

# ***EXTREME RIGHT-WING PARTIES IN FRANCE AND AUSTRIA SINCE 1980***

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the award of the Degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**AMITHA A.V.**



**Centre for American and West European Studies  
School of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi - 110 067.  
INDIA  
2001**



CENTRE FOR AMERICAN & WEST EUROPEAN STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY**  
NEW DELHI-110067

Date: 19/07/2001

**CERTIFICATE**

Certified that the dissertation titled, "*Extreme Right-wing Parties in France and Austria since 1980*" submitted by **AMITHA A.V.** in partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** is her original work. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree to this University or to any other University to the best of our knowledge.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.

**Prof. Rajendra Kumar Jain**  
(Chairperson)

**Prof. B. Vivekanandan**  
(Supervisor)

# CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PREFACE</b>	i-v
Chapter I	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1-34
Chapter II	
<b>FRONT NATIONAL OF FRANCE</b>	35-70
Chapter III	
<b>FREEDOM PARTY OF AUSTRIA</b>	71-101
Chapter IV	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	102-118
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	119-125

## PREFACE

Since the turn of the new millennium, the extreme-Right parties have been the subject of considerable concern. In the 1980s, a variety of extreme-Right wing parties within western Europe achieved notable electoral success. Among them, the Front National of France and Freedom Party of Austria occupied a better position in the national politics of their respective countries.

Immigration is an important issue through which the Front National and Freedom Party have been increasing their electoral support. France and Austria, both being members of the European Union, are facing the problem relating to immigration. Their geographical location is so strategic that the flow of the immigrants from the neighbouring countries becomes inevitable. In France, the immigrants are mostly from the North African countries, whereas Austria faces immigration from the East European countries. These immigrants who accept jobs for lesser pay than the native population have become competitors in the labour market.

The extreme-Right parties like the Front National and Freedom Party fan the anxieties and fears existing in the minds of the people to increase their vote share, thus making the immigrants the scapegoats for all their problems : increasing crime, increasing tax, cut down in social benefits and threat to national identity.

Immigrants from non-European countries practice a religion and follow a culture which is dissimilar to that of the ones existing in France or Austria. A national stir is created whenever a clash occurs between the two cultures. This in turn helps to mobilise opinion in favour of the extreme-Right parties who campaign against immigration and for the preservation of national identity.

In addition, the mainstream parties, in their competition to occupy the power at the Centre, forget the needs of the people. In an atmosphere, according to them, where politicians from the mainstream parties become corrupt and stop being responsible to the electorate, they take charge promising responsibility and refreshing change.

The Front National and Freedom Party have used these situations considerably in occupying a firm position at the national political scenario. For a long time now it was believed that an electoral breakthrough to government by any overtly fascist or racist party was not about to occur. But the results of the 1999 legislative elections in Austria made all these views take a back seat. The entrance of the Freedom Party as a coalition partner in the national government has brought back the memories of the fascist regimes that existed in the inter-war period and the menace flowed from them.

Therefore, it is necessary that members of the European Union find some solution to negate the influence which might lead to the rise

extreme-Right parties in other countries. While the negotiations for eastward enlargement is expected in the near future, it is necessary that issues like immigration, national identity and European identity be dealt in an appropriate manner thus curtailing the rise of extreme-Right parties like Front National and Freedom Party.

This work strives to answer certain specific questions :

- Whether the rise of extreme-Right wing parties in France and Austria pose a threat EU as a whole by reactivating the nationalist movements in these countries?
- What is the major factor which leads to the strengthening of extreme-Right parties?
- How effective is the issue of immigration in bringing about the electoral rise of the parties?
- Besides immigration, what are the other factors which influence their strength?
- What is the role played by the European Union in moderating the tempo of these parties?
- What are the means to counter the rise of extreme-right parties?

A number of people have helped me while producing this work. This is an opportunity for me to acknowledge each of them for all the help they have provided me. I express my profound gratitude to my guide, Prof. B. Vivekanandan, for his invaluable supervision and valuable time he has spent in helping me accomplish this

work. He was always open to discussion which gave me clarity and resolved the dilemma during the process of writing the dissertation.

I acknowledge Prof. Rajendra Kumar Jain, Chairperson, Centre for American and West European Studies, who was a constant support throughout the study programme.

A better hold on the topic of research required a deep insight into the subject. In this context, I want to thank the staff of Jawaharlal Nehru University library, Nehru Memorial Library – Teen Murti, the French Institute and the European Commission library.

