

retrospect, his shortcomings as a leader of a nation at war suggest how thoroughly inappropriate Asquith was, personally, for the role in which he was cast by Churchill's Irish strategy in March 1914. Instead it was Churchill, ordered to return the navy ships he had assembled to their bases and call off his plans for a systematic investment of Ulster, who was required to play a role defined by Asquith—that of misunderstood minister—indignantly denying there ever existed a “pogrom plot” against Ulster and repudiating the “hellish insinuation” that his purely precautionary steps had been designed as a deliberate provocation.²¹

The Basis of De Gaulle's Caesarist Strategy

A Recomposed Regime. The Constituent Assembly's opposition to de Gaulle's constitutional views (and to the advantages he would enjoy within a system designed according those views) was so intense that early in 1946 de Gaulle resigned as head of the provisional government and withdrew from ordinary political competition. As most expected, the Fourth Republic Constitution systematically benefited the existing political parties. Thanks to proportional representation and complex arrangements governing runoffs in fragmented constituencies, parties able to gain a small but significant percentage of the national vote were assured of representation in the Assembly. The Assembly itself was empowered to choose both the prime minister and the president. The president was a figurehead, but even the prime minister's powers were severely limited. Legislation proposed by the government was amended if not redrafted by parliamentary committees before its discussion on the floor. Both the prime minister and his cabinet were creatures of the Assembly—elected to it, approved by it, and subject to sudden dismissal following a failed vote of confidence. The institutional superiority of the Assembly over the government was expressed in the fact that it could dismiss one government and form another without calling new parliamentary elections.

As shown in Chapter 7, the result of this system was a fractionated Parliament and a series of short-lived governments based on negative majorities, most of which were incapable of sustaining bold initiatives in controversial areas, especially toward the most difficult problem of all—the future of Algeria. The shortcomings of the constitution were widely acknowledged. Attempts to strengthen the executive and rein in the power of the Assembly were made by every prime minister, from Mendès-France to Pflimlin. But one consequence of the system as established by the 1946 constitution was the inability of each of these governments (with the interesting but irrelevant exception of Pflimlin's three-week ministry) to agree

on the specifics of any one constitutional reform project. As a result, every one of the attempts between 1954 and 1958 to reform the constitution—to achieve a partial recomposition of the regime—failed.²²

Instead of a partial regime recomposition, which might have alleviated some of the pressure on Fourth Republic institutions, tensions accumulated, leading to the crisis of 1958, the collapse of the Fourth Republic, and a redesign of Republican institutions which accomplished a radical rearrangement of the regime.²³ The constitution of the Fifth Republic, drafted by de Gaulle's closest advisers, accomplished a massive shift of authority from the Assembly to the government, especially the president. Elected by a college of local and regional notables (changed to direct election by universal suffrage in October 1962), the president (not the Assembly) was empowered both to choose and dismiss the prime minister and, once every twelve months, to dissolve Parliament. All powers not specifically delegated to Parliament were reserved for the government, which meant, in effect, the president. Centralization of power was also achieved by constitutional provisions requiring the Assembly to debate the government version of bills, enabling promulgation of government-supported legislation unless opposed by an absolute majority of the Assembly, permitting the president to appeal directly to the people through referenda of his own choosing, and allowing the president, in times identified by him as national emergencies, to rule by decree. Parliamentary influence was further reduced, and the cabinet's reliance on the president further reinforced, by the rule that neither the prime minister nor any other minister could hold seats in the Assembly.²⁴

Against the background of the collapsing Fourth Republic, France's embrace of a strong leader and a centralized authority system is often cited as an instance of Bonapartism. Indeed the rise of a Caesarist figure in times of great national distress or deep divisions is a recurring theme in French history. The first and second empires were both constructed around such men—Napoléon Bonaparte and Napoléon III. Clemenceau played this role during World War I; both Pétain and de Gaulle did so in World War II. But the man on the white horse has not always succeeded. In 1887, General Georges Boulanger failed in his effort to translate popularity as a military leader into the overthrow of the Third Republic. In 1934, ex-President Gaston Doumergue was put forward, with only limited success, as a "national arbiter" who might steer France clear of the catastrophe that violent clashes between right and left seemed to portend.

