

FRANCE: A QUASI-CORPORATIST STATE

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## DEDICATION

*To my parents, Jimmie J. Hawkes and Josette L. Hawkes, without whose help, encouragement and understanding, this work would have been immeasurably more difficult.*

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## ABSTRACT

Over the last few decades, two theoretical approaches have been developed to explain the relationship between governments and interest groups: corporatism and pluralism. Traditionally, France has been labeled a corporatist state, however some characteristics of this nation suggest that it may in fact be a quasi-corporatist system, which might provide an explanation for the lack of unity and integration within the European Economic Community (EEC). Using French agricultural interest groups as a case study, this thesis will explain and demonstrate the impact pressure groups have upon the decision-making process. Case studies from 1965, 1968, and 1983 suggest that French agricultural producers have the ability to influence policy-making in France, even when it does not coincide with the opinions of governmental officials. These case studies also suggest that even though some features of corporatism exist in France, characteristics of pluralism are also prevalent. Therefore, France may not completely fit into this supposed evolutionary age of corporatism.

FRANCE: A QUASI-CORPORATIST STATE

## INTRODUCTION

Interest groups have long existed in societies. They provide men a means of organizing themselves in order to best express their opinions and interests, so that they may achieve their goal of influencing public policy. Over the past few decades scholars have become quite interested in this on going exchange between societies and their political systems. As a result of their studies, they have developed two theoretical approaches explaining this relationship: corporatism and pluralism. According to the corporatist model there exist formal channels of access and communication between the state and pressure groups. Therefore both participate in the decision-making process and the establishment of policies, which result from it. The pluralist approach does not believe that any institutionalized relationship exists between interest groups and the government. Therefore these groups must attempt to influence governmental policy through the use of public propaganda, demonstrations, strikes, and the use of personal contacts.

Some scholars believe that since World War II many nations have begun to evolve into corporatist nations, thereby suggesting that the twentieth century may be the age of corporatism. France however, does not appear to be

following this trend. The relationship between French agricultural workers and the government seems to be marked by both corporatist and pluralist characteristics. Some formal channels of access between these groups and the state have been established, as for example The Federation Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (FNSEA), which was developed by the government after World War II in order to facilitate its communications with farmers. However, despite these types of government established committees, agricultural interest groups still find the use of demonstrations, such as those of 1965, 1968, and 1983, to be quite effective in influencing policy. Since characteristics of both theories, corporatism and pluralism exist, France can only be labeled a quasi-corporatist state.

## CHAPTER I

### INTEREST GROUPS AND CORPORATISM IN FRANCE

Over the last few decades, scholars have developed two theoretical approaches to explain the relationship between society and state: pluralism and corporatism. France has traditionally been characterized as a corporatist nation. However, some characteristics of this system, such as the relationship between farm groups and the government, do not coincide with the concepts of corporatism, thereby suggesting that France may be a quasi-corporatist state. This raises implications for Europe, possibly explaining the lack of integration within the European Economic Community (EEC).

#### A. Interest Groups:

Corporatism and pluralism have helped to establish the different types of interest groups and their various forms of access into the political system. An interest group can be defined as a collection of individuals who unite on the basis of a common interest in order to influence public policy, but without attempting to control the political apparatus. Because of the varying types of interests these groups represent, according to Rod Hague and Martin Harrop, they can be classified under six different types: Communal, Customary, Institutional, Protective, Promotional, and

Associational.<sup>1</sup> The organization of Communal groups is based not upon a common interest, but rather upon a common bond which exists among members. New members are born into the group, not recruited. Very similar to Communal groups are Customary groups which are also united by a common bond. However, these types of groups do articulate interests through kinship and personal ties. Institutional groups are characterized by their formal organization, for example armies, legislatures and bureaucracies. Because of their proximity to the government, their articulated interests have considerable impact upon policy-making. Protective groups are organized to uphold the material interests of their members, for example trade unions or employer's organizations. These groups are quite influential in the decision-making process since they often serve as consultants to the government. Promotional groups are joined by their desire to promote certain activities or values rather than to protect the interests of its members. These groups are most significant in first world countries where they can freely express the values and morals they stand for. Associational groups are organized for a specific purpose. Their interests and aims are limited. How then do these different types of pressure groups gain access into the political system?

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<sup>1</sup>Rod Hague and Martin Harrop, Comparative Government and Politics (New Jersey: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1987), pp. 121-125.

### B. Channels of access:

Interest groups influence the decision-making process either through direct dealings with the government, through political parties, or through public opinion. The basis for the group's organization often determines what method is best for penetrating the political system. Direct contact between groups and government officials occurs under various forms. First there can be group representation in the political elite itself, making this one of the most effective forms of access. However, problems exist since members of the political elite represent various interests and these may sometimes conflict with one another. Elite connections are another form of direct contact. In this group, leaders establish and use their relationships with government officials to influence their voice and vote in the formulation of policy. Elite connections are simply a network of personal relations which provide informal channels of access into the government. The bureaucracy and assemblies can also serve as means of obtaining access. However, the level of penetration into these branches depends upon the openness of the political system.

Interest groups can also attempt to influence decisions through indirect methods, such as through political parties and the media. Pressure groups can offer their support and votes to political parties in return for the representation of their interests. Mass media can be used to steer public opinion in a particular direction. When neither direct nor

indirect means of influencing the government are accessible, interest groups turn to protest and violence as methods of expressing their political demands.

The level of influence these pressure groups have is largely determined by the nature of the political system itself. The more open the system (first world nations), the greater effect they have. The legitimacy of the group is also a determining factor in its influencing power. The legitimacy accorded to the group, by both the government and the public, establish the level of respectability given to interest groups. Another factor which determines a group's influence is its level of tangible resources, which includes its financial power and membership level.

### C. Corporatism vs. Pluralism:

The debate over corporatism and pluralism has attracted scholars of many disciplines, backgrounds, and convictions. Philippe C. Schmitter has emerged as the leading expert and most widely recognized author in this field of study.

Schmitter defines corporatism and pluralism as the following:

Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and support.

Pluralism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into an unspecified number of

multiple, voluntary, competitive, nonhierarchically ordered and self-determined (as to type or scope of interest) categories which are not specially licensed, recognized, subsidized, created or otherwise controlled in leadership selection or interest articulation by the state and which do not exercise a monopoly of representational activity within their respective categories.<sup>2</sup>

Corporatism and pluralism have both been developed as means of understanding the relationship between the interests of society and the authority of the state in capitalist democracies. After World War II, many academics felt that conventional pluralist theories no longer provided an adequate explanation of the changes that were taking place between the state and various interest groups. They believed that pluralism assumed too passive a role for the state, and that it failed to explain the process by which representative lobbies were being transformed into mere extensions of their governments. Therefore, in an attempt to provide such an explanation, these critics revived corporatist ideas, that had been discussed as far back as World War I.