Coming to JNU to pursue further studies was a dream come true which would not have been possible without the love, support and encouragement of my family members – Amma, Pappa, Satish Bhayya, Anu, Tarun Bhayya, Aparna, Vibha and Guddu.

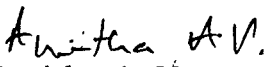
It would be unfair on my part if I forget to acknowledge my local guardians – Ramesh Bappa, Sudha Pachi, Shayu Mam, Sumathi Akka and Sankalp – who provided me with a home during my stay in JNU.

Although mentioned in the last, my friends deserve the most. Benarji, who helped me in all possible manners, should be thanked the most. Ruby, who has helped me to know myself better, has been a constant support. Ragda's support through the

telephone calls cheered me up and refreshed my mind for doing a better work. I want to thank Arms and Srikanth who helped me while I worked on this topic. My juniors – Jabin, Dolly, Mohanty, Janaki and Sudhir were of a great help in material collection.

I cannot leave out the rest – Charu, Chanda, Parimal, Kapil, Ashu, Rakesh, Hema, Chandu, Vikas and Shailesh who always kept my spirits high. A big thanks for my floor mates – Pragnya, Leela, Meenu, Madura, Shambhavi and Jenny who used to give company by staying awake in the night while I worked. Lastly, I would like to thank my 'Pondy friends' – Yasho, Urmi, Kiru and Ramya for all the support they offered me through letters and mails.

Jawaharlal Nehru University

  
Amitha A. V.

19 July 2001



## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

**“This is a very dangerous development which the European leaders and democracies must curb and control without dilly-dallying”**

**-- Wilhelm Heitmeyer**

In the post-war period, European countries remained more or less socially peaceful entities mostly under the moderate governments. But the rise of the extreme-Right parties at the end of the twentieth century had considerably disturbed that social peril. During the mid-1980s, a number of extreme-right parties within Western Europe achieved notable electoral successes. The National Front in France had broadened its appeal by forging electoral links with the conservatives. The National Front in Britain, the pioneer of anti-immigration politics, was formed as an amalgamation of fascists and conservative racists. The National Alliance of Italy had captured 14% of the vote and had five ministers in the New Centre-Right coalition government. However, the entry of the Austrian Freedom Party into its national government gained utmost attention. The leaders of these parties who share a very particular vision of New Europe based on racial exclusivity rather than democratic citizenship and equal rights for all inhabitants, are for the first time making their mark through ballot boxes and not just through violence.

Known by different names – ‘fascists’, ‘neo-nazi’, ‘ultra-right’, ‘radical right’, ‘extreme-right’ and ‘far-right’, these parties share a common set of characteristics. They have an affinity to the pre-war fascism. Not bothering with the camouflage and tactical institutions which the official parties use in abundance, the numerous militant groups agitating on the extreme-right fringes draw their inspiration directly from Nazi sources. Although the holocaust denial has managed to withstand the judicial barrages, an examination of the individual paths followed by particular militants and leaders show the closeness and complexity of the links between the extreme-right and the fanatical activities of the wings.

The core ideological bond between these parties is that they are ‘anti-system’. In other words, it refers to parties which are overtly hostile to the system and to ones which would in practice undermine the liberal democratic system. They provide the electorate what is popular and attract their attention with charismatic leaders.

The main distinctive feature of the socio-economic policy of such parties is the belief that fruits of the economy should first and foremost benefit its own people. They demand that measures should be adopted against an ongoing flow of immigrants who come from Central Africa, North Africa, Asia, Turkey and East Europe. Apart from increasing unemployment and economic hardship, they

are targeted as a cause for jeopardising country's ethnic and cultural homogeneity and are said to be responsible for crime and delinquency.

The immigrants, particularly the Muslims, face the swelling of anti-Islamism in Europe. The presence of Islam in Europe is certainly nothing new: Muslims have been living in and travelling throughout the geographical region for thousands of years. However, due to often widely constructed images of Islam, elaborated and amplified historically in order to inspire Christian crusades, to legitimate local expansions and generally to convince the Europeans of their moral superiority, Europeans have come to take it for granted that there is a wide and unbridgeable gulf between two distinct 'worlds' which are poised to feud forever.