One crucial factor in de Gaulle's Caesarist success was his cultivation of a crisis disruptive enough to make comprehensive regime recomposition possible. Alexander Werth draws an instructive comparison between Doumergue's brief attempt to transform the Third Republic into a presidential-

style regime and de Gaulle's experience as founder and ruler of the Fifth Republic. In February 1934 the elderly Doumergue was called upon, following severe riots in Paris, as a symbol of "national reconciliation." He agreed to form a government. Once installed, he and some of his ministers thought to at least partially recompose the Third Republic—to increase executive power and reduce tensions between left and right by shifting authority from the Assembly, and the cabinets it produced, to the presidency. But the proportions of the crisis that had brought him to power were not large enough to create fears capable of displacing the partisan oppositions Doumergue intended to stifle. Doumergue's government was soon toppled by an "anti-fascist" alliance of Socialists and Communists who went on to win power in 1936 under the banner of the Popular Front.²⁵ Werth comments that unlike Doumergue, who was ready "to be used as a mere expedient to relieve the temporary headache of the Republic," de Gaulle waited for a crisis of much greater proportions to materialize. In that context he could expect and was granted "a free hand to 'rebuild the State,'"²⁶ thereby enabling the charismatic potential of his Caesarist figure to be realized.

Notwithstanding his shrewdness, sense of timing, and tactical flexibility, it is de Gaulle's charisma that virtually all observers have regarded as the *sine qua non* of his success as the founder of the Fifth Republic and the engineer of France's separation of Algeria. His adroit and highly personal appeals for public support in the midst of the 1960 and 1961 crises showed de Gaulle superbly qualified to play the Caesarist role his regime had been designed to assign him. We have seen in Chapter 7, however, that his qualities of leadership were not politically relevant; indeed they hardly seemed present as a factor in French political life until the regime crisis of 1957–58 sharpened French frustrations with the inadequacies of the Fourth Republic, prompting fears of both chaos and fascism.

In fact it was not only the severity of the crisis bringing him to power, but the new rules for political competition enforced within the recomposed regime, which unleashed the political potential of de Gaulle's charismatic appeal to masses of French people.²⁷ In his preface to Alfred Grosser's 1965 study of foreign policy under the Fifth Republic, Stanley Hoffmann noted how different Grosser's examination of this topic was from his earlier investigation of foreign policy under the Fourth Republic. Grosser's study of the Fifth Republic's foreign policy, Hoffmann observed, "does not contain a systematic analysis of the political forces: parties, institutions, pressure groups, press, etc. The reason is obvious: foreign policy under the Fourth Republic was the product of a complex bargaining process; foreign policy in the Fifth Republic is the expression of one man's vision, will, and statecraft."²⁸

The institutional structure within which French foreign policy in general, and French policy toward Algeria in particular, could be transformed as Hoffmann describes was the product of the 1958 constitution. The pattern of authority relations it helped bring about corresponded closely to the way de Gaulle had wanted power to be organized in the regime founded in 1946. It is no exaggeration to describe the Fifth Republic as a polity organized to make de Gaulle's skills and those resources which he commanded, especially the trust and diffuse support of wide sectors of metropolitan public opinion, relatively more important than the resources commanded by his political opponents (coherent party organizations, the ability to launch coup attempts, and the capacity to put tens of thousands of violent demonstrators into the streets of Paris and Algiers).

Serial Decomposition, Realignment, and Pedagogy in the Fifth Republic. If the institutional transformation of the French state that is connoted by the term "regime recomposition" was a necessary condition for France to leave Algeria, that is, for the strategic contraction of the French state, it was certainly not sufficient. Centralization of state authority meant that policies designed to support Algérie française could have been as well protected from metropolitan opposition as were disengagement-oriented policies. After all, the idea of a *pur and dur* regime as well as the return to power of a strong leader (de Gaulle) were favored by the colonels, the ultras of Algiers, and Soustellian Gaullists precisely because these partisans of Algérie française believed a more authoritarian political regimen was necessary to marginalize antiwar sentiment (in the press and in Parliament) and bring the conflict in Algeria to an integrationist conclusion. Michel Debré, who served as justice minister in de Gaulle's government from June to December 1958, and as prime minister, from 1959 to 1962, as well as General de Beaufort, de Gaulle's chief adviser on military affairs until his resignation during Barricades week, were both ardent proponents of Algérie française.