Scholars believed that the twentieth century would become the age of corporatism, bringing an end to the laissez-faire era. After having disassociated corporatism from its pejorative association with fascism and nazism, academics then had to explain how this new form of interest group/state relationship would come about. In his book, Le Corporatisme d'association en Suisse, J. Malherbe

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<sup>2</sup>Philippe C. Schmitter, Trends Toward Corporatist Intermediation (London: SAGE Publications, 1979), pp. 13 & 15.

suggests that "corporatism appears under two very different guises: the revolutionary and the evolutionary. It is either the product of a 'new order' following from a fundamental overthrow of the political and economic institutions of a given country and created by force or special 'collective spirit'; or the outcome of a natural evolution in economic and social ideas and events."<sup>3</sup> In the aftermath of the Second World War, nations, finding themselves in the midst of widespread devastation and appalling poverty, found a new willingness to bridge their national and international differences in the task of reconstruction and economic recovery. There was a demand for restructuring the division of labor and its benefits, in order to create one social class and the even distribution of wealth. Europeans wanted to expand their role in public policy by associating and incorporating their classes and interest groups in the political process, thereby involving themselves more closely in the decision-making machinery.

What then, are the features of corporatism which distinguish it from pluralism? Similarities exist between the two concepts in that both accept, recognize and seek to offer solutions to coping with the growing structural differentiation and interest diversity of modern political systems. The most prominent feature of corporatism is a set of statutory institutions, whose function is to facilitate contacts between government officials and representatives of

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<sup>3</sup>Schmitter, p. 15.

authorized interest groups. This process assures the mandatory participation of interest groups in the decision-making process, which are given the opportunity to bargain over policy with government representatives and a cartel of organized pressure groups. In order to further integrate interest groups into the political system, corporatism also charges them with implementing policy decisions. Because of this institutionalized access into the decision-making process, the need for personal associations within the government, parliamentary lobbying and appeals to the public, all in order to influence policy, are diminished. States under corporatist direction also experience few organized demonstrations and strikes since communication between groups and the government is so thorough.

Corporatism has also been divided into two subtypes: social and state corporatism. Corporatist theorist, Mihail Manoilescu defines social corporatism as a system in which the legitimacy and functioning of a government are dependent upon the activity of singular, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered representative groups.<sup>4</sup> In other words, a social corporatist system is one with relatively autonomous, multilayered units, open and competitive electoral processes and party systems. In state corporatism, groups are created and maintained as auxiliary and dependent organs of the state. Under this form of corporatism, the legitimacy and functioning of the political system

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<sup>4</sup>Schmitter, p. 20.

relies upon interest groups. In state corporatist systems interest groups are subordinate to the central political power, elections are either nonexistent or plebiscitary, and political parties are either dominated or monopolized by a single party.

While corporatism lies at one end of the spectrum, pluralism lies at the other. In a pluralist type system formal contacts between interest groups and government officials are less frequent if not nonexistent. Interest groups work from outside the political machinery in order to influence policy, instead of being directly involved in the decision-making process. Since no institutional channels exist for these groups to penetrate the government, they must rely upon personal contacts, their electoral strength, the mobilization of public support, and when all else fails, strikes and demonstrations.

#### D. Corporatism in France:

How then does the French political system fit into either of these models? There are divergent views on the nature of French interest group politics. While some scholars, such as Henry W. Ehrmann, have categorized France as a corporatist state, others, for example Philippe C. Schmitter, believe it to be a pluralist system. Beginning with the Third Republic, interest groups in France have played an important role in shaping political attitudes and governmental policy. Traditionally, leaders of these pressure groups have been brought together with public

officials through the use of consultative committees. After World War II the number of these bodies was largely increased. However, in 1958 their numbers and power declined due to the personal philosophy of President Charles de Gaulle, who viewed them as particularistic and therefore not useful to the public's interest. In 1981, when the Socialist Party came into office, once again the number of committees increased as the Socialist government sought greater democratic participation through its program of decentralization. Groups that had previously been excluded, or that had been inactive, as well as a few new ones, were given membership on committees. Over the years however, the government has shown a lack of control over the activities, interests pursued, and the selection of leadership within these groups. There has also been the lack of, if not the total absence of interest group/state negotiations. As a result, pressure groups have not always been allowed to participate in the decision-making process.

In 1982, Frank L. Wilson, of Purdue University, interviewed several French interest group leaders and members; his findings were later published in The American Political Science Review. Dr. Wilson reported that "nearly all respondents claimed that the government dominated the committees. Very few committees had anything more than a purely consultative or advisory task: the government could,

and often did, ignore the advice."<sup>5</sup> Some academics therefore argue that in actuality the French system is not a corporatist model, since its corporatist ideas have only a paper existence.

French agricultural interest groups offer a good example of the low level of corporatism and presence of pluralism in France, causing some experts to label this political system at most a quasi-corporatist state, since it does not completely fit into either model. After World War II, until 1981, extensive corporatist interaction was most visible in the agricultural sector. However, as previously discussed, though there are corporatist type structures, this does not necessarily mean that corporatism exists, especially when the government fails to give any power to pressure groups. As in the case of France neither conservative nor leftist governments have ever granted political power to any of the groups they proliferated. Historically corporatism has infiltrated the French agricultural sector by providing it with a national interest association, The Federation Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (FNSEA), and at times with conferences and committees meeting with government officials. However interest groups' lack of power in policy making and the breakdown of communications between government ministers and group leaders, has often caused these groups to seek other methods of influence. As a

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<sup>5</sup>Frank L. Wilson, French Interest Group Politics: Pluralist or Neocorporatist?" The American Political Science Review (1982), p. 900.

result, characteristics of pluralism, such as public relations campaigns, personal contacts, parliamentary lobbying, demonstrations and strikes also exist in the French political system.

E. Conclusion:

Many scholars believe that the current movement toward corporatism has been facilitated by the presence of social democratic governments; France however seems to be an exception to this purported trend. The organization and activities of French agricultural interest groups, as well as their relations with government officials and their power to influence policy decisions have not always demonstrated signs of an evolutionary movement toward corporatism. At times, interest group/state relations in France have reflected some characteristics of pluralism. This suggests that instead of corporatism, France is actually evolving into a quasi-corporatist state. Why then has corporatism failed to completely penetrate the French system? In the case of the agricultural sector, this failure is due to the power and organization of agricultural workers.

