

Oral History Interview

with

Jules Moch

During the years of the Truman administration, was Minister of Public Works in the French Government, 1945-47; Minister of the Interior and Vice-Prime Minister, 1947-49, and in Bidault Cabinet, 1949-50; and Minister of Defense, 1950-51.

Independence, Missouri

April 29, 1970

by Richard D. McKinzie and Theodore A. Wilson

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WILSON: We are interested in the efforts after the Marshall plan was initiated to provide support for non-Communist labor activities. There were labor advisers, of course, attached to both the United States Embassy and to the ECA mission under Governor [Averell] Harriman. Were they aware of the problem of Communist penetration of labor unions, and did they encourage...

MOCH: Yes. But you know, it's very difficult to answer. I must be a little diplomatic. I've seen that often the propaganda went against the object. For example, I told once to General

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[Dwight D.] Eisenhower, whose friend I was, when he was President of the United States, that the "Voice of America" in Rumania helped the Rumanian Communists. Yes. Because they took as speakers only men of the old Fascist movement, and so it was very easy for the Communist government to say, "Look what is in America. America has only the Fascists from here." And so it worked against the cause, because it was not a good understanding of the situation. I think in the matter of labor unions, there was a man in Paris -- I don't remember the name now -- who was one of the heads of the American delegation of labor unionists. He lived in Paris -- in Versailles, and helped the non-Communist labor unions, but who helped so openly that it was a pleasure for the Communists to say, "You see, they are paid by the Americans."

WILSON: Yes, yes.

MOCH: It must be made much more discreetly than it was.

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WILSON: It's fairly obvious from the records we've seen that there was difficulty between American labor officials who came out of this non-political tradition, that is, emphasizing collective bargaining, but not emphasizing political action. Of course, the European tradition they found rather difficult, I think, to work with.

MOCH: Yes. In France the fundamental document in the labor movement was published in France in 1906, sixty-four years ago. In it is written that the labor unions had to work for better wages and for better conditions of work for the laborer, and not let the political parties or sects interfere with their job. Since that time the non-Communist labor movement was officially, absolutely independent from the Socialist movement. In reality, it was not absolutely true. In fact, the same man who headed in a little town the non-Communist labor union was a member of the Socialist Party, but when he attended

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the Socialist sessions, he did not speak for the labor movement, and when he came to the meeting of the labor movement, he didn't speak of the Socialist movement. That you didn't know; and that was exploited by the Communists. They said quite openly that the Communist C.G.T. [Confederation generale du travail] was under Communist direction. A man like Fajon, who is the General Secretary of the Communist C.G.T., was a member of the politburo of the Communist Party of France. Everyone knew that Leon Jouhaux, who was head of the non-Communist labor union, and who was politically near to the Socialists, never would have said that he was a Socialist and would never have been under our direction.

MCKINZIE: In the United States in 1947 when the discussion came up about Marshall plan and European aid and reconstruction, the public stance of most American officials was that France would never

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survive the winter of 1947-1948, as an independent nation, without some kind of American interim aid. It was understood that France and Italy were in serious trouble in 1947 and 1948 as a result of the Communist threat. I have since seen some Europeans who say that that really wasn't true, that the people in the United States tended to blow up the Communist menace to something larger than in fact it was. Of course, in 1947 you were in a position to tell how strong the Communist menace really was.

MOCH: I was Minister of Public Works and Transportation in the [Charles] De Gaulle Government of Liberation, from 1945 to November '47 -- two years. In November of '47, in the middle of the first wave of Communist revolutionary strikes, they asked me to go from the Technical Ministry of Public Works, where I worked early as an engineer, to the Ministry of Interior. I took the Ministry of Interior in November '47, in the middle of the wave of strikes, and I kept it until 1949. Then

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I went in as Defense Minister at the time of the war in Korea. I was always at a good post! No, the danger was not so great, and I speak quite frankly.

