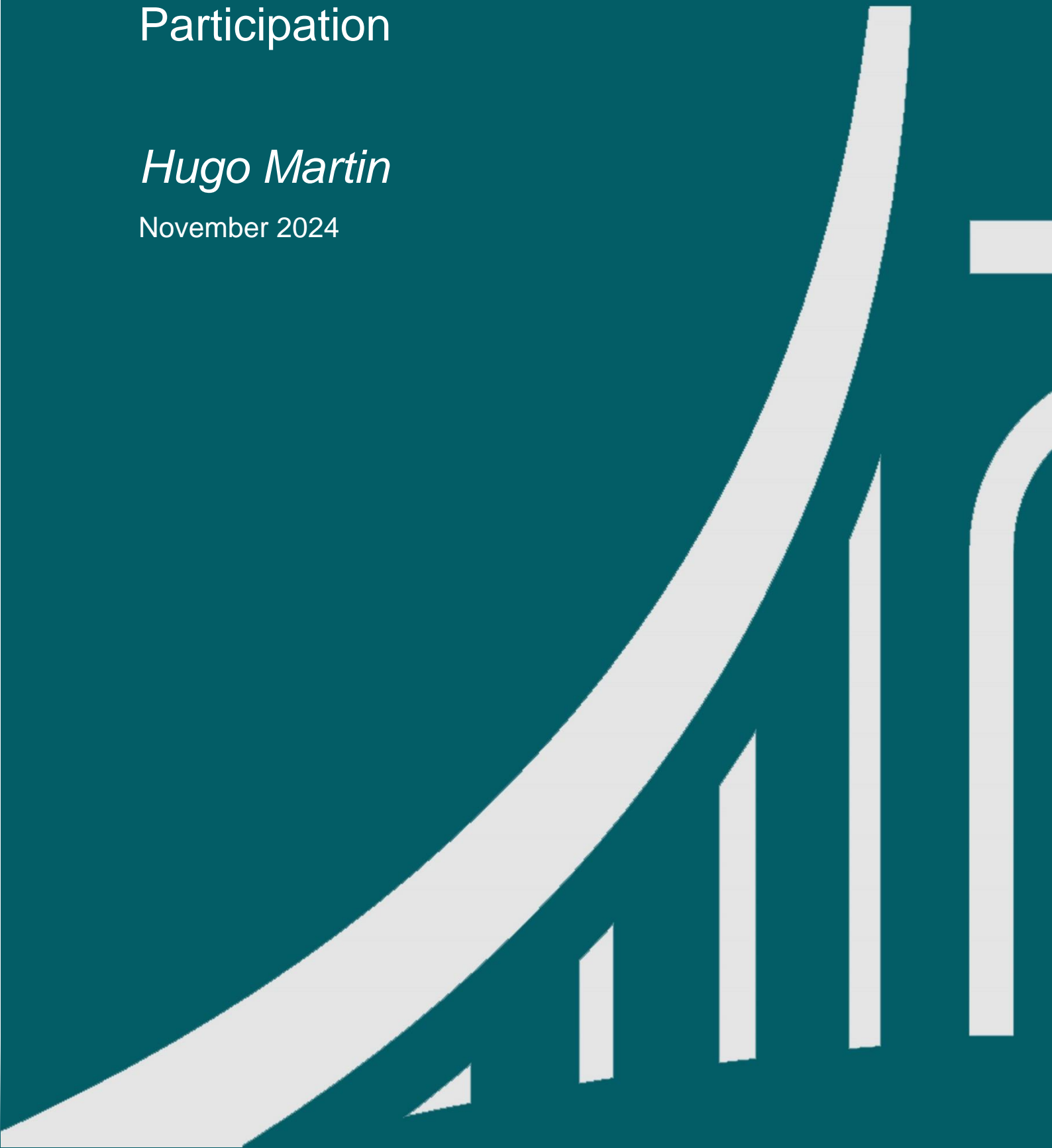


# Rekindling Gaullian Participation

*Hugo Martin*

November 2024



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## **Abstract**

*Charles de Gaulle's concept of 'participation' was one the first actual, State-led attempts at a third way between capitalism and communism that sought to empower workers and promote national sovereignty. De Gaulle's vision, which resonated with J. D. Vance's admiration for the French leader, is examined in the context of France's post-war era and its relevance to contemporary Western societies. This paper discusses the attempts at implementing participation in France, including the Ordinance n°59-126 of 1959 and the Vallon amendment, and their fate in the face of the May 1968 liberal-libertarian paradigm shift. The legacy of Gaullist participation is then traced in France and the West, highlighting its potential to address economic imbalances, promote worker empowerment, and foster corporate stability. The time may be ripe for a revival of Gaullist participation, after the advent of such comparable systems Germany's Codetermination System, the Nordic Model, and the Mondragon Corporation, in our contemporary, crisis-ridden context. As the globalist liberal establishment faces collapse, the U.S. and France may find common ground in Gaullist participation, paving the way for a more sovereign and self-reliant alliance in the West that also carries a desirable new vision for economic life.*

## Introduction

Four months before the nomination of J. D. Vance for vice president by Donald Trump and a little over a year into his tenure as a U. S. senator, he was interviewed by *Politico* journalist Ian Ward<sup>i</sup>. Although wary of his interviewee's "ominous philosophy", Ward was impressed by the "sweeping and strikingly systematic" assessments of Vance, whose idea of a "radical restructuring" of America the man conceives of "not in terms of election cycles but decades". Ward believes that this far-sightedness, as well as a record of "cross-aisle collaborations", made Vance "largely unique among congressional Republicans".

One unexpected element towards the end of this interview is Vance's professed admiration, when prompted to cite a historical figure he admires, for Charles de Gaulle, particularly over "his efforts to sow the seeds of a "vibrant" cultural conservatism", not plagued by "petulant finger-wagging" but instead blessed with "an invigorated self-confidence".

