

TIME

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A letter from the PUBLISHER

James R. Shepley

TIME has had frequent occasion in the past few years to speculate on the future of France and the rest of the world *après De Gaulle*. When mirage became reality on the evening of April 27, our correspondents were well-prepared to cover the cataclysm. Sensing in advance that France would say *non* to the general, Paris Bureau Chief William Rademaekers, a veteran European reporter, had assigned six correspondents—all French-speaking—to cover France's leading politicians, four major provincial cities and news sources in the capital.

At 4:40 p.m. that Sunday, about 13 hours after TIME had closed in New York, Rademaekers called the editors to warn that, with a third of the vote counted, De Gaulle seemed likely to lose the election. With that, a crew of editors, writers and researchers set out to describe and dissect the fall of De Gaulle in a two-page report that appeared in last week's TIME. No other newsmagazine carried a line on that epochal event.

This week's cover story on Georges Pompidou, De Gaulle's likeliest successor, goes beyond the present political turmoil within France to examine the reasons for the general's defeat, the mood of France in 1969 and the prospects for change. The story was written by Contributing Editor William Doerner and edited by Senior Editor Jason McManus, who, as TIME's Paris-based Common Market correspondent from 1962 to 1964, covered Britain's first bid to join Europe and De Gaulle's abrupt rejection of that effort.

For journalists, covering President De Gaulle was almost as arduous and frustrating an assignment as reporting on mainland China from Hong Kong. One of the most expert Gaulologists in the business is Curtis Prendergast, now TIME's London

bureau chief, who contributed to this week's cover. During a nine-year term in Paris, Prendergast accompanied the general on ten tours of France's provinces and two dramatic descents on war-torn Algeria, as well as on ceremonial visits to Senegal, Mauritania, Greece, Mexico, the West Indies and Cambodia.

TIME's first cover story on De Gaulle ran in the issue of Aug. 4, 1941, when he was the obscure, if fractious, leader-in-exile of Nazi-occupied France. Since then he has



FIRST OUI.



LAST NON.

been the subject of nine other TIME cover stories and appeared last when he said *non* to devaluation of the franc. His successor could hardly match the general's flair for making news—or, for that matter, his disdain for the press. Reported Paris Bureau Chief Rademaekers: "One covered De Gaulle from a distance—like a moon shot. Journalists invited to visit the Élysée Palace always entered by the servants' entrance. We still enter by the same door, but the mood and the attitude inside have noticeably changed." As TIME's cover story suggests, Georges Pompidou, or any other aspirant to the 23rd presidency of France, may at least admit the world's press by the front door.

The Cover: Casein and gouache on cardboard by Louis Glanzman.

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FIFTY CENTS

MAY 9, 1969

THE FRANCE AFTER DE GAULLE



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MR DONALD G LOW
2120 ARGONNE DR
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55421