

bickering party politics, General De Gaulle was arising as the strong man of France.

Following a strike wave which hardened many people's resistance to the invitations of Left-wing parties, De Gaulle's rally of the French people had swept the Board at the Municipal elections. The General's policy rests on three principals: the necessity of a strong, resurgent France, a close link with the United States and uncompromising warfare on the Communists.

As the election results became known, it was clear that De Gaulle had gained his victory at the expense of the centre parties. His support has come mostly from moderate and Conservative circles. The Communists, led by Maurice Thorez, virtually retained their voting strength and are now the second strongest party. The French Government are in an embarrassing position. From President Vincent Auriol and Ramadier's Cabinet must come the next move.

Behind the election results, which in themselves are of no importance, was this: the French political battlefield had at last been cleared for action. The fight between Communism and the anti-Communist group, headed by De Gaulle, would now be openly joined. The question every Frenchman asked was, whether a possible referendum would result in the General becoming head of State and whether, in that event, De Gaulle could command enough support from the workers in France, a New French Revolution had been born. While political Europe debated the French elections, Britain's politicians were starting a new Parliamentary session. As the King left Buckingham Palace for the State Opening of Parliament it was certain that the new session would be controversial.

Although the Government had soft-pedalled on steel nationalisation, the Gas industry was due for public ownership. An Autumn budget was also listed. The announcement by the King that the powers of the House of Lords were to be curbed came as a surprise. It could mean that the Government, from a tactical point of view, were preparing to go to the country on a slogan of "Peers versus the people." At present, the Lords can hold up all legislation, except money bills, for two years. As the King indicated the proposals of the Government, the people had plenty to talk about.