I will give you an example. It will be a rather long five minutes, but it will show you better than a greater speech, what is a part of the Communist movement, not all of it. I was at that time a member of Parliament for South France, the country of the vineyards -- French wines. I had a village whose municipal county was 100 percent Communist. And I was astonished because this village was the richest of the Department, because the earth was good and they had water. They made three times more wine than the ordinary district; and they were very rich people. And it was the landowners, themselves, who were the members of the Communist municipal county. So, I tried to understand why; and I went to the archives and I learned that in 1851, a century before, this village

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revolted against Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, when he was President of the Republic and became Emperor. The people of the village took their hunting rifles and marches in the direction of the capital of the Department, Montpellier. They were arrested by half a dozen gendarmes, taken to prison and all were condemned to be deported to New Caledonia or to South Algiers. Well, then they became fearful in their village.

They came back after an amnesty; then they had the right to have a pension, which was very important, as they had been deported as victims of coup d' etat. The pension went then to their sons, a pension which was as we say, a paper like the papers you have in your Bibliotheque here, as a doctor's certificate or certificate deporte, and so on. This paper was in every house in an honored place. Since then they have thought that their duty, the duty of a son or a grandson, or the great-grandson, is to be as leftist as possible. They were Republican under

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the Second Empire; they became radical at the beginning of the Third Republic; then Socialists; then in 1920, Communists. Ideologically, they were nothing; they were leftists and they were democrats.

The following is even much more curious. In 1951 or 1952, a century later, they became so rich that they decided not to work, but to import workers. They had no salaried workers in that village; they decided to import workers. These were workers of the earth. The workers of the earth in France belonged to the Communist labor union, C.G.T. When they arrived in this village and they saw that the landowners were Communist, they tore up their membership cards in the C.G.T. and they formed a unit of the C.G.T.-Force Ouvriere which was Socialist -- in protest against the landowners being Communist. At the next municipal elections they made a list of workers against a list of landowners. As the landowners were Communist, the workers were Socialist, and the workers had the help of the Catholic priests, too.

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They put one or two Catholics on their list, and they have beaten the Communist landowners. Since then, this village has been no longer a Communist municipality.

I have given you such detail to show you that of the five million voters of the Communist party, there are maybe four million who don't know the ideology of the party. There are one million, including three hundred thousand members of the Party, who know it and who are strong Communists. So the Communist danger was always over-estimated in America. This little village council was not a danger for the Republic, even if it were Communist, you see. In fact, the danger would have been a political one, and only if the key posts, as in Czechoslovakia, would have been in the hands of Communist ministers.

In Czechoslovakia, in February 1948, the Prime Minister was a Communist. They had a coalition government, with the [Eduard] Benes Party, the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. But the Communists had a Prime Minister;

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they had the Minister of Interior; they had the Minister of Information; and they had a fellow-traveler -- not member of the Party -- as the Minister of Defense. He was General [Ludvik]

Svoboda; he entered the Party afterward, and he is now President of the Republic there. With those four men they made their coup d'etat. The Minister of the Interior ordered the police not to intervene; the Minister of Defense gave rifles to the workers; and the Minister of Information called on the workers to march against the President. In three days, without one wounded or one killed, they took the only country of the East which, first, had interest in the Allies, and second, had a long tradition of democracy seen first in the fifteenth century. It is a country which was less good for Communist influence.

In France, the situation was quite the same. The proportion voting for the Communist Party was the same as in Czechoslovakia, but the difference is that the Communists were ousted in 1947 from the government as I told you before. And at the

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time of the biggest strikes, in November '48, the Prime Minister was the Radical Socialist, Henry Queuille; the Minister of Defense was a Socialist, Paul Ramadier; the Minister of Interior was me; and the Under Secretary of State for Information -- we had no Minister of Information -- was [Francois] Mitterand. So we had four men we were able to resist without difficulty.

WILSON: For a short time, we seem to recall, in October and November of 1947 you were Minister of Reconstruction. Is that correct?

MOCH: Yes.

WILSON: What was the nature of that position?