Ward appears to make it a point to paint de Gaulle's post-war legacy in a negative light. First, in writing that de Gaulle "returned to power following a right-wing coup stemming from the Algerian War of Independence", Ward omits to mention that de Gaulle was put in power to placate the Algiers generals<sup>ii</sup> who were threatening a paratrooper raid on Paris, after which de Gaulle recognized the independence of Algeria, prompting several assassination attempts<sup>iii</sup> on his person by order of said generals. Then, in noting that de Gaulle "proceeded to rewrite the French constitution to dramatically expand the executive power of the president", Ward does not deem it useful to explain that the Fourth French Republic was paralysed by its parliamentarianism, which caused ministerial instability and great confusion in the separation of powers<sup>iv</sup>. Finally, in remarking that de Gaulle "also saw his job as reversing France's imperial decline", Ward disregards his leading role in French decolonisation<sup>v</sup>.

While these omissions may be chalked up to a lack of space for or personal awareness of the full historical context, the attention gotten by Vance's Gaullist streak, especially since a July 2024 article in *The Economist*<sup>vi</sup> echoed Ward's portrayal of both men, calls for a more nuanced depiction of de Gaulle's doctrine.

In particular, participation, his untried approach to a third alternative to communism and capitalism, is worth explaining to an international audience. It and other aspects of Charles de Gaulle thought we will present first by evidencing their relevance, then by describing their attempted application, and finally, by detailing both their abortive fate and potential for rebirth.

## I. Relevance of participation

### *In de Gaulle's days*

“One day, the machine appeared. Capital married it. The couple took possession of the world. Tied to the machines for their work, to their bosses for their wages, the workers feel morally reduced and materially threatened. From then on, many men, especially workers, fell under its dependence. And here is class struggle! It is everywhere, in the workshops, in the fields, in the offices, in the street, deep into the eyes and far inside the souls. It poisons human relationships, panics states, breaks the unity of nations, stirs up wars. For it is indeed the social question, always asked but never resolved, which is at the origin of the great shocks suffered over the last thirty-five years. Today, it is the same question, always asked, never resolved, which is pushing the world towards a new tragedy.”