Explaining both the relocation of the Algerian problem across the regime threshold and the implementation of a withdrawal policy requires consideration of how de Gaulle exploited the opportunities created by regime recomposition to move France toward disengagement from Algeria rather than to revitalize efforts to incorporate it. This, in turn, requires analysis of de Gaulle's subsidiary use of the other rescaling mechanisms: realignment, utility function change, and (serial) decomposition.

De Gaulle backed away (several times) from decisively confronting his opponents over attempts to cross the regime threshold. His decision to avoid a showdown with Massu, Salan, and Soustelle in the second half of 1958, his reassurances to military commanders in October 1959 (which

helped prevent Operation Veronique from coming to fruition), and his tour of the officers' messes in March 1960 (following the Barricades Rebellion) were calculated retreats. But these retreats were tactical, not strategic. At no point did de Gaulle, as Asquith did in summer 1914, forswear the use of state power as a means of enforcing state contraction. Each of his retreats was followed by substantially more explicit and "advanced" formulations of his intentions toward Algeria. The climax of this process was reached in April 1961, when a direct collision with the military high command resulted in the relocation of the Algerian question across the regime threshold.

This interpretation of de Gaulle's strategy requires a view of his leadership as more Machiavellian than empirical, as based, for all its tactical flexibility, on a deliberate plan to end France's rule over all of Algeria—a plan whose main outlines, at least, must have been relatively clear to de Gaulle himself in 1958.²⁹ Although in his memoirs de Gaulle portrays himself as having had "no strictly pre-determined plan" as to "the precise details, the phasing and timing of the solution," he describes "the main outlines" as having been "clear in my mind"—negotiations based on battlefield successes, acceptance of the principle of Algerian national self-determination, and abandonment of *Algérie française* as a "ruinous utopia." According to this formulation, his aspirations for Algeria had been reduced to a vague "hope." He "hoped to ensure that, in the sense in which France had always remained in some degree Roman ever since the days of Gaul, the Algeria of the future . . . would in many respects remain French."³⁰

As de Gaulle well knew, in 1958 an Algeria as French as France still was "Roman" was not what partisans of *Algérie française* had in mind when they demanded "de Gaulle au pouvoir."³¹ Accordingly, in his memoirs de Gaulle also portrayed himself as aware of the need to camouflage his ultimate intentions until his regime was solidly established, until *military* victories over the FLN had been achieved, and until processes of political education in France had reached fruition. Once his political supremacy over the army, the settlers, and metropolitan diehards had been established, domestic political criticism of "abandonment" could be isolated and overcome.

I should have to proceed cautiously from one stage to the next. Only gradually, using each crisis as a springboard for further advance, could I hope to create a current of consent powerful enough to carry all before it. Were I to announce my intentions point-blank, there was no doubt that the sea of ignorant fear, of shocked surprise, of concerted malevolence through which I was navigating would cause such a tidal wave of alarms and passions in every walk of life that the ship would capsize.³²

Of course such retrospective and self-serving analyses portraying de Gaulle as unusually perspicacious, not to say clairvoyant, cannot be taken at face value. What is impressive is that de Gaulle's worst detractors, those partisans of French Algeria who have reviled him for his betrayal of their dreams and his promises, agree with de Gaulle's own account, even though by doing so they are forced to admit their own lapses of judgment. Jean-Louis Tixier-Vignancour, serving as Raoul Salan's lawyer at the latter's trial for treason in 1962, described de Gaulle as having "come to power with the intention but not the strength to give Algeria its independence. Thus to arrive at the goal, he had usurped the force of Algérie française and tricked all but a handful of his closest collaborators . . . by practicing his duplicitous gradualism."³³ According to Soustelle in 1962, de Gaulle had inaugurated an Algerian policy in June 1958 whose "trickery was so skilled, so gradual (at least at the beginning), camouflaged with such astuteness, that it was difficult to penetrate."³⁴