Currently, there are about 23 million Muslims in Europe as a whole, just over 3.5 per cent of its total population.<sup>1</sup> They face a mass upsurge in xenophobic hostility and violence, a tightening of immigration restrictions which are related to expanding racist and culturalist assumptions, widespread unemployment and fears of persecution. This widespread and amplifying fear, suspicion and hostility towards them has enabled the extreme-right wing activists in finding in them an easy and 'acceptable' quarry in their political

---

<sup>1</sup>. Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach, "Introduction: Islam in Europe and Politics of Religion and Community" in Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach (eds.), *Islam in Europe: The politics of Religion and Community*, ( Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 1997), p.13.

hunt. In France Jean Marie Le Pen leads *Le Front National* with calls for a halt to the 'Islamisation' of France; in Germany Franz Schonhuber, leader of the right-wing *Republikaner* party, declares, 'Never will the green flag of Islam fly over Germany' and Progressive Party of Denmark campaigns with a promise of 'Denmark with no Musselmen'.<sup>2</sup>

However, the parties' increasing use of anti-immigrants rhetoric is not the only explanation for the success and failure of these parties. It requires a local as well as national dimension and involves a number of general arguments. The most common thesis has been the Protest Explanation of extreme right voting. Many a times, the mainstream parties do not realise their duties towards the electorate and so create discontentment against them. This is when the 'supporters' lean on to the extreme right parties. Because of this reason, these parties have been recruiting from the Centre-right supporters or people who are normally non-voters and from Centre-left supporters who lost their hold over a section of the working class.<sup>3</sup>

The Single Issue Theory explains the reason for the working – class support. It places considerable emphasis on the attractiveness of the anti-immigrant politics, or issues which can be closely related to this. It implies that extreme right parties will do

---

<sup>2</sup>. *ibid*, p.5.

<sup>3</sup>. Roger Eatwell., "The Rebirth of the 'Extreme-Right' in Western Europe?", *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), vol.53 (2000), p.419.

especially well at times when there are major concerns about immigration, at either the national or more local level. They blame immigrants for all the socio-economic problems. These concerns in the minds of the people are tempered in order to gain votes.<sup>4</sup>

By the 1990s the 'Political Opportunity Structure' was adopted by these parties. This theory focuses on the actions and programmes of mainstream parties, together with the openness of political institutions to insurgent parties. This includes the system of election in particular country. The presence of the system of proportional representation is favourable to small parties which allows them to gain representation. This approach also holds that when the mainstream parties struggle to pick up the issue and cluster around the centre, the extreme parties make a breakthrough. The issues which they bring up presently are that of anti-immigrant sentiment, the hostility to the European Union and globalisation.<sup>5</sup>

However, the political philosopher Chantal Mouffe claims that it is the 'consensus at the centre' type of politics that leads to the blurring of the left or right divide and, as a consequence, to the rise of extreme right-wing parties. According to him, as a result of 'skilful populist rhetoric, they have been able to articulate many

---

<sup>4</sup>. *ibid*, pp.420-1.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p.422.

demands of the ordinary people,..., and they are : trying to present themselves as the only guarantors of the sovereignty of the people'.<sup>6</sup>

It is difficult to narrow down on any one of these theories as the actual reason for their rise. It is a combination of all these factors: notable loss of trust in the mainstream parties, the belief that it is economically rational to support some extreme right policies, the loss of faith in old ideologies, political corruption and hydra of globalisation.

### **THE RISE OF EXTREME-RIGHT DURING THE INTER WAR PERIOD:**

The early twentieth century was an unprecedentedly volatile and turbulent period in the history of Europe. Between the two World Wars, the dominant class throughout much of the continent found themselves facing the arrival of mass politics and popular pressure for social reform. The rise of extremist movements with a cultural or religious edge to them posed a basic challenge to liberal democracies. The political agenda of these movements during this time used unresolved issues of identity, ethnicity and religion in their pursuit of power. Fear of future, heightened political insecurity and extreme differences in wealth and opportunity

---

<sup>6</sup>. Oliver Merchant, "The 'Fourth Way' of the Ultra Right : Austria , Europe and the End of Neo-Corporatism", *Capital and Class* (London), vol.73 (2000), Winter, pp.11-12.

combined with highest unemployment rate created a fertile breeding ground for a new strain of populist fascism.<sup>7</sup>

In Great Britain, politics was largely dominated by economic problems, especially rising unemployment and an outdated industrial plant that made it increasingly difficult for British goods to compete in the world market. The most significant development in British politics then was the almost complete collapse of the once dominant Liberal party. The party associated with peace, anti-imperialism and domestic reform had led England into the war and then endured all crisis of that dismal experience. In 1922, the Conservatives won a comfortable majority. The ensuing election, in which Red baiting of Labour was a feature, again firmly installed the Conservatives in power.