The above was not written by a Marxist but spoken<sup>vii</sup> by Charles de Gaulle in 1950 on Labour Day. In fact, de Gaulle might have resented comparisons with Marx. In *La France et son armée* (1938), he denounced the way in which “the non-Marxist past of the socialists was erased from the collective memory, including the many approaches that had been proposed since the last century in the direction of workers’ participation and the association of capital and labour.”<sup>viii</sup> He notably cited:

- Charles Fourier (1772-1837), the utopian socialist who coined the word phalanstery, a portmanteau of “phalanx” and “monastery”, to describe an ideal cooperative community;
- Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), the anarchist who made into a coherent system the ideas of mutualism, which he described as a synthesis of “private property and collective ownership”
- Frédéric Le Play (1806-1882), the social reformer who believed strong families played a key role in the health of a society and placed particular emphasis on the role of mothers and women;
- Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881), the philosopher and activist who spent most of his life behind bars for his radical defence of the republic in the face of monarchist and imperial regimes.

*“What, here is a society—I am talking about French society—here is a society in which machine is the absolute master, pushing at an accelerated pace towards unheard-of transformations. A society in which everything that is of a material order, the conditions of work, domestic existence, travel, information, etc., all that which had not changed since Antiquity, is now changing, more and more quickly and more and more completely. A society which, 50 years ago, was agricultural and rural, and which, at full speed, is becoming industrial and urban. A society which has lost, in large part, the social, moral, religious foundations and framework which were traditional to it.”*

On 7<sup>th</sup> June 1968, Charles de Gaulle gave an hour-long interview<sup>ix</sup> to novelist, journalist and future academician Michel Droit. In it, he gave a detailed appreciation of the direction of French society. Some twenty years into the Cold War, neither bloc's ideology seemed to him satisfactory.

*“First, there is communism, which says: let us create as many material goods as possible and distribute them in such a way that no one has them unless they are authorized to do so. How? Through constraint. Constant moral and material constraint. In other words, by a dictatorship that is implacable and perpetual, even if, within itself, different clans seize it, one after the other, denouncing each other. Even if, since this system has been in force, in certain places, its leaders, as they succeed one another, condemn each other. As if it were proven in advance that each one would fail, unless he should betray. No, from the perspective of man, the communist solution is bad.”*

*“Capitalism says: thanks to profit, which incites initiative, let us produce more and more wealth, which, by being distributed through the free market, raises, overall, the level of the entire social body. And yet, property—the management, the profit of the enterprises, in the capitalist system—belongs only to capital. And then, those who do not possess it find themselves in a sort of state of alienation, within the very activity to which they contribute. No, capitalism, from the perspective of man, does not offer a satisfactory solution.”*

Finding pitfalls in both systems, de Gaulle presented his own alternative:

*“There is a third solution. It is participation, which changes the condition of man amid modern civilization. As soon as people come together for common economic work, for example to operate an industry, by providing either the necessary capital, or the capacity for direction, management and technique, or work, it is a question of everyone forming a society together. A society where everyone has an interest in its performance*

*and its proper functioning, has a direct interest. This implies that each person is allocated by law a share of what the business earns and what it invests in itself, thanks to its profits. It also implies that everyone is sufficiently informed of the progress of the company, and can, through representatives that they will all have freely appointed, participate in the corporation and its councils to assert their interests, their point of view and their proposal. This is the path that I have always believed to be the right one.”*

This is the conclusion de Gaulle came to for a sustainable, acceptable vision for the civilizational organization of economic life in France.

This project was left untried to the full extent intended by de Gaulle as a result of historical circumstances that will be explained further down. This means that in spite of its aborted launch and partial applications with mitigated results, its seductive potential for the people remains unspoiled, as any failed attempt at implementation can be chalked up to coming short of de Gaulle’s vision. One may speak of **actually existing Gaullism** as a goal desirable to the majority of the politically involved French population. The promotion of participation is thus a useful tool for anyone involved in French politics and looking to enact reputedly third way economic policies.

## ***In France today***

*“Everyone was, is or will be a Gaullist”*

- Charles de Gaulle to André Malraux,  
1952

In July 2020, *Marianne’s* Etienne Campion denounced the hypocrisy of self-styled “social Gaullists” such as Macron’s then newly appointed Prime Minister Jean Castex.