## CHAPTER II

### POWER AND ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

"It is all too easy to fall into the trap of giving undue emphasis to the proclaimed objectives of official policy makers to the neglect of the obstacles in their path."<sup>1</sup> Most examinations of the agricultural policy of France, focus upon the ideas, opinions, and decisions of the French government. The interests and needs of those closest and most directly involved in agriculture, the farmers, are sometimes overlooked or misunderstood. Yet farmers wield such political power that they greatly influence the decision-making process.

#### A. Source of agricultural power:

In democratic societies such as France, government officials acquire power through an election or appointment process, and exercise this power within the limits and regulations of the established political system. Therefore, their power is rendered unto them by voters, for without the support of citizens they can not legitimately attain positions of power. Power, however, can also be obtained outside of the political apparatus and without

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<sup>1</sup>Jack Hayward, The State and the Market Economy (New York: New York University Press, 1986), p. 1.

the support of a majority. For example, for years, French agricultural workers have had the ability, or power, to influence the decision-making process of France. If their power to influence is not due to the results of public elections, then how is it gained?

The political and social power of French farm workers is derived from several different sources. One explanation for their strength is their perceived role and importance in French history. It was the French peasantry that organized and led the Revolution of 1789, which caused France to break away from its long period of a ruling monarchy and restructure its political and social systems. Therefore, farm workers have often been commended for laying the social and political ground work of the Third and Fourth Republics. In turn, this prestige has helped to legitimize their ideas and opinions. As Sydney Nettleton Fisher explains, "some historians feel that the French Revolution helped to give increased political strength to the farmers, who developed their large numbers into powerful pressure groups to resist displacement and obtain protection."<sup>2</sup>

A second factor explaining why French agricultural workers are so powerful is the numbers they represent. Prior to its engagement in the European Common Market, over

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<sup>2</sup>Sydney Nettleton Fisher, France and the European Community (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1964), p. 86.

40% of France's population was classified as agricultural.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore understandable why farmers, representing such a large percentage of the population, became so important to the French government. For example, in 1957, French officials first sought the support of the agrarian society before approaching the Parliament for ratification of France's Common Market membership. Quite logically, to many politicians, 40% of the population could simply be translated or transformed into 40% of the people's vote, by representing the interests of French farmers.

However, since 1957, the percentage of Frenchmen involved in agriculture has drastically declined. Between 1954 and 1979, 3.2 million people left the agricultural sector.<sup>4</sup> By 1980, only 8.62% of the French population was still involved in agriculture.<sup>5</sup> There are two main reasons why so many French farmers left their farms: industrialization and the French government's "remembrement" program. After World War II, France began a period of rapid industrial growth. As industries were established and developed, employment opportunities quickly grew and many farmers realized that more money was to be earned in France's factories than on its farms. Historically, French

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<sup>3</sup>Fisher, p. 86.

<sup>4</sup>Henry W. Erhmann, Politics France (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1983), p. 29.

<sup>5</sup>Mervyn O. Pragnell, The International Year Book and Statesmen's Who's Who 1987 (England: Thomas Skinner Directories, 1987), p. 198.

farmers have held small amounts of land, which most often were divided into several dispersed parcels. After joining the EEC, the French government began pursuing "remembrement," a plan which would unite and connect small individual segments of land, creating fewer, but larger farms. As a result of this consolidation process, by 1980 around half a million of France's 1.2 million farms were more than 50 acres, with more than 150,000 of these being above 125 acres.<sup>6</sup> In 1955, there existed 2,300,000 farms in France, whereas in 1980, there were only 1,260,000, a decline of 2.5% per year.<sup>7</sup> Today, though French farmers no longer represent a majority of the population, they remain powerful. One reason is that their past numbers, which once gave them a majority, has also provided them a certain level of respectability, which has been carried through to the 1980's. Secondly, despite declines in the number of farm workers, agricultural production in France has steadily increased, changing the social significance of farmers to an economic importance.

A third explanation of why French farmers are so influential is the economic values they represent to France and the Common Market. 85% of the French soil is arable, making France not only a predominantly agricultural nation, but also the largest potential farming area in the

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<sup>6</sup>Tony Allan, Ed., Library of Nations: France (Chicago, Illinois: Time Life Books Pub., 1985), p. 92.

<sup>7</sup>Pragnell, p. 196.

Community.<sup>8</sup> Today, French agricultural production represents 27% of the European Market's agricultural output.<sup>9</sup> This of course gives the French government a substantial amount of power within the European Economic Community (EEC), which imports 66% of France's agricultural exports.<sup>10</sup> Often labeled as the "bread basket of Europe," France provides her EC partners a large percentage of their food supplies. Among countries that, not too long ago, experienced the pain, suffering and death caused by shortages of food, France finds its high levels of agricultural production to be quite influential. These high levels of productivity, however, have not always existed. For example, before 1939 France produced only ten to twelve million tons of grain per year, but by 1970 she was producing 36 million tons annually.<sup>11</sup> This increase in productivity is attributed to the rise in the use of modern machinery and technology, such as tractors and fertilizers. For example, in 1950 there were more than two million farms, but only 150,000 tractors in use; however, by 1973 there were 1.3 million farms and just as many tractors being used.<sup>12</sup> The European Community, through its CAP

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<sup>8</sup>Pragnell, p. 195.

<sup>9</sup>Jean-Yves Potel, L'Etat de la France et de ses habitants (Paris: La Decouverte, 1985), p. 350.

<sup>10</sup>Pragnell, p. 200.

<sup>11</sup>Allan, Ed., p. 91.

<sup>12</sup>Allan, Ed., p. 91.

program and financial assistance, has been the primary financial benefactor for France's agricultural modernization. This often leaves French policy makers in a conflict between serving the interests of the EC (its modernizer), and French farmers (a great source of its yearly GNP).

B. Organization of agricultural power:

"In every polity there exist means to bring the demands and desires prevalent in the society to the attention of the decision makers."<sup>13</sup> Having the ability to influence policy-makers is not sufficient. In order to be most effective, French agricultural workers also organize themselves.

Throughout the history of France, the organization of agricultural interests has undergone much internal conflict. During the Third Republic, many competing interest groups fought to influence and obtain subsidies from the government. But most failed under the Vichy Regime, which was dominated by Germany. After World War II, various subsidiary groups reasserted their autonomy. These agricultural pressure groups differed according to their varying interests, needs, and sometimes their geographical location. Consequently, during the Fourth Republic there existed over 500 different agricultural interest groups.