In France too the elections of 1919 brought in a rightward leaning *bloc national*. Dissatisfaction with the outcome of the peace settlement, which the French thought yielded too little security and too little recompense for the vast damages they had suffered, dominated the public mind. In Germany, the first Weimar coalition of Social Democrats, Democrats and Catholic Centrists resigned in June 1919 over the peace terms. The right-wing Nationalist Party (DNVP) gained power.

---

<sup>7</sup>. Anthony Wood, *Europe 1815-1960* (Essex, Longman Group Ltd., 1984), p.357.

Thus the dismal years immediately after the First World War were marked by an unmistakable drift to the Right. One of the reasons for this conservative trend in the West was the fact of the existence of the Communist regime. Fear and hatred of Bolshevism dominated the European middle class and even some of the trade unionists. A part of the hysteria against Communism reflected a fear that private property may be abolished wiping out profit and deposing the dominant economic classes in the West. Other subtler reasons for the right wing swing in the 1920s have to do with the whole movement of thought and culture. There was a return to religion because of the loss of faith in worldly progress, secular utopias and the benevolence of human nature. This attitude helped the Right more than the Left. <sup>8</sup>

The years just after the First World War was as wild in Italy as in any country in Europe: peasantry was impatient to get farm lands which had been promised to them, and for the property-owning classes the situation was all too reminiscent of Russia in 1917 which had aroused great excitement and led to a number of Socialist riots and strikes. In addition to the economic problems of acute inflation and high unemployment, there was a social dislocation as a result of the War. In addition, the Versailles Treaty failed to grant Italy her share as co-victor of the spoils of the war. Years of strikes and violence along with an effective parliamentary

---

<sup>8</sup>. Roland N. Stromberg, *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1988), pp.132-3



system created a general mood of disillusionment and discontent. The government's failure to act on these problems infuriated large sections of the populace and turned the Italian bourgeoisie towards the Right.<sup>9</sup>

The strong leadership now came from Benito Mussolini. A man with intellectual interest, Mussolini helped fascism with an ideology. His credo stressed action, elite leadership and a new set of values to organise the masses. Eloquently proclaimed by Mussolini, fascism asked for national revival and blamed the parliamentary system of democracy for Italy's weakness . It was thus anti-democratic and anti-Marxist. It was also anti-modernist, preaching natural inequality of man moved by the ideal of purging corruption and decadence from society.<sup>10</sup>

Between 1921 and 1922 the chaos reigned: Parliament was impotent and Mussolini alone seemed a forceful personality. By October 1922, fascism rapidly gained converts and the old system of government, never very successful, broke down under the strain of the war and post war crisis.

The first real threat to Austria's fledging democracy posed by the right came, not the from the populist ultra-right movements

---

<sup>9</sup>. David E. Ingeroll and Richard K. Mathews, *The Philosophic Roots of Modern Ideology: Liberalism, Communism and Fascism* (New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1986), p.230-1.

Also see Leon P. Baradt, *Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact* (New Jersey, Prentice-Hall,1986), pp.252-3.

<sup>10</sup> Stromberg, n.8, p.135.

which had flourished before 1914, but from paramilitary *Heimwehren*. Often referred to collectively as *Heimwehr* these regional units of National Guards were recruited overwhelmingly from war veterans only too eager to fight the nation's alleged enemies - whether external, for example Yugoslavs making incursions over the border in the south, or internal i.e. Communists and Social Democrats.

In the first decade of their existence the *Heimwehr* lacked the organisational or ideological cohesion to constitute a fascist force, its only core principles being virulent patriotism and anti-Marxism. The energetic role played by the voluntary National Guard helping the government restore law and order not only established them as a key factor in state politics, but ushered in a phase of internal upheaval from which it would emerge as a more united and radical movement. *Heimwehr* co-existed with another movement which never left its fascist credentials in doubt, the Austrian National Socialism. It had grown out of the German Workers' Movement, originally formed as an anti-Czech, before long both an anti-Marxist and anti-Semitic strand of trade unionism in the 1880s.<sup>11</sup>

The subsequent history of the Austrian Nazi's was fraught by leadership battles over the degree of Austrian autonomy within a Greater Germany and how far the movement should become an extension of its younger but more powerful German *confre*. With