Campion underlines the fact that de Gaulle’s social philosophy aimed to bridge the divide between capitalism and communism, promoting a third way that championed worker dignity and participation. He criticized capitalism for dehumanizing workers and communism for stifling individual initiative. His proposed solution sought to involve workers in business management, giving them a share in the profits and decision-making, as informed by social Catholicism. He saw capitalism as morally flawed, despite its material benefits, and believed it led to widespread dissatisfaction.

Castex’s reference to “social Gaullism” contrasts sharply with de Gaulle’s focus on national sovereignty and anti-capitalist sentiment. Campion argues that Castex, by aligning with Macron’s liberal policies, represents the antithesis of Gaullism. While de Gaulle prioritized national independence and worker empowerment, Macron champions European integration and a market-driven economy.

In an April 2022 interview<sup>x</sup> with Campion, historian Arnaud Teyssier laid bare the dire straits of France’s political right, tracing its disintegration to a fundamental abandonment of Gaullism, social responsibility, and the strong state that Charles de Gaulle envisioned. Teyssier highlighted how the right’s flirtation with neoliberalism and uncritical embrace of a federal Europe has left it caught between the extremes of Macron’s centrist policies and Le Pen’s populism. He invoked the prophetic words of Philippe Séguin, who warned that neglecting these core values would ultimately elevate Le Pen to 40% support—a prediction now realized.

Teyssier argued that the right had lost touch with its historical roots and the French people, instead pandering to urban elites. This detachment, he asserts, reflects a society longing for stability that serves only the privileged few, further fracturing the social fabric. The 2022 elections illustrated this disconnect, with many traditional right-wing voters flocking to Le Pen and Zemmour, seeking a more resonant representation of their grievances.

Teyssier called for a renaissance of Gaullist values, urging Macron to embrace a more authentically Gaullian leadership style that prioritizes the social contract and the role of the state.

The relevance of participation has been refreshed even more recently than that. Career statesman Michel Barnier was appointed Prime Minister of France by President Emmanuel Macron on 5 September 2024. On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024, he gave his general policy statement before the National Assembly. He made it a point to bring up Gaullian participation, which he claimed his government would “resuscitate”.

Of Barnier's Gaullism, Campion quipped in an article entitled "Social Gaullist" or liberal post-Gaullist? The real story of Michel Barnier<sup>xii</sup> that in the vibrant world of French politics, the arrival of spring signals not just the blossoming of nature but also the resurgence of "*gaullisme social*" in the tried-and-true tradition of French politicians self-labeling as "right-wing personalities sensitive to the demands of the working classes".

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### ***Throughout the West today***

In recent years, Western outlets have taken a renewed interest in Charles de Gaulle.

In August 2018, *The New Yorker's* Adam Gopnik published "How Charles de Gaulle rescued France"<sup>xiii</sup>, in which he could not help but to wonder how the man's politics could be transposed into other countries' political landscapes, noting that "his life shows that right-wing politics needn't bend toward absolutism". Gopnik notably mentioned that de Gaulle's steadfast belief in France's destiny allowed him to negotiate a post-war position of power, securing France a prominent role in the United Nations and a seat on the Security Council despite its initial devastating defeat. Gopnik also remarked that de Gaulle's foreign policy decisions marked a significant shift towards independence from NATO and the United States, as he sought to elevate France to the status of a global power. Gopnik finally noted that de Gaulle's legacy is not merely one of political manoeuvring but a profound belief in France's exceptional role in world history, which continues to resonate today—and should also resonate with the U. S.'s own innate exceptionalism.

In January 2021, *Atlantic Sentinel's* Nick Ottens wrote that "America Needs a de Gaulle"<sup>xiii</sup>, making a case for the U. S. to embrace a leader who embodies the unifying principles of the *Général*. This means melding progressive economics and a strong nationalist vision, by prioritizing unity over divisive identity politics.