In 1946, the French government attempted to implement

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<sup>13</sup>Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Comparative Politics: Systems, Process, and Policy (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), p. 169.

the corporatist concept, when four large agricultural organizations were established with governmental assistance, in hopes of uniting various pressure groups and better combining their demands. The Federation Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (FNSEA), the Assemblée Permanente des Chambres d'Agriculture (APCA), the Confederation Nationale de la Mutualite, du Credit, et de la Cooperation Agricole (CNMCCA) and the Centre Nationale des Jeunes Agriculteurs (CNJA) all became the government's instruments for modernizing France's means of agricultural production.

In 1970, due to the FNSEA's quasi-governmental reputation, all four organizations were turned over to FNSEA officials and are now largely supported by public funds. However, many branches of the government still recognize the FNSEA as the only representative of farmers' interests. These four organizations, under the leadership of the FNSEA, have often been criticized for not representing the interests of French farmers, but rather simply reflecting those of the government. Rival organizations complain about governmental pressures, especially in regions where they threaten the FNSEA's dominance. Opposition by farmers to the policies of the French government and those of the Common Market, led to severe tensions within the FNSEA and the eventual emergence of rival groups. The failure of the FNSEA to organize and consolidate agricultural interests, represents the French

government's inability to assimilate corporatism into its political system.

The strongest of these opposition groups is the Mouvement de Defense des Exploitant Familiaux (MODEF), founded in 1959. MODEF represents the interests and demands of small agricultural producers. It's program is inspired by the Communist party and is anti-capitalist. However, it defends property owners and stands against the French government's "remembrement" policy, which it feels only works to the advantage of large agricultural producers, since only they can afford to buy land, while small farmers can only afford to sell theirs. Other opposition groups were also founded, such as, the Federation Francaise de l' Agriculture (FFA) in 1969, the Confederation Nationale des Syndicats de Travailleurs-Paysans (CNSTP) founded in 1981, and most recently the Federation Nationale des Syndicats Paysans (FNSP) in 1982. The existence of the various opposition groups, demonstrates the presence of pluralism in the French system. Nonetheless, they are still not as effective as the FNSEA, which continues to operate with government support. This on-going relationship between the FNSEA and the government represents a continued existence of corporatism, however because it co-exists with pluralism, the French system fits completely into neither model, and is therefore a quasi-corporatist state.

Since 1981, the Mitterrand government has been

pursuing a program of decentralization, which has opened up new access to other pressure groups, furthering pluralism in France. What has been France's policy toward agriculture since World War II? This increase in pluralism also raises some implications for Europe, possibly explaining the lack of unity with the EEC. The exploration of corporatism at the European Community level has somewhat been neglected by scholars, despite the fact that the EC has encouraged its development in member nations. The impact of quasi-corporatism in France upon the Community will be further discussed in Chapter III.

## CHAPTER III

### FRENCH AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND EC AGRICULTURAL POLICY

#### A. French policy:

After the tremendous destruction caused by World War II, France underwent some fundamental changes in her institutions, ideologies and means of production. This transformation was based upon three concepts: nationalization, planning and modernization. In 1957, the French government helped formulate and establish the European Economic Community. France hoped that, through its participation in the EEC, its agricultural production would attain a level of self-sufficiency, which it regarded as a vital part of France's national defense. French officials believed that the adoption of a free trade system within Europe would help hasten structural adjustments and the modernization of France's productive apparatus. Free trade would bring in competition for both the industrial and the agricultural producers, thereby forcing them to adopt new policies and means of production in order to remain competitive with foreign producers.

Establishing self-sufficiency was not enough to ensure France's national security, especially at a time when past experiences with Germany continued to haunt Frenchmen.

Robert Schuman, Foreign Minister of France, said that through economic unification he wanted to make sure that war between France and Germany "is not only unthinkable, but materially impossible."<sup>1</sup> The French government believed that by including West Germany in this European organization, the threat of another German attack would not only be curtailed, but in any case could at least be containable. Another reason for joining the EC was that as France began losing control of her colonial empire, the European market became her most viable substitute. The Community was more dynamic than France's colonial markets, which after independence were faced with internal structural problems. The Common Market eventually turned out to be a substitute for France's lost colonial markets.

B. EC policy:

The two major achievements of the Community are the establishment of a customs union and the development of a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Provisions for the Common Market called for the elimination of all custom duties between member states over a ten year transitional period. Traditionally, prior to the establishment of the EEC, the French market was safeguarded from foreign competitors by numerous protectionist measures making it somewhat more difficult for French producers to adapt to

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<sup>1</sup>Sydney Nettleton Fisher, France and the European Community (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1964), p. 84.

this custom free market. The French population, as a whole, was not too enthusiastic about this new policy orientation. But many French officials believed that a customs free market would promote the industrialization and technological advancement of France, which at this time lagged behind other European states.

### C. The Common Agricultural Policy:

It was not until January of 1962, four years after the establishment of the EEC, that the general terms for a Common Agricultural Policy were drawn up. Though the EC was founded upon liberal trading principles, the CAP was structured around the belief that protectionism was essential in the agricultural sector. Article 39 of the Treaties of Rome which established the EEC, set out the five objectives of the CAP:

1. To increase agricultural productivity;
2. To ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community;
3. To stabilize markets;
4. To assure the availability of supplies;
5. To ensure that supplies reach consumers at reasonable prices.<sup>2</sup>

The CAP was established upon three basic principles: free internal trade, preference for member countries and shared financial responsibilities. This program consists of two

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<sup>2</sup>Andrea Boltho, Ed., The European Economy: Growth and Crisis (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 234.

basic parts: a market policy, which guarantees prices, and a structural policy, which provides funding for improving agricultural efficiency. The market policy, or the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), prescribes prices for products, provides import levies, export subsidies and subsidies for domestic markets. The financing for these support systems is shared by all members of the Common Market through the organization's budget.

D. The CAP and French policy:

When the CAP was established, its objectives were quite congruent with those of the French government: both sought to increase the market capacity for producers and to improve their means of production. At this time, it could be said that French policy, especially in the agricultural sector, was a mere reflection of the EEC's program. According to author Udo Rehfeldt, "to some extent, the CAP (which has consisted mainly of price subsidies) has completed the French agricultural policy of 'structural reforms' inaugurated in 1960."<sup>3</sup> By providing subsidies to French farmers, the Community has helped the French government achieve its goals at a lower price than it would have incurred had it had to solely support its agrarian society.