In the final analysis, however empirical were de Gaulle's tactical responses to the unfolding situation, three basic elements of his Machiavelian self-description may be considered well established—his early acceptance of an open-ended process of French disengagement from Algeria, his decision to camouflage that acceptance, and his perception of the regime-challenging nature of the threats he would have to overcome before consummating the disengagement process. By serially decomposing the process of disengagement from Algeria into conceptually discrete steps, no one of which offered his opponents among the colons or within the military a politically suitable basis for mobilizing large-scale metropolitan opposition, and by preserving as long as possible the image of a leader who *might* be devoted to keeping Algeria French, de Gaulle minimized the seriousness of the challenges his opponents could raise against him.³⁵

The staggered unfolding of de Gaulle's intentions toward Algeria, what Soustelle meant by de Gaulle's "duplicitous gradualism," marked de Gaulle's *tactical* use of serial decomposition to fragment a regime-threatening coalition. Its purpose was similar to that of temporarily excluding Ulster in the scheme developed by Lloyd George and Churchill in late 1913 and early 1914. By endorsing the principle of unfettered Algerian self-determination while condemning the "secession" option and promising French army "supervision" of the balloting, by prosecuting the war with full vigor while reinterpreting the meaning or importance of victory, and by exploiting public fear and distress in the midst of regime crises *operationally* precipitated by the extraconstitutional activities of his opponents, de Gaulle isolated, neutralized, and then marginalized pieds noirs, metropolitan partisans of Algérie française, and, finally, the generals.³⁶

Unlike Asquith, however, de Gaulle never allowed decomposition of the

process of disengagement to be replaced by decomposition of the objective of that process—withdrawal of French sovereignty from all of Algeria. Despite de Gaulle indirectly encouraging the French to think about the partition of Algeria as a possible result of his policies, the centerpiece of his strategy for state contraction was to rely on recomposing the French regime to create political conditions within which a spatially undecomposed Algerian problem could be relocated across the regime threshold, and then solved. Those political conditions were a major realignment of French political competition, featuring a dominant centrist party whose internal unity was *not* based on uniformity of opinion about Algeria, and a substantial decline in the value that many French placed on their country's rule of Algeria.

The 1958 elections were the first held under the terms of the Fifth Republic Constitution. They produced a disciplined Gaullist party (the UNR) large enough to dominate the National Assembly. The parliamentary presence of the Communist party was reduced to irrelevance, thereby depriving the center-left parties favoring Algerian disengagement of any alternative to cooperation with the Gaullists.³⁷ De Gaulle's appeal to French nationalist sentiment, his incontestable credentials as a *resistant*, and his ability to elicit support from both clericalists and anticlericalists also made the MRP's program somewhat redundant. It won only 10 percent of Assembly seats in the 1958 elections and disappeared as a separate organization after the 1963 elections. The Poujadists vanished even more quickly, partially because of changed economic conditions, but also because in the Fourth Republic's demise they had lost a necessary target for the populist anger they expressed and exploited. Most important of all, a fundamental split developed among the Indépendants—the large conservative party that had given solid and decisive parliamentary support to every initiative since 1954 it considered inconsistent with permanent French sovereignty over Algeria.