Real progress, Ottens argued, comes from collaboration and a shared commitment to the nation's core values. In rejecting the toxic partisanship that has plagued American politics, a leader may instead forge a path that focuses on the tangible needs of the American people: investing in infrastructure, fostering economic growth and enhancing national pride while resisting the pull of radical factions.

In May 2023, *The Critic's* Andrew Cusack proposed that "the legacy of French Gaullism" could "breathe life into a listless British conservatism"<sup>xiv</sup>. He contended that the current Tory leadership lacks the robust vision necessary to assert Britain's place in the world, drawing parallels to de Gaulle's transformative leadership that restored French national pride after World War II.

Cusack advocated for a blend of conservatism and strong state involvement in economic matters, particularly in infrastructure and energy independence. This revival of Toryism, he argued, should reflect a commitment to the traditional values of the party while embracing necessary modernization to address contemporary challenges.



Cusack referenced Sir Thomas Playford (1896 – 1981), who served as 33rd Premier of South Australia from 1938 to 1965, championed a proactive government role in economic development, prioritizing national well-being over abstract ideology. This is reminiscent of the defeat of American paleo-conservatives by Neoconservatives, who, contrary to the former, had a theory of State rather than refusing to think the State altogether<sup>xv</sup>.

These musings in the Anglosphere suggest that de Gaulle's legacy is relevant enough that reviewing his planned deep economic reforms could speak to people and lawmakers in France and throughout the West today.



## II. Attempts at application

May the reader bear in mind that the following, though widespread today throughout the West, was innovative at the time; that it was the programmatic intent behind the social democratic policies enacted throughout Europe in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> c.

### ***Ordinance n°59-126 of 7th January 1959<sup>xvi</sup>***

This executive order was issued by the Pompidou government of President Charles de Gaulle. The first attempt at writing participation into law, it allowed employees in industrial and commercial companies to engage in their company's success through either profit-sharing or equity participation.

Key provisions included:

**Participation contracts:** Companies could adopt either a collective labour agreement or a standard contract that employees would ratify. These contracts could include sharing in profits, capital participation, or productivity increases, with the distribution managed across all staff levels.

**Fiscal benefits:** Companies adopting these contracts could receive tax exemptions, provided they met specific conditions. These benefits applied to profits shared with workers, making participation a financially attractive option for employers.

**Employee rights:** The ordinance mandated regular information sharing with employees about how their participation was being calculated and distributed. It also ensured that participation wouldn't replace existing salary components.

**Oversight and review:** Both departmental and national commissions were established to ensure companies complied with the ordinance's conditions. These commissions could approve, modify, or reject applications for tax exemptions.

This ordinance marked a major step towards empowering employees within businesses by legally integrating them into the company's financial success.

Yet the application of similar reforms to their logical conclusion was abandoned in France before it could bloom, for reasons we shall review shortly.

**Marcel Loichot's pan-capitalism**

1995-1997 Minister of Cooperation Jacques Godfrain<sup>xvii</sup>, explains that Marcel Loichot, an engineer and industrialist, developed the theory of “pan-capitalism” during an unexpected stay in a health institute. Loichot wrote a 20-page essay in 1961 that was presented to General de Gaulle, outlining a system to transcend the contradictions between capitalism and socialism. He proposed a “pan-capitalist” model where workers would become partial owners of the companies they worked for, sharing in the growth of the business they worked for through stocks or bonds. This system aimed to preserve private property while redistributing wealth more equitably, addressing what Loichot saw as the key flaws in both capitalist and socialist systems.

Still according to Godfrain, Louis Vallon, a key ally of Charles de Gaulle, was enthusiastic about Loichot's theory and pushed it forward in political circles, leading to widespread circulation and discussion. By January 1966, Loichot's ideas gained traction, with influential figures such as lawmaker René Capitant and the newspaper *Le Monde* endorsing them.

Loichot criticized capitalism for exploiting workers and socialism for creating new forms of alienation through state control. He argued that both systems failed to offer a sustainable socio-economic solution. Instead, his pan-capitalism maintained private ownership but broadened access to it, proposing that companies would allocate new shares equally between shareholders and employees.