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<sup>3</sup>Dudley Seers and Constantine Vaitsos, Integration and Unequal Development: The Experience of the EEC (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), p. 171.

CAP subsidies partially freed the French budget from the need to provide agricultural subsidies, thus enabling the French government to provide greater assistance to its industrial sector, which was being challenged by highly structured and technocratic West German manufacturers.

In 1957, well over 40% of the French population was involved in agriculture, giving farmers great political power. In light of their political strength, it is understandable why the French government sought the support of its agrarian society. French officials stressed to their farmers that membership in the Common Market and economic integration would provide great benefits to French agriculture. The French government also explained to farmers that participation in the EC would not only help unify Europe economically, but that political integration would also eventually occur. With the memories of good scarcities during the two World Wars still vivid in their minds, and their ambitions for a prosperous agricultural recovery, French farmers supported the conditions establishing the Common Market as well as the 1962 provisions which founded the CAP.

#### E. Problems with the CAP:

By 1970 the Common Agricultural Policy seemed to have failed. The cost of the policy to the Community's budget had rapidly risen since the mid-1960's. The cost of food to the consumer was forced up by farm prices, which were

far above the level at which competitive supplies were available from the world market. Yet despite these high prices, many EC farmers lived in poverty. Surplus production of several different products not only further burdened the community's budget, but also disrupted world agricultural markets. Increases in the EEC's membership changed the balance of interests represented in the CAP.<sup>4</sup> Employment in agriculture dropped from "22.7% of the civilian labor force of the six in 1958 to 11.5% in 1972."<sup>5</sup> Another problem faced by the CAP was the exchange rate variations of member country currencies.

In answer to these many problems facing the CAP, the Commission of the European Communities proposed a structural reform program which ensured that some five million Europeans would leave agriculture by 1980, taking some five million acres of land out of farming. EC officials believed this program would not only bring about a reduction of agricultural surpluses, but would also eventually raise the incomes of farmers. The Council of Ministers agreed on the main features of a revised structural policy in 1971. By April 1972, three directives were approved on farm modernization, the provision of retirement aids, and vocational guidance.

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<sup>4</sup>Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community on January 1, 1973.

<sup>5</sup>John S. Marsh, European Economic Issues (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), p. 10.

#### F. Conclusions:

Agricultural policies are usually made by governments for their own people. Therefore international decisions, such as those of the EC, about domestic farm policy are often regarded as of secondary importance. The European Community, in establishing the CAP, has had to contend with complex internal problems. The Common Agricultural Program was founded and operates upon a bargaining process where decisions are often the result of compromise. The CAP has made great contributions to the development of the Community, but since the 1970's, EC agricultural policy has tended to exemplify disunity, rather than convergence between Community members. This lack of unity can be attributed to changes which have taken place outside of the CAP, such as inflation and the expansion of EC membership. However, it is also due to the lack of corporatism within the political systems of member states. For example, as pluralism began infiltrating the corporatist system of France, it created various interest groups, each seeking to influence government policy in favor of its own interests. Even though pluralism has helped to develop a more democratic and open system in France, it has also caused disunity within the nation. EC member nations are therefore faced with the task of creating unity from within, before they can attempt to unite as a Community.

Today the interests of the European Community do not always coincide with those of its individual member nations. Therefore the French government, as well as others, must choose between the needs of Europe and those of its own people, as shown in the case studies in the following chapter. It is when nations choose to pursue their self-interests, or the demands of their pressure groups, that the welfare of the Common Market is threatened and the visions of a "United States of Europe" begin to fade.

## CHAPTER IV

### CASE STUDIES

Through the use of several case studies this chapter will demonstrate the influence power of French agricultural producers and the impact they have had upon the decision-making process of France and European integration.

#### A. 1965 case study:

Originally, French agricultural workers were committed to the idea of a Common Market, even prior to the ratification of the Treaty. It was not until 1965, eight years after the establishment of the EEC, that French farmers first opposed the Community's agricultural policy. Why then did these farmers change their views on the European Common Market? Changes in their attitudes and support can best be explained by the ignorance which existed among them. In the beginning, farmers, along with many other social classes, encouraged the unification of Europe, both economically and politically. A study made in early 1962 proved this to still be true, when "22 out of 100 peasants (farmers) were 'very much for' efforts aiming at the unification of Europe, and another 45 per cent were more 'for' than 'against' such efforts, with only 1 per cent

'very much opposed', 29 per cent had no opinion."<sup>1</sup> However, "when it came to making sacrifices in the process of unifying Europe, the peasantry (the farmers) was most outspokenly against any such ideas."<sup>2</sup> During the first stages of discussions concerning the Treaties of Rome, there was no direct communication between the French government and the people. In 1957, it appears that most French farmers were not fully aware that changes were in the making which would affect their own future more than most policy measures of the past. Government officials only emphasized to agricultural organizations the positive effects the EC would have upon farmers. Therefore, the initial support offered by French farmers was based upon misinformation and misconceptions. These agricultural producers could only become informed by directly involving themselves with, or rather being affected by, France's participation in the Common Market. Four years passed between the ratification of the Treaty in 1957 and the establishment of a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in 1962, and then a few more years passed before the impact of the CAP could be felt; all of this explains the delay in the farmers' reactions, which first occurred in 1965.

Throughout the Third and Fourth Republics, most of the agricultural population supported all major political

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<sup>1</sup>Hanns Peter Muth, French Agriculture and the Political Integration of Western Europe (The Netherlands: A.W. Sijthoff - Leyden, 1970), p. 178.

<sup>2</sup>Muth, pp. 178-179.

movements, favoring both conservative and left-wing parties. At the beginning of the Fifth Republic farmers began for the first time, consolidating their support of the right-wing, thereby nationalizing their political commitment. Until 1958, relations between farmers and President Charles de Gaulle had been quite smooth. In 1958, an overwhelming majority of French citizens supported de Gaulle, giving him 78.5% of their votes in the December Presidential election. However, after 1958, relations between agricultural workers and President de Gaulle's government became strained and bitter as farmers became enraged by official policies. Right from the beginning, French agricultural workers had always supported France's participation in the Common Market, believing they stood to benefit from it. French farmers were first angered by the government in July of 1958, when it imposed various new tax programs and decrees which would increase prices by 7%, all in order to hold the 1958 budget deficit to a maximum of 600 billion francs (or \$1.43 billion); this plan, however, at the same time reduced the previously promised 10% increase in wheat prices to 7%. As a result several demonstrations were held, but all had little impact or influence.