---

<sup>11</sup>. Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London, Routledge, 1993), p.124.

no charismatic leader to unite the party, it was inevitable that Hitler would gradually gain ascendancy over the movement which by 1926 had significantly changed its name to Nationalist Socialist Democratic Party of Austria (NSDAP) to bring into the line with the German movement.<sup>12</sup>

In the autumn of 1929 came the catastrophe which so few had anticipated. Prices broke on the New York stock exchange, dragging down with them in their economy, first the economy of the United States itself, subsequently that of Europe and the rest of world. The Depression brought with it fresh distress, mass unemployment, the ruin of framers and small businessmen.<sup>13</sup>

The first European government to fall as direct consequences of Great Depression was the German Government led by Social Democratic Hermann Miller. Germany at this time presented a general picture of political and economic chaos interrupted only briefly by periods of relative stability. The nation had been defeated at the battlefield and was much under a large debt for war reparations imposed by Treaty of Versailles. The economic depression produced rabid inflation in the economy.<sup>14</sup>On the political front the conservatives were placed in a better position as they believed in the orthodox maxim that reduced spending was

---

<sup>12</sup>. *ibid.*, p.125.

<sup>13</sup>. Wood, n.7, p.385.

<sup>14</sup>. Ingersoll and Mathews, n.9, p.259.

the proper way to move the business cycle out of Depression.<sup>15</sup> The Democratic Party had vanished and the Centre was paralysed by its own divisions; the Right was more and more conniving to the Nazis. This 'new right' expressed both aspirations of the middle class and the resentment of the traditional groups.

At the core of the ideology was an ethnic or *volkisch* nationalism which regarded the interests of the German *volk* as the supreme value. The belief in the moral supremacy of the Aryan race was brought about by the differences, which it believed existed between people belonging to "superior" and "inferior" races traceable to biological differences. It added that the decline of a higher culture was a result of intermingling of these two races.<sup>16</sup> Its members also advocated a powerful authoritarian state to ensure a tough defence of German institutions abroad and a hierarchical political and social order at home.

Thus, the Nazi seizure of power was facilitated by several more or less fortuitous occurrences - German defeat in the First World War, the humiliation of the Versailles Treaty, the disastrous economic and social consequences of the hyper inflation and Great Depression. They gained strength as a mass movement by appealing to certain intellectual and emotional tendencies long

---

<sup>15</sup>. Stuart Hughes H., *Contemporary Europe : A History* (Prentice hall, New Jersey, 1961), p.198.

<sup>16</sup>. Mark N. Hagopian, *Ideas and Ideologies of Modern Politics* (New York, Longman Inc.,1985),p. 233.

present in German history. The temper of the German people during this period that allowed Hitler to succeed which has been called "flight from reality",<sup>17</sup> played a major role .

It is sometimes said that the Nazis won because they were superb propagandists knowing how to appeal to the mass mind. The strange image of a superman hero-leader was built up with the aid of parades and banners, searchlights playing on the swastika symbol, uniforms and songs. The spectacle reached deeply into the unconscious minds of simple people and touched chords of unreason.<sup>18</sup> However, the distress produced by the Depression was one of the major factors that catapulted them to power. To counteract the Depression, Hitler introduced a gigantic public works programme that melded gradually into a rearmament programme. As a result, Germany was the first to recover from it.

In Austria, the coming of the Depression brought a number of tensions into open. Until 1930, the Nazis were successfully marginalised by the parliamentary system. After that, Hitler's growing success in Germany and its impact of the Depression helped the Nationalist Socialist Democratic Party of Austria (NSDAP) to become a genuine populist force. To combat this Nazis menace, the Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dolfuss created his own

---

<sup>17</sup>. Jerome Blum, Rondo Cameron and Thomas G.Barnes, *The European World Since 1815 : Triumph and Transition* (Roulledge and Kegah Paul Ltd., London.1967). p.399.

<sup>18</sup>. Stromberg, n.8, pp.202-3.

brand of fascism by colluding with a majority of *Heimwehr*. In spite of the assassination of the Chancellor in 1934, the years between 1932-38 were a period of growing authoritarianism. The Austrian NSDAP continued relentlessly to build up its organisation and membership throughout the country and provided a natural haven for the increasing number of *Heimwehr* members disenchanted at the emasculation of the movement. But the intervention of France had prevented Hitler from taking advantage of the situation to absorb Austria.