MOCH: Ramadier's government fell two times. His government was formed when [Vincent] Auriol was elected President in January 1947. We were at that time twenty-two ministers, of which there were five Communists, as I told you. Four of the five Communists were ousted later [in May 1947]. Then we had to take the ministries; for

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example I took from a Communist Minister the Ministry for Construction that I added to the Ministry of Transport and Public Works at that time. But then in October '47, for a reason I don't know very well because I was in America at that time, I learned that all of the ministers had given their resignations, and that Ramadier had formed a compressed cabinet of eleven members only. I was in Martinique or Guadeloupe at that time and I received a telegram saying that I had been put in charge of my old department of Public Works and Transport plus Construction, plus National Plan, plus National Economy -- all the technical departments.

MCKINZIE: Yes. The plan which we know as the [Jean] Monnet plan for modernization and expansion of French industry was in operation, or at least it was being discussed and began to be

implemented, before the Marshall plan. Do you recall having any feelings about the effect of the Marshall

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plan on this inherently French plan, the Monnet plan for modernization? Did the Marshall plan conflict with that in any way?

MOCH: As far as I can remember, because I was not mixed in the negotiations, there were negotiations between [Maurice] Petsche and [John W.] Snyder at the time of these questions. As far as I remember the Marshall plan gave us the means to go farther on the lines of the French plan.

I give you an example, which will show to you what difficulties we had. During the two years I was Minister of Public Works, we rebuilt every day three big bridges. I call a bridge something that is more than forty meters, fifty yards, in length.

MCKINZIE: Yes.

MOCH: Not the little bridges in the d' Orsay. We had to build every day three bridges; no country in the world had ever done such a thing. That

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means a thousand bridges a year. We had 9,600 big bridges destroyed in France, so it was a program of ten years, you see. In building three bridges a day, we had ten years work. We went on with our plan, but with the help of the Marshall plan.

MCKINZIE: With the counterpart funds?

MOCH: Yes, yes, the counterpart funds. We had our plans before the Marshall plan; we knew exactly what we should do, and never did the Americans ask you to do this rather than that. They gave us money to do as we liked, as we thought was necessary.

MCKINZIE: You have indicated that you weren't pressured by the Americans who were in the French mission. There was some discussion in the American mission, about whether or not there ought to be some emphasis on reconstruction of housing in France...

MOCH: Ah, yes.

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MCKINZIE: ...and evidently that caused some little discussion at the time.

MOCH: Yes. The position of the French Government was that our people had so much suffered from the war that they could suffer from bad lodgings for some years, and that it was more

important to give top priority to the construction of the harbors, of the bridges, of the railways, and of the roads; a second priority to the factories, and only a third priority to housing. We were absolute in our decision to do this, even if it was cruel for the population. The population would have preferred, surely, your idea of beginning the building of houses, but then we would have our houses, but no factories, no work, no employment, no construction. We thought that the logical way was -- one, all the transport; two, the factories; and three, the houses. We stuck to that.

WILSON: Would you say that these decisions were made primarily on the logic of economic grounds, and that perhaps you as French Ministers, as the

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French Government, better understood the political effects of these decisions on the French people than the Americans did? Do you think perhaps the Americans were somewhat too concerned about getting things that the people could see had direct benefits?

MOCH: You say much better what I dared not to say. Yes. We had to explain that, but it was really easy. I had a hundred meetings with the population, saying you are in slums, you are in iron sheds, but isn't it more important that you have bread, that the bread can come, that we rebuilt the railway which comes to your village, and that afterwards there will be the factory where you will work and so on; and they understood that very well.

MCKINZIE: One problem which always comes up when you talk to Americans who were a part of the French mission is the concern they had for the French attitude toward productivity. There was

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a lot of talk about increasing productivity, that in order for France to ultimately have a high standard of living, the important thing, as you have indicated, is to increase productivity. At the same time, a lot of Americans thought that there was a kind of French characteristic which resisted the change that would be necessary to bring about increased productivity. Do you think that's an American prejudice, to attribute this kind of character trait to Frenchmen, that they are afraid of the change that would be necessary?