In the 1958 elections the Indépendants raised their percentage of the popular vote and the size of their representation in the Assembly. The new rules of Fifth Republic politics, however, and the size of the Gaullist bloc of deputies meant that their party could no longer bring down any government of which it was not a part. Forced to choose between participation in cabinets and a hardline toward Algeria, the party could not hold itself together. A minority of its top leaders, led by Roger Duchet and the party center, remained wedded to *Algérie française*. This faction's telegram of solidarity with those manning the barricades in January 1960 embarrassed and angered the bulk of the party. After the Generals' Putsch attempt, Duchet was forced to resign as secretary general of the party. Indépendant parliamentary leaders, such as Antoine Pinay and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing,

traded their acquiescence in de Gaulle's Algerian policy for ministerial posts in Fifth Republic governments. They, and most other Indépendant politicians, allowed their fear of instability, their desire to serve in the cabinet, and their need to compete for moderately conservative voters attracted to the new Gaullist party to overrule their waning enthusiasm for the Algerian War.³⁸ Thus was a major realignment of French metropolitan politics achieved, eliminating the stalemated confrontation on Algeria between antidisengagement and disengagement-oriented blocs, which had paralyzed the Fourth Republic.

Algerian ultras and army officers ready to carry out a coup d'état were severely disadvantaged by the absence of a weighty metropolitan political organization committed as strongly as they were to maintaining French Algeria. The banner of *Algérie française* attracted no large political party or organization whose leadership might have presented itself as an alternative to de Gaulle or to the Fifth Republic. Pinay, the leading Indépendant contender for the presidency, was coming to the conclusion that the war in Algeria was a waste of resources.³⁹ Soustelle's only party links were to the UNR, which he had founded but which subsequently rejected him. Bidault was cut off from what remained of the party he had formerly led, the MRP, by its acceptance of Algerian self-determination. None of the other figures on the Vincennes Committee had the political stature or experience to be considered serious candidates for president of the Fifth, or any other, Republic.

Realignment within the institutions of the new regime thus played a key role in their preservation. Faced with massive public displays of support for de Gaulle—during the Barricades Rebellion in January 1960, in the results of the January 1961 referendum on Algerian self-determination, and during the Generals' Revolt of April 1961—the settlers and the professional army were deterred from employing all their resources (including invasion of the mainland) by the prospect of wielding power over a hostile metropolitan population. On the tactical level it was this shift in the balance of expectations about available options for governing France which permitted de Gaulle to be as patient as he was in January 1960 and April 1961. His confidence that he could rally public opinion to his side forced his opponents to take the politically costly initiative of breaking the newly established rules for political competition. The ultras, and especially the rebellious Army commanders, were thus compelled to assume the burden of proof that they had the means and the will to rule France without de Gaulle and without a large, established metropolitan political organization.

To build support for his Algerian policy and defend his regime against the challenges he expected its implementation to trigger, de Gaulle relied not only on the French public's deference to his opinions. He also sought

to substitute his own views of the Algerian question for the ones that still prevailed, in 1958, among those members of the electorate in the center, and to the right of center, of French politics. The same staggered presentation of less ambiguous, less tortuously phrased constructions of his plans and preferences, which serially decomposed the problem of disengaging from Algeria, thereby depriving his opponents of early and convenient opportunities for resistance, was also part of a sustained effort to change French attitudes toward Algeria.

Of course de Gaulle was not the only contributor to the pedagogical process. In the final years of the Fourth Republic, books and articles about torture framed the war as an ethical question. These issues attracted the attention of many French intellectuals to the problem of the Algerian conflict's relationship to democracy in metropolitan France, but never generated a mass base for the moral critique of the Algerian War which was widely accepted within the intelligentsia.⁴⁰

In the first years of the Fifth Republic, French intellectuals displayed a new willingness to draw uncompromising conclusions about the moral status of French verses Muslim claims in Algeria. The Jeanson network, organized to assist the FLN in its "just resistance" to French oppression, raised fundamental questions about the forms opposition to the Algerian War could legitimately take. In September 1960, 121 of France's leading noncommunist intellectuals issued a manifesto in support of conscientious objection to serving in the armed forces, desertion from the ranks, and even aid to the FLN. These activities helped shift the center of gravity of French opinion toward disengagement. Although the government prosecuted the Jeanson network and banned publication of the manifesto, it drew back from filing charges against the manifesto's signatories.⁴¹