During the years when Germany and Austria were shaken by social unrest and were moving inexorably towards authoritarian government, Britain and France were more or less safe from the threat of revolution. Counting on German reparations to pay the cost, the French government undertook at once an extensive programme of physical reconstruction of the war damaged areas. When German reparations failed to materialise in the expected amount, the ramshackle methods used to finance the reconstruction took the toll. The franc depreciated and the working class bore most of the burden of increased taxation. Thus as in Germany, the inflation contributed to the growth of extremism on both the Right and the Left.<sup>19</sup>

Between the elections of 1932 and 1934, five governments had tried and failed to secure measures to bring about a balanced

---

<sup>19</sup>. Blum, Cameron and Barnes, n.17, p.370.

budget. This caused alarm to those concerned with stability of currency and revived the belief that French parliamentary democracy produced only sterile talk. Thus a number of anti-parliamentary leagues revived: *Action Francaise*, *Solidarite Francaise*, *Parti Fasciste* and *Croix de Feu*. Under the leadership of Colonel de la Roche, a man with forceful personality and effective public manners, *Croix de Feu* evolved into a right wing party preparing for the next electoral contest. Another important organisation was the *Action Francaise* led by vitriolic writer Charles Mauras. It was rabidly nationalist and frankly reactionary.<sup>20</sup>

The Depression spawned social protest. In 1934, expecting a Fascist coup d'etat, open riots broke out. To combat fascist tendencies, the Socialists, together with Radicals, brought about a "Popular Front". It was not surprising that Socialists had taken up this anti-fascist posture. But the striking change in Communists who had taken part in riots against the socialist government in 1934, was determined by the success of Hitler and Nazis in Germany.

However, as a response to the formation of a coalition government by Popular Front, the *Parti Populaire Francais (PPF)* was formed in 1936 by Doriot. With the financial backing from conservative businessmen and landowners, the PPF's ideology was radical critique of Bolshevism, class warfare, liberalism and

---

<sup>20</sup> R. A. C. Parker, *Europe 1919-1945* (London, Weidenfield, 1969), p.174.

capitalism, and by the end of 1938 had adopted elements of 'cultural' anti-Semitism. Lacking pragmatic tactical flair of Hitler or Mussolini, Doriot refused to pursue a legal route to power by contesting elections or to build up paramilitary force for a putsch. Nor did he show any interest in forging alliances with other right-wing forces such as *Parti Social Francais*. Thus his scheme for social, economic and moral regeneration of the nation remained utopian myth of an impotent extra-parliamentary movement.<sup>21</sup> Despite its many structural weaknesses, France's liberal system had successfully resisted the fascist challenge.

A threat to liberal democracy from extreme political right remained far from success in Britain during this period. Even though many suffered directly from unemployment or stagnant business, the deflationary policies and stability of prices helped the middle class with fixed or inflexible incomes. In addition, the electoral system followed by the British checked the minority conservative party to gain majority in the House of Commons.<sup>22</sup>

However, in the early 1930s Oswald Mosley set himself the task of organising a British fascist movement. He invited the members of the fascist groups to join the British Union of Fascists (BUF) which was launched in 1932. The full panoply of fascism began to appear which included parades and marches. Anti-

---

<sup>21</sup>. Griffin, n. 11, p.134.

<sup>22</sup>. *ibid*, pp.131-33.



Semitic, anti-socialist and anti-parliamentary propoganda existed on a large scale. In June 1934, they had a great rally in London which was marked by extreme violence used against interrupters. This probably declined Mosley's support. The electoral popularity of its programme for a "Greater Britain" was tested in sixty-six metropolitan boroughs and provincial towns. In 1937 the BUF candidates did badly everywhere except in the party's stronghold. In the meantime the membership which had quickly reached 50,000 in the early days, slumped to 5,000 after the first episodes of public disorder.

The second blow came shortly after the Rohn purge in Germany which increased distaste for a movement which openly copied Nazism. But the imposition of a legislation forbidding uniforms and limiting freedoms of assembly by the then government became a nail in their coffin. In 1940, the BUF was outlawed and this decision was prompted more by fears that it represented a potential source of enemy espionage than that it posed any serious risk to British democracy.

The British politics between the wars took the form of a peaceful and largely national contest between the political parties. Despite extremist challenges, they remained content to work within the established constitutional framework and to act with tolerable restraint towards their opponents. The result was that, Britain by

the end of 1930s was a society more united in outlook and politically less turbulent than the Britain of 1914.