This model aimed to create a system where workers would become part-owners, leading to more democratic control within companies and eventually eliminating class divisions. Loichot saw this as the path to a more just society, where workers would no longer feel alienated, and class conflict would fade.

### ***The Vallon amendment***

According to economist Jean-Claude Casanova<sup>xviii</sup>, Vallon had already proposed a bill to abolish both capitalism and communism as early as 1952.

The Vallon amendment, which was adopted by the Nation Assembly on 12 May 1965, concerned the law of 12 July 1965 amending the taxation of businesses and income from portfolio capital.

While self-financing was once viewed with suspicion by both liberals and socialists, through the 1960s, it gained acceptance as crucial to investment. Vallon's amendment was a response to this shift, aiming to give workers a stake in the wealth created by these corporate practices.

The Vallon amendment faced resistance from business leaders, economists, and even some government officials. Critics argued that it would undermine market stability, discourage investment, and disproportionately benefit workers in prosperous sectors. The French financial elite were particularly concerned about its impact on the stock market and the potential disruption to capital flow.

The government's hesitation and the complexity of implementing this reform led to its postponement, leaving the question of worker participation in corporate gains unresolved.

Loichot and Vallon's ideas were put to a referendum on 27 April 1969 as part of a wider reform programme proposition by way of the question: "Do you approve of the bill submitted to the French people by the President of the Republic and relating to the creation of regions and the reform of the Senate?"

With an 80,13% participation rate, the referendum was rejected, with 29 392 390 "No" against 23 552 611 "Yes".

De Gaulle resigned the Presidency the following day.

### III. Fate and lingering potential

#### ***The May 1968 liberal-libertarian paradigm shift***

The failure of the 1969 referendum came in the wake of the May 1968 student protest and general strike, nominally directed against the establishment through such slogans as 'it is forbidden to forbid', 'CRS = SS' (the CRS being the French riot police) and 'imagination in power'.

One of the more in-depth contemporary diagnoses of May 1968 can be read in a March 2018 article<sup>xix</sup> written by Eric Zemmour and published in *Le Figaro*.

Zemmour's insights are so clear and synthetic that they warrant a good translation of selected quotes rather than soporific paraphrasing:

*"Now, we know. We know that May 68 was merely a ruse of history. [...] We know that the "crisis of civilization" diagnosed at the time by Georges Pompidou was above all a mutation of capitalism, which was moving from a system based on production, industry and savings, to an economy based on consumption, services and debt."*

*"Conservative thought has long held that a nation is nothing more than a family of families. It was inevitable that the disintegration of one would lead to the disintegration of the other. Constructivism, born in the minds of French theorists—Deleuze, Guattari, Foucault—came back to us with the halo of its passage through American campuses in the 1960s."*

*"The very French conjunction of liberty and equality, of liberalism, but also of the old Marxist vulgate, was wreaking havoc. [...] The nation is no more than a territory without a past where diverse communities coexist, in the name of an oxymoronic "living together"."*

*"May 68 has long since won. The rebels have become the establishment. An establishment that still pretends to be the rebellion. And that still calls its opponents the powers that be. Yet they are now the powers that be. And the revolt is brewing."*

In April 2018, Order of Arts and Letters recipient Olivier Germain-Thomas published *La brocante de mai 68*, his own perspective on the events of May 1968.

In an interview<sup>xx</sup> for the launch of the book, he reflected on the events of May 1968 and the interplay of political forces behind them. He notably recognised the organized Trotskyists behind them.

Initially an active member of the student movement, Germain-Thomas backed down when he realised his actions could contribute to the destabilisation of Charles de Gaulle's "extraordinary" government.

Although Castro's Cuba was calumniously accused of fomenting May 1968, neither he, an admirer of de Gaulle, nor the French Communist Party, which liked the *Général's* performative opposition to the U. S. government, were funding the movement. Rather, the CIA was tasked with exploiting the events towards the toppling of de Gaulle, and such iconic leaders of the May 1968 protest as Daniel Cohn-Bendit are now shown to stand "completely with those who dominate the world, which is to say: international finance and the Europe of Brussels".