In general the leading French newspapers followed government policy toward Algeria and their sense of what public opinion would tolerate, rather than trying to change the policy or shape public opinion. As Raoul Girardet points out, at the end of 1954 both *Le Populaire* (the official newspaper of the Socialist party) and *Le Figaro* (associated with the Indépendants) published editorials affirming the nation's "irreducible will to maintain Algeria within France, emphasizing that self-determination would mean secession and represent a mortal danger to the national community." In 1962, just prior to the Evian Accords, both newspapers published similarly impassioned endorsements of government policy (to recognize Algerian independence) as "conforming to the requirements of reason and the necessities of national interest."⁴² Between 1956 and 1959, France's large circulation newspapers were inclined to do no more than report the *existence* of Cartiérist critiques of Algerian policy (in "reviews of the press") or print letters to the editor raising similar points.⁴³ In 1957,

Le Figaro rebuked its own writer, Raymond Aron, for both the mode of his analysis and his conclusions in *The Algerian Tragedy*. Despite some warnings of the need to reevaluate French policies toward Algeria, *Le Monde* maintained (until spring 1961) a “habitual optimism,” shifting its editorial line to follow de Gaulle’s gradually developing public position.⁴⁴

In 1958 only leftist newspapers such as *L’Express*, *Le Populaire* and *Témoignage Chrétien* were offering forthright criticism of the war. But their readership was small and insulated from most sectors of French society. As noted, before 1958 the most dynamic sectors of the French business community were Cartiérist in their attitude toward French colonies, but these circles were slow to apply their analysis (in public at least) to Algeria. In early 1959, however, a key French business journal, *Les Echos*, published an article opposing the Algerian war as an intolerable burden on the French economy. The war cost France, according to *Les Echos*, 1,200 billion francs per year plus 120 billion francs in new investments. *L’Express*, which had disagreed with Aron in 1957 when he raised similar arguments against continuing French rule of Algeria, now hailed the article in *Les Echos* as a “new sign of the evolution of thinking among the controllers of the French economy.”⁴⁵

By 1959 the French Catholic church had also moved away from strong support of the war. Signals from the Vatican that its missionary activities in the third world were now more likely to be enhanced by endorsing the right of Asian and African peoples to self-determination than by clinging to a dying colonialism were increasingly interpreted by French Catholics as applying to Algeria. Although divided on the issue, many bishops and priests in France spoke out against torture and other abuses and in favor of reaching an accommodation with Algerian Muslims that would set the stage for French withdrawal.⁴⁶

In the final analysis, however, it was de Gaulle’s own determined efforts that were the motor behind substantial change in the publicly displayed attitudes of metropolitan Frenchmen. Virtually all of de Gaulle’s public utterances were consistent with a pedagogical strategy based on calculated ambiguity and a slow revelation of how few were the constraints he was willing to accept in finding a way out of Algeria.⁴⁷ In retrospect it is clear that de Gaulle’s post-May 1958 remarks about Algeria were almost always more important for what they implied about the possibility of future movement toward disengagement than for their specific content (which was often irrelevant, vague, or tautological). For example, the procedures for establishing contact between the FLN and France, suggested in his October 1958 “peace of the brave” speech, were immediately rejected by the guerrillas as tantamount to capitulation. However, the tribute de Gaulle paid to the courage and honor of the “men of the insurrection” encouraged

the French to change their expectations about what sort of relationship France might eventually have with those who previously had been officially referred to only as criminals and terrorists.

In his self-determination speech of September 1959, de Gaulle vehemently rejected and even ridiculed the idea of Algeria's "secession" from France. But much more important than his specific comments was the way they were framed. He chose to substitute an awkward and obviously inappropriate-sounding neologism—Frenchification—for the traditional, emotion-laden slogans of *Algérie française* or *intégration*. He thereby reduced the most enthusiastically supported vision of French victory to the status of one among several options (and not even the preferred option) for Franco-Algerian relations. Moreover, by simply mentioning separation as an outcome of the war that France would survive with her security and honor intact, he prompted others to debate the possibility on its merits. By stressing the disaster that secession would bring for the living standards of Algerian Muslims, instead of for metropolitan France's own interests, he strengthened those who contended that the costs of holding Algeria had, or soon might, exceed the advantages of continuing to enforce French sovereignty there.