Farmers were best able to affect the government and its policies in 1965. Conflict of interests eventually reached their peak between June and December of that year. Original plans for financing a common EC agricultural

policy, adopted in 1962, called for member states to collect import levies separately, and then pay national assessments into a fund established by the Community to finance its farm program. This farm program had established the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), which financed two major farm programs:

- (1) EEC purchases of surplus farm products;
- (2) Export subsidies for the sale of EEC farm products to non-EEC countries, at world prices, which were below Community prices.

This original program was due to expire June 30, 1965. Therefore the Commission of the European Communities submitted a new program proposal to its member nations. Under the Commission's new agricultural policy, import levies would be paid directly to the EEC's agricultural fund, which in turn would be controlled by the European Parliament.

On June 15, 1965, French Foreign Minister, Maurice Couve de Murville pushed for a two and a half year delay in French plans for a Common Market in farm products, thereby delaying the Common Agricultural Policy. The French government felt that the Commission's new program was just another step toward "supranationalism" within the Community, and therefore, aiming to maintain some sovereignty, it chose to oppose it. Foreign Minister Couve de Murville proposed to the European Council that complete EC control of agriculture in the six member states be delayed from

July 1, 1967 to the end of 1969. At this time it was estimated that the French government's proposal would cost France's farm economy one million dollars between 1967 and 1969, the proposed two and a half year delay period. This of course made no sense to either French farm federations or the remaining five EC members, especially since France stood to gain the most from a Common Agriculture Program. French farmers began demonstrating and protesting in large numbers. Opposition to the French government's proposal was also expressed within the EC, especially by Italian Foreign Minister Fanfani.

After the Council failed to adopt an agricultural finance plan at its June 30th meeting, French officials announced on July 6th that France would boycott any future EEC meetings. On July 22, 1965, the Commission submitted a revised proposal to its six members, which was primarily designed to satisfy France. This new proposal included two major concessions to France:

- (1) The Commission dropped its earlier plans under which the EEC would have had an independent revenue from industrial duties and agricultural levies, beginning July 1, 1967.
- (2) The Commission accepted the French proposal made June 15th and 30th for the adoption of an agricultural finance plan to run from July 1, 1965 through December 31, 1969.

Much to the dismay of French farmers, the French government accepted this new program. Though French agricultural producers were unable to sway the demands of their government, later on that year they were able to create some

impact on its future European policies.

Producers, who continued to support the idea of economic integration, felt that Charles de Gaulle's government had not only damaged the unification process, but had also hurt them economically. Opposition to the government increased, which became detrimental to Charles de Gaulle, as he soon faced his second Presidential election in December of 1965. On December 3, 1965, only two days before the first ballot election, Charles de Gaulle, in a television address, pledged to work for the "economic union" of the EC. His statement had of course been directed to French farmers, who by this time no longer supported him. De Gaulle's attempt at regaining their votes was unsuccessful, and he therefore failed to obtain a majority vote on the first ballot round, receiving only 43.97% of the votes. However, on the second ballot, held on December 19th, de Gaulle was able to defeat his major opponent, Francois Mitterrand, with 55.2% of the vote. Though Charles de Gaulle won the 1965 Presidential election, he suffered a personal loss. Prior to the first ballot, de Gaulle believed an overwhelming majority of Frenchmen supported him; therefore his lack of support was not only a shock, but also a disappointment.

In 1965, "when de Gaulle and the agricultural syndicate, the FNSEA, were at loggerheads over the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), farmers voted against de Gaulle in the Presidential election and were held (statistically)

responsible for de Gaulle suffering the indignity of a second ballot."<sup>3</sup> The effects of the 1965 Presidential election could somewhat explain why de Gaulle's government pushed so hard in 1966 for high common price levels within the EEC. Once agreement was reached on common prices, it was estimated that France would gain the most from these increases. This government action might have been an attempt to compensate farmers for the loss they were thought to have incurred in 1965. It could also have been a means to regain their support before the 1968 Parliamentary elections.<sup>4</sup>

The events of 1965 demonstrate the first case during the Fifth Republic in which French farmers successfully utilized their power, through the use of demonstrations and their vote, in order to influence government policies. Though their actions had little impact upon the EC's adoption of a new agricultural financial plan for 1967, they did influence future agricultural decision making. At this time, farmers favored the integration of Europe, believing that it would benefit their economic status. Usually "farmers vote for the party or alliance which promises them most in material gains and which carries out

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<sup>3</sup>Philip G. Cerny and Martin A. Schain, Socialism, the State and Public Policy in France (New York: Methuen, Inc., 1985), p. 250.

<sup>4</sup>In June of 1968 the Gaullist part overwhelmingly won in Parliamentary elections. For more details on Parliamentary elections in France see Politics in France by Henry W. Ehrmann, Chapter IV, pages 100-135.

its promises through policy."<sup>5</sup> Therefore, in 1965 it was only natural that they favored EC policy over French policy.

B: 1968-69 case study:

Throughout 1968 and 1969 the French government once again found itself in conflict with its farmers. During the course of 1968 doubts concerning the adequacy of the existing Common Agricultural Policy began to emerge. On October 17, 1967, Dr. Sicco Mansholt, the member of the European Commission in charge of agriculture, addressed the Ministers of Agriculture of the Six. Dr. Mansholt explained to these ministers that even though the CAP had barely been established, it was already reaching the limits of its potential. Prices could not be raised to a level which would allow farm incomes to achieve parity with other sectors without creating large surpluses for many products. Income parity required a rapid growth of productivity in European agriculture and simultaneously a continuation in the reduction of the number of agricultural producers. Before EC members Dr. Mansholt concluded that only a fundamental change in the agricultural policy of the Community could solve their problems, and therefore recommended that there should be Community regional planning of agricultural production. In light of Dr. Mansholt's theories and ideas, the Ministers of Agriculture requested

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<sup>5</sup>Cerny and Schain, p. 251.

that he submit a full report to the Commission.