Millions of workers did take to the street in the wake of the student protest; yet on the long run, the needs of the former were not addressed like the whims of the latter were granted, such that since now, "it is finance that runs everything", Germain-Thomas fears that "participation is impossible in a globalized system".

On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018, liberal-libertarian daily *Libération* opposed the Conservative analysis of May 1968 in a counter-argumentative article<sup>xxi</sup>.

The ten theses *Libération* purported to refute can be reformulated and repurposed today to denounce liberals and woke moralists in the broader West.

They are as follows:

- I. May 68 was an individualistic and narcissistic revolt which dissolved, in the name of a libertarian and consumerist hedonism, the common values which held together the edifice of French society.
- II. May 68 was essentially a deleterious and anarchic student revolt which plunged the university into disorder and disarray.
- III. May 68 was a violent Marxist movement that attempted to overthrow the democratic order for the benefit of sectarian and active minorities.
- IV. May 68 was a nihilistic and aimless revolt that sought to destroy the republican structures of France.
- V. May 68 lowered parental authority and disintegrated the family by crowning the 'child king', without limits, without morals or inheritance.
- VI. May 68 destroyed the school and ruined the transmission of knowledge and values.
- VII. May 68 was an attack against the nation and a prelude to globalization without soul and without protection.
- VIII. May 68 was ultimately a ruse of capital and a decisive adjuvant to the liberal Americanization of society.
- IX. May 68 was a victory for the right, which emerged strengthened by the events.
- X. May 68 was a revolution betrayed by its leaders who went 'from the Mao collar to the Rotary Club.'

### ***Lip service in France since***

From 1970 to 1986<sup>xxii</sup>, France experienced attempts at a revitalization of employee shareholding, expanding beyond the initial financial participation mechanisms set by General de Gaulle. This period saw two primary approaches: establishing employee ownership in public enterprises and promoting shareholding in private companies.

In the public sector, the 1970 Renault National Factory Authority Law enabled free share distributions based on seniority. 1973 laws further extended these practices to national banks and insurance companies, allowing for market transferability of shares.

In the private sector, various laws aimed to encourage employee ownership, such as the 1970 stock option law, which allowed employees to acquire shares at predetermined prices, and the 1984 law facilitating employee buyouts through leveraged management buyouts. Additionally, a proposed law in 1980 sought to create employee shareholding companies that would distribute profits equally between workers and capital providers, fostering a partnership between labour and capital.

Between 1986 and 1994<sup>xxiii</sup>, France sought to invigorate employee shareholding through privatizations and reforms to savings schemes, particularly targeting public enterprises. The 1986 privatization law included incentives such as reserved shares and discounts for employees, fostering their investment in their companies. Additionally, the 1986 ordinance established more robust frameworks for employee participation, particularly through company savings plans, which allowed employees to accumulate shares with significant tax advantages.

These measures aimed to deepen employee engagement in corporate governance and encourage a culture of ownership, reflecting a broader trend towards increasing the financial participation of workers in their companies. Furthermore, the introduction of funds for collective investment provided structured management for employee savings.

How has participation fared, then, in recent decades?

In May 2020, Gérald Darmanin, who would soon become Minister of the Interior, gave an interview<sup>xxiv</sup> to the *Journal du Dimanche*. In it, he declared that he aimed to “generalize”, “simplify” and “expand” employee ownership by offering significant financial incentives.

Darmanin argued that in a time of crisis, wealth distribution is crucial, and that linking capital and labour can help address social class conflicts. The *JDD* reminds the reader that the policy saw opposition from both the business sector, who saw it as a threat to capitalism, and labour unions concerned about “class collaboration”.

The original rule applied to companies with more than 100 employees, requiring profits to be held in a special reserve for five years. Later, this threshold was lowered to companies with more than 50 employees. The Macron Law of 2015 increased tax benefits linked to profit-sharing, while the 2019 Pacte Law relaxed certain regulations. Despite these reforms, only 42.6% of employees benefited from this system in 2017.