In his January 25, 1960, address to the nation during Barricades Week, de Gaulle refused to use the phrase "French Algeria." Instead he characterized France's task in Algeria as "assuring the triumph of a solution that is French." As Grosser points out, "this statement could mean either '*Algérie française*' or 'It is unworthy of France not to give independence to a dominated country.'"⁴⁸ The point is that such ambiguity was calculated to encourage thinking and arguments about Algeria's future framed in terms of what was, in fact, "worthy" of France, rather than in terms of what would be required to achieve the particular image of French-Algerian relations contained in the slogan of *Algérie française*.

Thus de Gaulle sought gradually, but fairly steadily, to broaden the number of outcomes deemed consistent with French "grandeur," to raise questions about Algeria's value to France, and, finally, to create and strengthen beliefs that France would be better off without having to rule Algeria. This entailed implicit acceptance of the two major critiques of postwar French overseas policies offered by leftist French intellectuals: (1) the "relativist" rejection of Western (i.e., French) culture as the standard against which the maturity and value of native peoples (and their cultures) should be measured; and (2) the "realist" contention that decolonization (including the relinquishment of Algeria) was not only inevitable but also in France's economic and diplomatic interest. Before 1958, as part of his war of position against the Fourth Republic, de Gaulle and many of his supporters used these critiques as a foil to highlight his own virtues and

suggest the degradation of the regime that seemed as though it might be responsive to them. In his war of maneuver against those who sought to do to the Fifth Republic what he had done to the Fourth, de Gaulle promoted precisely these critiques in an effort to reduce to a small minority those French strongly committed to Algérie française.

De Gaulle's stress on the notion of Algeria's distinctive "personality," his substitution of the phrase "Algerian Algeria" for "French Algeria" as the emblem of that country's future, and his endorsement of self-determination for a third world people not yet fully assimilated into French culture echoed the "relativist" critique—ideas that had been politically marginalized under the Fourth Republic when advanced by Jean-Paul Sartre, Claude Bourdet, Jacques Berque, François Mauriac, and Claude Lévi-Strauss. The "realist" critique was reflected in Gaulle's attempt to decrease Algeria's salience for those French concerned about France's future. In doing so he relied on Cartiérist analyses of French colonialism developed within the French business community. For example, the significance of de Gaulle's announcement, in October 1958, of his sweeping Constantine Plan for the economic rehabilitation of Algeria can only be appreciated within the context of Raymond Aron's 1957 book applying Cartiérist thinking to Algeria (discussed in Chap. 4). Aron's calculations were based in part on information contained in the Maspétiol report of 1955 which documented how abysmal were the living conditions of the mass of Algerian Muslims and how enormous were the sums required to carry out Soustelle's program of *intégration*.⁴⁹ In this light it can be seen that the sheer economic impossibility of implementing de Gaulle's Constantine Plan for the development of Algeria was perhaps the most important reason for its announcement—de Gaulle's desire to encourage those who appreciated the economic irrationality of France's Algerian policy to publicly make their case.

But de Gaulle had to make his argument more explicit before its logic became politically potent and before most managers, businessmen, and financial journalists, who privately opposed French rule of Algeria on grounds of economic irrationality, were willing to make their views known.⁵⁰ Not until after de Gaulle's articulation of self-determination as the basis for Algeria's future did Cartiér himself, in his 1960 book *Algeria without Lies*, finally apply his earlier analysis of colonialism to Algeria. He now contended that Algeria was, and would continue to be, an economic drain on France. Cartiér characterized as inevitable the decline of France's position there, describing European settlement in North Africa as "probably an error from the start."⁵¹