Dr. Mansholt's call for a Community structural policy heightened interest in the report he was preparing, but also brought about various other thoughts for a new approach. On October 18, 1968, Dr. Mansholt presented his findings and recommendations to the EEC Commission. By the end of December of 1968 the Commission had formally adopted the proposals and submitted them to the Council of Ministers. The specific goals of the plan were:

- (1) to reduce the outlay for price support operations;
- (2) to create larger, economically viable farms which warrant capital investment and yield an adequate return to their operators;
- (3) to use price policy to guide production in accordance with requirements;
- (4) to take five million hectares of agricultural land out of production;
- (5) to facilitate the movement of five million persons out of agriculture during the 1970's either by advanced retirement schemes or by training for other occupations; and
- (6) to improve marketing.<sup>6</sup>

Basically the plan suggested that the only practical way of increasing the incomes of farmers was through a structural reform of the production process. Dr. Mansholt recommended an increase in the size of farms and a reduction in the number of farmers.. It was believed that industries, which at the time enjoyed an annual growth rate in the GNP of 3%,

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<sup>6</sup>John S. Marsh, European Economic Issues (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976), p. 142.

could absorb this reduction of half the agricultural labor force. Larger and more productive farm units, however, would worsen the problem of surpluses. Therefore, the Commission recommended that between 1970 and 1980 some five million hectares of land be taken out of agriculture to be reforested, thus diminishing the EC's deficit in wood.

There were various reactions to the Mansholt Plan, but they were hardly enthusiastic. The Plan mostly served to persuade member governments of the need for a new approach in the CAP. The Community's farmers were among those most opposed and hostile to the Plan, which was quite understandable since it was designed to remove half of them from the land. French government officials reacted by stressing to other members that structural reform was the responsibility of all involved in the EC. Believing it had to work towards reformation, the French government appointed a commission, headed by Professor Georges Vedel, to study the future of French agriculture and make some recommendations to alleviate any possible problems. The commission's findings, known as the Vedel Report, was published in August of 1969. The first part simply presented an analysis of the problems facing French farmers. At the request of the French Minister of Agriculture, Jacques Duhamel, the Commission presented its proposed remedies in June of 1969, under the title: Proposals for a New Agricultural Policy. It was not until September of 1969, after three months had elapsed, that the document was

published, demonstrating the French government's reluctance to release a document which it knew its farmers would find as provocative as the Mansholt Plan.

The Vedel Report called for the following, over a fifteen year period:

- (1) a reduction in the number of farms in France from 1.5 million to 250,000, each of which would employ some two to four people;
- (2) a reduction in the active agricultural population from 3 million to 600,000 - 700,000;
- (3) a cut of 12 million hectares in the present total of 32 million hectares used for agriculture;
- (4) an increase in the minimum farm size from 20 to 80 hectares;
- (5) a doubling of average yields;
- (6) an increase in labour productivity by a factor of 5.5 times, and of farm output by 8 times, the present level.<sup>7</sup>

Three measures were proposed by which these conditions could be achieved: the reform of market-support procedure by placing land in reserve, social grants and grants for modernization.<sup>8</sup> Obviously the recommendations of the Vedel Report were closely aligned to those of the Mansholt Plan. The Vedel Report differed only in that it favored price reductions and a greater emphasis on the withdrawal of land from the agricultural sector.

In response to the Vedel Report, French farmers staged nationwide protests from November 13th through the

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<sup>7</sup>Marsh, pp. 154-155.

<sup>8</sup>Marsh, p. 155.

28th in support of higher prices for their crops and to oppose government plans to reduce the number of small farms. In an attempt to appease these farmers, French Minister of Agriculture Duhamel publicly stressed that the fact that the government had published the report did not mean that it had accepted its conclusions and proposals. By November 1969, in response to the ever-growing opposition by farmers, both the Mansholt Plan and the Vedel Report were revised. The eventual goals for each of these proposals were reduced in order to appease agricultural producers, yet the plans still attempted to make some structural changes. Though farmers were still not completely satisfied, they accepted these new proposals since their impact would not be as drastic as those of previous proposals.

In 1969, farmers once again proved that their consolidated voice and actions can influence the decision-making process of Europe and their own governments. By demonstrating their discontentment, European agricultural workers succeeded in reducing the level of structural reform pursued by the EC. More important in regard to this thesis is the influence French farmers had upon their government. Had it not been for their opposition to the Vedel Report, French government officials may have implemented policies which today could have had an impact upon the numbers in agriculture and their income level. Had French officials pursued the recommendations of the

Vedel Report, today's French agriculture population might have been even lower than 8% with an income level even lower than it is currently. In 1969, the French farmer's fight against the Vedel Proposal could also be regarded as a battle for self-preservation. Once again they proved they had the power to influence policy-making not only in France, but also within the European Community.

C. 1983 case study:

Another case, similar to the one of 1969, occurred in the Spring of 1983. In late April of 1983 the Mitterrand government came under severe attacks in a series of demonstrations organized and led by several different groups for various reasons. Students, businessmen, and farmers all held separate protests, some of which ended in clashes with the police. In 1982, agricultural revenue increased by 9.1%, but this increase was not equally distributed among farmers.<sup>9</sup> Wine and oleaginous producers gained the most, while fruit and vegetable farmers received the least. In response to this, by April of 1983, French agricultural producers began protesting that the EC's CAP policies and France's importation of food were the causes for declines in their incomes. On April 25th, farmers in Normandy attacked governmental offices in Caen, and unsuccessfully attempted to burn down these buildings; similar attacks on that same day were also launched in Auxerre and Burgundy.

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<sup>9</sup>"Le revenu agricole moyen a progresse de 9,1% en 1982," Le Monde (5 May 1983), p. 1.

On April 26th farmers blockaded transit points on the French-Belgian border in order to prevent imported food products from entering the French market. Loads of imported pork were dumped onto the roads and a convoy of 1,000 pig farmers, holding captive a West German meat truck, headed to Paris in order to protest EC policy.

French Minister of Agriculture, Michel Rocard, feared further protest and violence on the part of farmers, after EC officials failed to reach a resolution on European agricultural prices on April 28th. Indeed, after the 28th, French farmers increased their pressure upon the government by carrying out further manifestations. The farmers' push upon the government caused France's Prime Minister, Pierre Mauroy, to side with agricultural producers and pursue policies which reflected their interests. On April 28, 1983 Prime Minister Mauroy, while addressing the French National Assembly, made the following statement:

Here, all of us must be keen to depend agriculture to obtain the dismantlement of these farming subsidies. Unfortunately, today, it is not easy to undo what was once, not long ago, requested by France. However, all of us must fight to obtain satisfaction and we should be unanimous in defending the interests of France and its agriculture instead of creating problems as some are doing.<sup>10</sup> (Translation by Josette L. Hawkes)

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<sup>10</sup>"Les agriculteurs francais veulent bloquer les frontieres," Le Monde (29 April 1983), p. 10.