MOCH: I think that it is not real. I think that the French workers are able to adapt themselves to the new methods. Now the productivity is higher in France than in Germany, and in England; it is lower than in America, but that is because you have much more mechanization than we had, and we will catch up. No, we had no difficulty. The French people are clever enough.

WILSON: If not the French people, what about French

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industrialists? Were they...

MOCH: Ah, there we had more difficulty. We had more difficulty because they wished to be master of the construction of their factories. And when the Government said, "Yes, but you must make modernizations," they said, "We have not enough money to do that, and we are accustomed to work," so and so. The difficulty was bigger on the side of the owner of the factories than on the side of the people. But you know, you cannot imagine the difficulties. I will tell you a little story to put you in the mind we had then.

We had our coal mines absolutely destroyed, and we wanted coal. It was a first necessity. Well, to have coal we were obliged to have wooden supports in the mines. But all the wood had to come from other countries, or from South France. And we couldn't bring it to the coal mines, which are in the north of France, because the bridges were destroyed, and the trains couldn't go. To,

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rebuild the bridges all in iron, or in cement, in both cases we wanted coal. So it was a vicious circle; to have the bridges, we wanted coal, but to have coal we wanted the bridges. So I had the idea to make temporary bridges in wood, where no coal was necessary. But on bridges of wood the train must go very slowly, and to get again up to speed they need more coal. And I asked the engineers to make diagrams for each railway line, taking into account the number of trains a day and the average speed of the trains, and to calculate in each case what would be more economical from the point of view of coal, to make a temporary bridge in wood, which would last ten years, and to use more coal during those ten years to get the speed, or to make an iron bridge. And it was this calculation which was a basis of the fundamental ten-year plan I spoke to you about. So, we had difficulties that are impossible to imagine in a country like yours, which never was destroyed by the war.

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WILSON: Yes. We hope to be able to express in our study some of these great difficulties. To put it perhaps in another way, it's apparent from our research that most Americans and Europeans working on the problem recognized at the end of the war that coal was the one most important...

MOCH: The key point.

WILSON: ...the key point, yes.

You mentioned earlier that you did get considerable supplies of coal for a time from Poland. There was, as I recall, some increasing pressure or difficulty, perhaps from the American side, to cut off trade with countries controlled by the Soviet Union. What was the French position on trade with Eastern bloc countries?

MOCH: No. As long as I was involved with these questions, that means until November '47 -- because when I was at the Interior I had another job to do -- we had no difficulties. We received

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not very much, just a little, coal from the Poles. It was a strange thing, because there were also trains in Germany going from West to East, when the Polish trade went from East to West.

WILSON: Yes, yes.

MOCH: It was economically stupid.

WILSON: Yes. I think I recall the problem relating to UNRRA aid to Poland and to the Ukraine. Did you get any of the timber that was supposedly shipped from the Ukraine to Western European countries in return for UNRRA aid?

MOCH: I have no remembrance of that.

WILSON: There was some conflict then with the American Government about that?

MOCH: I don't know.

MCKINZIE: Once the Marshall plan was set up, and the organization had put itself together, some people have said that the big value of the thing

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was that it worked outside the traditional diplomatic channels, that it wasn't caught up in the French Foreign Ministry and it wasn't caught up in the American Department of State. It is said that as an organization it worked better because it didn't have these ties with traditional foreign affairs people. Does that mean anything to you?

MOCH: No. Because when the Marshall plan was working fully, I was no longer a Minister involved with technical questions. I was Minister of the Interior, and I didn't get involved with that. No.

WILSON: You became Minister of Defense at a very critical time.

MOCH: Yes. I became Minister of Defense at the beginning of the Atlantic Pact [NATO], at the time of the war of Korea, and a time when the pessimist thought that a new war with Russia

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would come in three months, and the optimists said in six months.