De Gaulle was not a Cartiérist himself, but a French nationalist in the tradition of Louis XIV and Napoléon, oriented toward achieving French

leadership in Europe and opposed, as Ferry's critics had been in the 1880s, to imperialist adventures which distracted France from her continental vocation.⁵² Nevertheless, in spring 1961 de Gaulle used the prohibitive cost of realizing *intégration*, combined with the burden of the continuing military conflict, as a basis for his own public adoption of a severely Cartiérist approach to Algeria: "Algeria costs us—that is the least we can say—more than she is worth . . . decolonization is our interest, and therefore our policy."⁵³ If de Gaulle's use of profit-and-loss terminology was unnatural, and oddly discordant with the grand style characteristic of his rhetoric, still it had a purpose. His blunt statement appears to have provided decisive encouragement for *France-Observateur*, *Le Monde*, and *Le Figaro*, newspapers that had largely avoided publishing Cartiérist analyses of the Algerian question. Between April and September 1961, they each published numerous articles applying "the logic of the accountant" to the problem of Algeria and endorsing disengagement.⁵⁴

De Gaulle never seriously attempted to persuade the *pieds noirs* to support self-determination in Algeria. He did, however, expend considerable energy in seeking to change the values and expectations of the army. While praising its military "victories" in Algeria, he portrayed the Army's achievements, and "pacification" in general, as nothing more than ancillary contributions to a political settlement with the Algerian Muslims. In February 1960 France detonated her first atomic bomb. Again and again officers were told that in the nuclear age, the mission of the French army was considerably grander and more exciting than policing villages and *casbahs* or flushing guerrillas out of mountain hideouts. These were the operational preoccupations of the army in Algeria, most of which de Gaulle contemptuously dismissed as "boy scout" activities.⁵⁵ De Gaulle encouraged commanders to envision an "atomic army," based on the most sophisticated technology available, built around France's own independent nuclear strike force, whose mission would be to reestablish France in the front rank of world power.⁵⁶ There are few signs that these arguments made much of an impression on officers whose entire careers were based on their achievements in Indochina and Algeria, but they did provide an alternative framework within which new officers, and those based in Europe, could see the end of French rule in Algeria as an exciting beginning and a potential basis for boosting their careers.

The pedagogical success de Gaulle enjoyed was reflected in what Raoul Girardet calls a "decisive displacement of the national *consensus*." It was the state, he argues, which had overcome French anticolonialist inhibitions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and it was also the state, personified by Charles de Gaulle, whose efforts were responsible for public acceptance of decolonization in general and withdrawal from Algeria in

particular. "More or less from the end of 1960," he continues, "the State was deliberately using all the weight of its authority, all the power of coercion, and the pressures of persuasion it had at its disposal to orient opinion toward a view very different from that with which the government had always sought to engage it."⁵⁷

Contrary to Girardet's image, however, the "education" of the French public, which de Gaulle spurred and in which he actively participated, did not occur within an unchanging French state. The recomposition of the regime and the massive political realignment that redesign made possible were necessary components of a rescaling strategy featuring pedagogically induced change in value preferences about Algeria as an important, but subsidiary mechanism in the process of state contraction.

Lloyd George's Caesarism

Realignment without Recomposition. Both the UNR-supported government of Charles de Gaulle and the Lloyd George coalition between Liberals and Unionists were the result of substantial political realignments. Dominant centrist blocs replaced polarized competition over whether or not to contract the territorial scope of the state. Each "Caesarist bloc" relied heavily on the charismatic appeal of its respective architect, whose leadership was widely deemed essential to overcome a protracted national emergency.

However, the impetus for creating these blocs as well as the consequences of their formation were quite different. In France a regime crisis led toward, and was exploited to produce, regime breakdown. The rescue of the state from the chaos which seemed to threaten it produced new political capital. These resources—trust in de Gaulle's judgment, fear of the consequences of his absence, and hope for the consummation of his promises—were used effectively to recompose the regime. The calculated intent of recomposition was to change the rules of political competition so as to enhance the discretion of a centralized authority structure over all areas of public life, including the substantive question of Algeria's future. The realignment of political forces evident in the outcome of parliamentary elections and referenda, and de Gaulle's willingness to risk and ability to withstand repeated regime crises reflect the success of this strategy. Together with the pedagogic campaign described above, they permitted the relocation of the Algerian problem across the regime threshold.

In Britain, on the other hand, the regime crisis was defused before breakdown occurred. Plans for regime recomposition, harbored by Milner and other Unionists associated with him, were never given an opportunity