Fascism was the great political surprise of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The two societies in which fascism appeared full blown - the Italian and the German - had things in common that distinguished them from societies of France and Britain. In these western democracies, middle class values and the middle class way of life predominated without question.

France and Britain had won the First World War but Germany had lost. Thus the origins of fascism in Germany and Italy arose out of the frustrations of the lower middle class from which so many of these former soldiers and dissatisfied students had come. The additional strength came when men of property and people with conservative inclination began to see in fascism a possible ally in their struggle with political Left that would deprive them of private property. In the year of heightened trade unionism and revolutionary socialism, the mass felt that authoritarian rule offered the only solution.

#### **THE POST-WORLD WAR YEARS:**

For many Europeans, the end of Second World War was the beginning of a new era. Even as the War ended, the full horror of racist policies of Nazism was only gradually coming to light. The politicians and soldiers worked to devise new constitutional

arrangement in many countries. Citizens preferred to take little interest in politics, concentrating instead on taking up their lives and rebuilding their economies. In all countries, there was a demand for political, social and economic reform.

After the Second World War, Germany was briefly divided into four sectors of Allied occupation. Most right wing extremists were interned or in hiding. Mobilisation was further obstructed by denazification policy, which included a provision requiring the appeal of all parties by the Allied forces. However, a number of small parties originated and contested elections but they did not gain much support. Thus, the whole environment generally remained hostile to the extreme-right movements in the years immediately after the War.<sup>23</sup>

Similarly, in France the national disgrace of collaboration and the Vichy regime replaced taboo on any overtly pro-fascist activity. Thousands of collaborators were executed. In the October 1945 election, the pre-war Right was eliminated almost entirely. In Britain, in one of the stunning electoral upsets, the voters in June 1945 chose the Labour Party and Clement Attlee over the conservatives. However, the Attlee's government faced severe economic problems in the coming years. Resources had to be devoted to the rebuilding of much that had been destroyed or

---

<sup>23</sup>. Uwe Backes and Cas Mudde, "Germany: Extremism without Successful Parties", *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), vol.53 (2000), p.458.

damaged during the war. Demand for resources led to increase in the value and volume of imports. It further brought about inflation which was worsened by increasing world prices. To try to solve parts of its problems the government imposed charges for some Health Service facilities which brought about a split in the party and eventually to the electoral defeat in the next election.<sup>24</sup>

However, contrary to what many Europeans continue to believe, fascism did not evaporate with the defeat of fascist regimes. In spite of the lack of political respectability and lack of support, the ideology and objects of fascism were kept alive. In Britain, small book clubs and various organisations gave Oswald Mosley a base that provided audiences and enough people to stage rallies. In France, a new movement mushroomed for a little while : Poujadism, a mixture of right-wing and populist elements.

In Italy, in spite of legal bans, the Italian Social Movement (MSI) was formed as early as 1946. It was founded by survivors of Mussolini's Italian Social Republic who wished to keep alive the political traditions deriving from the fascist experience. With the expulsion of the Communists from the post war anti-fascist coalition government in May 1947, the relations between the Communists and the Christian Democrats became increasingly bitter. This gave an opportunity for the MSI to gain acceptance as

---

<sup>24</sup>. Edward Whitting Fox, *The Emergence of Modern European World: Form the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Essex, Blackwell Publishers, 1991), pp.374-5.

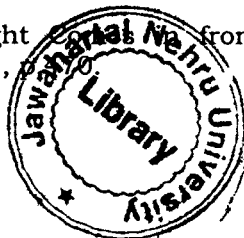
an ally of Christian Democrats in an anti-Communist crusade. Co-operation between the two parties in some places at the local level gave the party a modest but not insignificant electoral performances with two per cent at the general elections with even better performance at local level in 1948.<sup>25</sup>

In Austria, the 'League of Independents' (*Verband der Unabhangigen:VdU*) was founded in 1949 to challenge the practice of Proporz. Under this system the two parties, the People's Party and the Socialist Party, divided posts in the government, the bureaucracy and in public agencies of the economy between them in proportion to their representation in parliament. Thus Austria possessed no culture of opposition. It was this lack of opposition that led to the establishment of a 'Third Force' which was to serve as a 'balance on the political scale' between the Socialist left and the Catholic -Conservative right. It was founded with the intention of creating a liberal, third-party alternative to the *Demokrat* of government by Proporz . In the 1949 elections, it parlayed this dissatisfaction into what was the largest voter share for a third party in the history of the Third Republic . Its elected representatives entered parliament hopeful of breaching the Proporz and democratising the parliament by providing an alternative partner for either of the majority parties. Instead, the prospect of a small coalition of the VdU so terrified the coalition leaders that their