WILSON: I've just been reading a very interesting book by C. L. Sulzberger of the New York Times...

MOCH: I knew him -- I've seen him.

WILSON: ...in which he prints several interviews with you. These are his diaries.

MOCH: Dealing with me? I forgot.

WILSON: Yes. And I think there were perhaps two that he uses in this period.

MOCH: You must give me the name of the book...

WILSON: I will.

MOCH: ...I will try to find them.

WILSON: He prints again and again the speculations on the part of Americans and on the part of European officials about the possibility of war with the Soviet Union, something that we perhaps

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don't appreciate. There were as you said the speculations -- in three months war will come, or in six months; this was the general feeling perhaps.

MOCH: No. I had not that feeling.

WILSON: Yes.

MOCH: I had absolutely not that feeling. At that time you had atomic monopoly. The Soviets had not exploded their first atomic device, and I thought it was impossible for the Soviets to attack, and also that they had no intention to attack.

WILSON: Yes. They would perhaps push as far as they could until there appeared a risk of war?

MOCH: Exactly. As they did some years later.

MCKINZIE: As Minister of Defense in that early period, do you think the pressures from America for French rearmament were more than what the French were willing to...

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MOCH: No. I must say that I had a visit which astonished me a little. It was a visit of General [Omar] Bradley, who came to see what we were doing. I arranged a great meeting at a round table where I sat with him and with twenty of my top engineers and officials, and we explained which way we were going, and he was fully satisfied. He made excellent speeches afterward. We had no difficulty at that time. I can tell you when De Gaulle led us out of NATO. We had in Germany only two French NATO divisions, nothing more, and all told we had in France and in Germany, five divisions, from which the two in Germany were under NATO command, the three in France being independent. That was the situation when we went out from NATO under De

Gaulle's order. When I was Minister of Defense we had in Germany, five divisions, on a war footing, ready to go to war in one hour. We had, in France, five other divisions ready to fight in three days; that makes ten. I promised to have fifteen divisions one year later, and

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twenty divisions two years later. That was judged the maximum we thought we could equip with modern materiel. So I had absolutely no difficulties of that kind. I had other difficulties in 1950, with [Dean] Acheson and Marshall on German rearmament.

WILSON: Yes, of course.

MOCH: It was another question. I went until the eve of the break. I remained a good friend of both; but the French Government was unanimously against German rearmament for the duration of all the inter-Allied agreements. We thought it was not necessary, that we had enough troops and that the rearmament of Germany was a kind of scandal. One week I had to fly six times over the ocean. One day I had an appointment with Acheson and Marshall in Washington; the day after that there was a session of the French Council of Ministers in Paris. The day after that I came back with the answer of the French Council of Ministers,

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and I made that trip six times. I didn't know how to sleep.

WILSON: It's a very difficult time made more complex by the commitments at the time, particularly of France to its overseas dependent territories. I think I recall there was some difficulty within the Government about support and maintenance of troops both in Indo-China and in North Africa.

MOCH: No. It was not at the same time. In Indo-China the troubles were from '47 to '54...

WILSON: Yes.

MOCH: ...and in North Africa from '54 to '61. The trouble in Africa began just after [Pierre] Mendes-France made his maiden speech, the first day of his Government, saying, "Give me thirty days. In thirty days I will make peace in Indo-China, or I will leave the Government."

WILSON: That's right.

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MOCH: In thirty days he made the peace with Indo-China, and we all were happy, because the war in Indo-China never was popular in France. It was called by the people "the dirty war," and never did we send any draftees. Never; we couldn't. We sent to Indo-China only the Foreign Legion and volunteers, but not one draftee.

WILSON: Yes. Would it be fair to say that there was more opposition by the Socialists to the war in Indo-China than by other groups?