A partial reduction of the amount of French monetary compensations was officially confirmed by the government on May 3, 1983. This reduction would, in time, cause an increase in French agricultural prices, which definitely served the interests of France's farmers. Once again French agricultural workers were successful in influencing French officials into pursuing policies which were to their benefit. The events of 1983 caused the French government to choose the interests of its farmers over those of the European Community. The French government's commitment to its farmers continued throughout 1983, causing disagreements and disunity within the European Common Market.

Members of the EC met June 17th through June 19th of 1983 in Stuttgart, West Germany, in order to settle their budgetary disputes, which they had failed to resolve earlier that year. By 1983 the majority of the EC's budget was being used to provide compensation payments to European farmers. Disagreement among Community members occurred when Great Britain began arguing that it was pouring far more money into the EC budget than it was receiving. British officials explained that only countries with large agricultural sectors, such as France, were benefiting from the CAP, since they were receiving a fair return and, sometimes even more, on their investment into the Common Market budget. As a result, Great Britain requested that the EC refund it \$1.7 billion from its 1983 contributions

to the Community. EC officials agreed to repay \$670 million to Great Britain, but no comprehensive agreement was reached covering the future of the CAP budget. Officials did agree that Finance and Foreign Ministers of the member nations would meet in Athens, Greece, in December to resume negotiations.

By December, budgetary disputes also encompassed arguments between those who wanted to rectify EEC finances by cutting spending programs (this option being most favored by Great Britain;) and those who wished to continue these programs and raise more revenue, probably by increasing VAT (value added tax) contributions made by member countries (a solution promoted by France). The Athens summit, held December 4th through the 6th failed to yield any accord on a plan for reforming the finances of the EC. The budgetary disputes also prevented Spain and Portugal's request for entry into the Community from reaching the floor for consideration.

In 1983, the French government's renewed commitment to its agricultural producers is a major factor explaining France's continued opposition to EC budget reform proposals which did not reflect the interests of French farmers. This 1983 case demonstrates the ability of French agricultural producers to sway government opinion and policy in their favor. It also reinforces the concept that the pursuit of self-interest on the part of EC members undermines the goal of unifying Western Europe. Though in 1983 the French

government's policies favored its agricultural sector, it undermined the unity and further integration of Europe, since it caused a further delay of the EC's approval of Spain and Portugal's entry into the Common Market. Therefore, often when French policy-makers choose to side with France's farmers, it is at the cost of the Community and European integration. It is quite possible that had the events of 1983 not occurred, Spain and Portugal might have entered the European Common Market at an earlier date than they did in 1986.

#### D. Conclusion

Unlike in Corporatist systems, the French government has shown an inability to consolidate and maintain control over its nation's interest groups. In the case studies presented, French agricultural producers have demonstrated that they can effectively use their power to influence policy decisions in France. Through the use of their voting power, as in 1965, and demonstrations, as in 1968 and 1983, farmers have been able to persuade the decision-making process in their favor. Even state established and supported groups, such as the FNSEA, have demonstrated opposition to the government as seen in 1965. The activities of these farmers' groups represent the existence of pluralism in the French system. Corporatism does exist at times, for example government officials sometimes meet with leaders of these pressure groups in order to facilitate discussions and improve state/interest group

relations. Therefore, since some forms of corporatism can be found along side pluralism, the French system can not be categorized into either model and should therefore be labeled a quasi-corporatist state.

## CONCLUSION

States are founded and operate under various types of governmental systems. Societies, made up of different people with diverse interests and ideas, often organize themselves into many groups, known as interest groups, in order to most effectively express their demands to their government. It is this relationship between governments and interest groups that the theories of corporatism and pluralism seek to explain. Pluralists believe that there is an unspecified number of interest groups within a political system. These pressure groups operate voluntarily, are self-determined, competitive and nonhierarchically ordered. Groups are neither created nor controlled by the state. In a pluralist system there is no monopoly of representation within respective interest categories. The best example of the pluralist model is the United States, where members of society are free to organize themselves and are self-guided and controlled.

Corporatism represents a completely different set of ideas. Corporatists believe that the interests of society are organized by the state into a limited number of groups, which are noncompetitive and hierarchically ordered. A monopoly of representation exists within respective categories. The government also controls the inner operations

of these groups and the manner in which they choose to express their demands.

Many scholars have often categorized France as a corporatist nation. In some ways the French system is characterized by some traits of corporatism, for example in its agricultural sector, The Federation Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitant Agricoles (FNSEA) was organized and developed by the state in 1946 in order to represent the interests of farmers. Though today it is no longer under government control it still operates under its favor. Another example of corporatism in France is the existence of open communication between government officials and leaders of pressure groups. However, the characteristics of corporatism are often outweighed by pluralistic ones. For example, the interests of the agricultural sectors are not represented by just one group, various groups have been established sometimes working in conjunction, at other times opposing one another. Nor are these interest groups under government control, as seen in the three case studies presented in Chapter IV. They often use the power and effects of strikes, demonstrations, public propaganda, and personal contacts to influence the decision-making process in their favor. All of these traits of the French system represent characteristics of pluralism. Therefore, since corporatism in France co-exists with pluralism, it would be wrong for scholars to label this a corporatist system.

Instead France should be labelled as a quasi-corporatist state.

Defining France as a quasi-corporatist nation raises some implications for Europe and possible explanations for the lack of unity within the EEC. After World War II France, along with other European nations founded the European Communities, in hopes of eventually integrating both their economic and political systems. The dream was to form a "United States of Europe" by 1992. So far however, their desire for unity has been undermined by the lack of cooperation and support within the organization. Quasi-corporatism offers a possible explanation for this lack of congruency. For example in the French agricultural sector, the state has often found itself having to choose between the interests and demands of its farmers and those of the EC. The case studies presented in Chapter IV demonstrate how influential French agricultural producers can be in the formulation of policies that concern them. With the Community at one end of the scale and domestic interest groups at the other end, the state has become the pivotal force that often determines which way the scale will lean. It is when interest groups succeed in persuading their government to tip the scale in their favor that the unity and integration of the European Community is undermined. If EEC members are truly committed to economically and politically integrating themselves by 1992, they need to fully support the Community and possibly

promote corporatism within their nations in order to better control the interests of their societies.

The French model suggests that the corporatist/pluratist concept is incomplete. These two approaches stand at opposite ends of the spectrum. However, as seen in this study of France and its agricultural interest groups, there is a need for a theory which lies in between these two approaches...possibly quasi-corporatism.

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