In November 2021, senior official Paul Klotz wrote in *Marianne* an article entitled “We must pursue the generalization of employee participation dreamed of by de Gaulle.”<sup>xxv</sup>

Klotz emphasized that in 1967, participation was part of a wider effort to establish a “new social order” and counter excessive financialization. Although partially implemented, profit-sharing today often serves as a token gesture for large corporations, with companies freely setting conditions that rarely include employee representation in decision-making.

A more generalized approach to participation could address economic imbalances caused by financial capitalism, which has concentrated wealth and increased inequality. For example, CAC 40<sup>1</sup> companies paid a record €60.2 billion in dividends in 2019, and it now takes six generations for a low-income family to reach the median income level.

According to Klotz, generalized profit-sharing would offer three main benefits. First, it would diversify decision-making bodies by cementing employee representation, improving information flow and fostering long-term corporate strategy. This would also enhance employee well-being, as workers prioritize human issues in corporate governance. Second, it would stabilize the financial system by reducing the risk of hostile takeovers and offering protection against speculative funds. Third, companies with employee ownership tend to survive longer, contributing to job security and corporate performance.

This would promote worker empowerment and corporate stability, fulfilling de Gaulle’s vision of economic renewal through collective association, as he emphasized in his 1948 speech to the miners of Saint-Étienne: “It’s time for everyone to get involved, and for each to have a stake.”

### ***Why the time may be ripe***

There exist today systems of economic organisation comparable to Gaullian participation.

They include:

- Germany’s Codetermination (*Mitbestimmung*) System, which involves<sup>xxvi</sup>:
  - Operational co-determination (through work councils that negotiate working conditions, hours, and other day-to-day concerns)
  - Corporate co-determination (where employees have representation on a company’s supervisory board, which makes decisions on broader corporate strategies)
  - Laws like the 1976 Co-determination Act, which guarantees workers a voice in companies with more than 2000 employees, often giving them close to equal representation with shareholders in strategic decision-making
- The Nordic Model, which involves<sup>xxvii</sup>:
  - Combining a strong welfare state with a market-based economy

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<sup>1</sup> French equivalent to the Dow Jones Industrial Average

- Emphasizing a high degree of cooperation between labour unions, employers, and the government, which helps create stability and minimize labour conflicts
- Balancing economic competitiveness with a robust social safety net, which includes universal healthcare, education, and welfare services
- The Basque-based Mondragon Corporation<sup>xxviii</sup>, which involves:
  - Prioritizing democratic control, with worker-members having a say in decision-making and profit distribution
  - Reinvesting surpluses into the cooperatives or sharing them among members
  - Aligning economic success with social well-being

The added value of Gaullian participation lies in its **classically conservative vision**. The three models mentioned above coincide with a deep moral crisis in the West, marked by alienation through screens and spectacles, catastrophic demographic decline and deindustrialisation. As the peoples of the West are either demoralised or yearning for more opportunities (especially among the disenfranchised youths who lack access to decent jobs and property), Anglo-American patronage and sponsorship of participation in particular and of Gaullism in general is sure to get the politicised segments of the French population on board with a renewed Western civilizational vision.

## Conclusion

The impasses of both capitalism and communism, as identified by Charles de Gaulle, impassioned political debate between their claimants and fraud finders in France to this day, with the *Général's* vision and track record even spreading beyond not only the Channel, but also the pond.

In spite of the energy with which actual legislation towards participation was gestated by the most loyal and steadfast of Gaullists during the first decade of the 5<sup>th</sup> Republic, it took too long to materialize, and its most ambitious attempt would be stamped by the “No” in the 1969 referendum.

This was largely due to May 1968, whose liberal-libertarian legacy has prevented a more complete implementation of participation into French law to this day, although the long decline of the paradigm inherited from the 1960s could clear the coast for corporatism in France and in the West at large.

Following Trump's victory in the November 2024 U. S. Presidential Elections, Vance's Gaullist streak could prove precious towards future Transatlantic relations. Should it be used well, the U. S. could confer with France on her own sovereign terms, strengthening their relationship towards a renewed civilizational vision as the globalist liberal establishment collapses under its own contradictions.

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