MOCH: Yes. But, you see, we had no interest in keeping the French mines, the French operations, and to give them to their old owners. We preferred to pay some money to them, than to make war in order to get them back. My personal position, as Minister of Defense, that I have explained in the Council of Ministers, which was also my experience in the underground in France from '40 to '43, was, and is always, that a modern army with all its lorries, its motorized guns,

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and so on, and with the tons and tons of materiel they want everyday and everyday, cannot win against guerrilla-fighting people when those have the help of the population. That is absolutely impossible. You can keep a village; you can keep another village. In the daylight you can keep even the road from one village to the other, but in the night it goes to the guerrillas. It is impossible to achieve victory with a modern army against guerrillas when the guerrillas have the help of all the population, and that was the situation on Indo-China. I speak only of the time of the French involvement.

WILSON: Well, that's a very interesting observation. Your experience and the experience, I suppose, of many thousands of others in the resistance taught you this.

MOCH: You see, they say now there were a million that were in the underground, but at the time of the underground we were not more than twenty

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thousand. There were five hundred thousand Germans permanently stationed in France. Yet, on the day of the Normandy landing all the German army was paralyzed. The railway lines were blown up; the electricity was cut off; and the divisions of the German army, which had offered to go behind the beaches where Eisenhower made the landing, never arrived. It was an absolute paralyzation, and we were one against twenty-five. But after we had blown up a railway line we went into the neighboring village, and we became the son or the cousin of the landowner. We took the dress of peasants, and we worked the fields until we met again to blow another line, or to make another expedition.

MCKINZIE: On this general subject about the fighting in Indo-China, some American officials, I gather, argued against the French commitment there at the time. One of the arguments was that Marshall plan aid was less than half of the amount of money that the French Government spent on the Indo-China war

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during the time that the Marshall plan was in effect.

MOCH: It's possible. I don't know.

MCKINZIE: And these American officials say that if that hadn't happened, if there hadn't been an Indo-China war, that the American aid would have had far more effect. As I understand it, the French comeback was that the Indo-China war was fought for the whole Western community and not merely for France, and that the United States lacked an appreciation of that fact.

MOCH: It's very difficult to answer. I was personally hostile to the war in Indo-China, but I remained in the Government, nevertheless. I tried in the Government to slow the thing down.

WILSON: One of the things which baffles us in our research so far is the extent to which American officials hoped to have aid, economic assistance, bring about European union. We found that there were several efforts on the part of groups,

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Socialists for example, and on the part of other private groups to bring about some movement for European unity before the Marshall plan started. How would you assess this kind of thing?

MOCH: Yes. The idea of a European community was not large in France. The Marshall plan entered in operation in '48, and the first agreement on the European Coal and Steel Community was in 1947, if I remember. It was a little before. At that time, I must say there were two different directions of thought in France. One was the hate for Germany. You must understand this -- that the losses we had in the two world wars were so high that in proportion to your population it would mean thirteen million deaths in America, where you had in the two world wars half a million, or twenty-six times more in proportion to the population. So there is not a Frenchman, who has not had a son or a father killed, or deported and burnt, and so on. So there was a hate against Germany after the war that you cannot imagine here.

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For example, in my constituency in South France, Montpellier, I had to fight against one of the hotels that had announced that it did not admit Germans. This was like what the Germans had done to the Jews. I had to explain to them that this was a new racism and I was against racism in any case. If I was the victim of it, I was on the other side. They had not the right to do such. If I tell you this little story, it is to explain the public opinion, because public opinion was in favor of this. When a German car came into France at that time, and when a German-speaking Frenchman asked his way, the peasant who was asked it, gave a false way on purpose, saying this man has occupied our country.

That was one thing. The second was that in the intellectual classes, there were two ideas. The first idea was that we fought three wars in less than one century with Germany -- 1870, 1914, and 1939 -- it's enough. We must arrive at a definitive arrangement. As a second idea, if

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we do not arrange to include Germany in some kind of Europe, the Russians will take West Germany away from us, because they can offer the reunification of Germany, since they hold East Germany, and they will offer, sooner or later, unification and a neutral status like Austria's; and we cannot accept that. So we must bind Germany. The first approach to European organization was this idea of binding West Germany with us.

Perhaps I should explain that. Robert Schuman, who was a man dedicated to that idea (I will tell you in a moment why), began to negotiate with Monnet's European Coal and Steel Community. I was in many Governments [cabinets] with him. I once said to him, "We are friends. But the difference between us is that my family went away, in 1870, to avoid being German, and your family remained under German rule; and so you took your studies at the University of Heidelberg, when I took mine in Paris." You understand he was quite assimilated.

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WILSON: Yes.

MOCH: He was German under German occupation. He became French in 1918, naturally; he was thirty and some years old. So he had connections with Germany as with France. Then, with the technical help of Monnet he built the European Coal and Steel Community, and afterwards he helped build the Euratom and the Common Market programs, and so on. I think, from the point of view of an engineer, that with the new technology of automation, of computers, and so on, that a country must have a big market. There was a time where the country could remain a village, with surrounding fields. The frontier now corresponds to the beginning of industrialization. With the exceptions of America, Russia, and China, the markets are too small to correspond to the expansion of modernization of industry. I take the example of aviation. We made in France very good planes. Caravelle is the best carrier in the world. The copy made by Douglas, the DC-9, is worse than Caravelle, being noisy and

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narrow. I don't like to fly on these lines.

WILSON: Yes.

MOCH: I am a pilot with three thousand hours piloting, so I know a little about the question. But when we wish to go from the subsonic, middle-range carrier to the supersonic middle-range carrier we are obliged to unite with Britain, because it was too expensive for us. The Concorde,

which shall be a marvelous success, is a product of the unified efforts of the British and French air industry. And if we go to the supersonic long-range carrier, we must have Germany in it. It must be European. So that the building of the world shall be the building of four or five big markets: the American one; the Russian one; later when they are better in this thing -- the European one; and then even later, the Chinese, and so on. Then we will arrive at a world agreement.

WILSON: Yes.

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MOCH: The next step is the market of two hundred to two hundred fifty million inhabitants, instead of the forty or fifty million of each of the states today.

MCKINZIE: You felt this way in 1947 and '48...

MOCH: Yes. I was against the European Defense Community. I was against it because it was the car before the horse. If you want seriously to build something, what is the approach. The approach first is to put away the customs barriers inside the community. Secondly, one must harmonize the social charges or taxes, because if the charges are not the same as for the country that has the best social laws, it will be handicapped, and will be invaded by the products of the other. Third, one must harmonize the fiscal charges. Fourth is the need to harmonize the external policy; and fifth, when you have the harmonizing of external policy, one can then build a European army. That is the fifth step, not the second one, you see.

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WILSON: At the time you were serving as Minister of Public Works, what were your impressions about American policy towards Germany? There are differing views in the United States about the intent of the United States to hold Germany down, the Morgenthau plan and all of that -- to establish some pastoral state -- or at a very early stage to encourage Germans and Germany, perhaps within some larger European community, to rebuild and attain rather quickly the 1936 industrial status.

MOCH: Yes. If we would have been clever, we would have imposed on Germany rearmament in 1945, because the two countries which alone were not to rearm have made progress much faster than all the others, I am referring to Japan and Germany, you see. No. That is a joke. No. It was impossible.

The rich country which must give money must give it discreetly. It must not try to impose its will on an independent country. We never would have accepted being an American colony or something like that, even if we are the best

[39]

friends of America. In Germany, it was the same. It was impossible to impose a pastoral system (that was an idea of Morgenthau as far as I remember); that was impossible. What I would say about our policy is that you did in Germany what we refused to do in France; you gave a top priority to housing in Germany. The publicity on it was not in your favor. I remember the first time I was in West Berlin I saw only ruins and mountains of wreckage everywhere; but the second time, instead of that, I saw new houses and great places built with American help, so and so, a million dollars for this building and so on. And that made not a good impression.

WILSON: This has been very enjoyable and enlightening for us. Very good. Thank you.

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