---

<sup>25</sup>. James L. Newell, "Italy : The Extreme Right from the Cold", *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), Vol.53 (2000),

TH-9088



collaboration was strengthened. The VdU was treated as a Nazi party reincarnate as it attracted war veterans and half a million or so former Nazis as its members. Robbed of the possibility of realising its reform program, the VdU lost many of its supporters and thus started withering away.<sup>26</sup>

The problem that all fascist faced in 1940s was not lack of coherent ideology but of political respectability. Most Europeans knew what had happened the last time when such ideas had gained mass support and therefore few were prepared to vote for it again.

#### **MODERATE YEARS OF EXTREME-RIGHT PARTIES:**

The 1950s were times of economic growth and stability. Fascists could not make much headway during this period when anti-communism was the keystone of most European countries' foreign policy. In Germany, the extreme-right parties saw the gradual disappearance of its electoral basis. Their political potential was absorbed by the large Christian conservative 'catch-all-party' CDU/CSU. Moreover, when the reasonably successful Socialist Reich Party was banned by the Constitutional court on the ground of neo-nazi character in 1952, the extreme-right was reminded of the narrow margins of toleration.<sup>27</sup>The Government continued the occupation powers' policies of bringing Nazi war criminals to trial,

---

<sup>26</sup>. Max Riedlsperger, "Heil Haider! The Revitalisation of the Austrian Freedom Party since 1986" *Politics and Society in Germany, Austria and Switzerland*, vol.4, no.3 (Summer 1992), pp.20-24.

<sup>27</sup>. Backes and Mudde, n.23, p.458.

the policy of denazification and the weeding out of former Nazis from public posts.

In Italy attempts were made during the 1950s to gain acceptance as a legitimate political interlocutor. It began in 1950 with the proposal launched by party Secretary De Marsanich for a unity-of-action pact of parties of the right. The Italian Socialist Movement (MSI) was accorded some legitimacy it wanted when Christian Democrats agreed to accept its parliamentary votes to confirm the Zoli government in 1957. This was mainly because of the predominance within the Christian Democratic Party of those who felt the threat posed by MSI to its right flank was best dealt with by a slow progress of integration.<sup>28</sup> However, this strategy came to an end when serious rioting broke out during the National Congress of MSI and the government was forced to resign.

In France, the Poujadism started basically as a protest against high taxation but later it spread like a wildfire. Poujadist propaganda was directed against the rich and powerful, the technocrats and officials. Negation, cynicism, xenophobia and violence were effective weapons for campaigning but they themselves became the means of destruction of the party. Like

---

<sup>28</sup>. Newell, n.25, p.471.

other popular authoritarian right-wing movements, it was violent, eruptive and short lived.<sup>29</sup>

Winston Churchill assumed leadership in the 1951 election in Britain. His government benefited from the fall in prices following the end of Korean War and from the increased output from industries. These favourable changes allowed the government to end rationing, lower taxes and encourage economic expansion. This led to increase in demand for labour: married women were encouraged to return to work while immigrants from Commonwealth countries were attracted to take jobs which the affluent British were unwilling to do.<sup>30</sup>

During this time, a new wave of extreme right party evolved in Austria. The League of Independents' short existence ended in 1956 due to internal quarrels and was reorganised as Freedom Party. The party contained few liberals, consisting largely of the German national rump of the Third Lager and moving decisively to the Right of the position the founders of the League had intended to occupy. The party programme declared that Austria was a German state and emphasised the positive side of the Austrian participation in the war. It also placed emphasis on family values, private property and some aspects of Liberal programme. For the first few years, it

---

<sup>29</sup>. Phillip M. Williams, *Crisis and Compromise: Politics in the Fourth Republic* (London, Longmans, Greens and Co. Ltd., 1964), pp. 162-9.

<sup>30</sup>. Peter Lome, *Europe Since 1945* (London, 1985), p.165.



acted as a Ghetto Party with its ideology based on German nationalism, anti-clericalism, anti-socialism and protest.

Under the leadership of Friedrich Peter, the Freedom Party began its evolution towards becoming a party of the present. He committed himself '....to again pick up the thread of that which in Austria was broken at the end of the last century-namely the further development of liberalism'.<sup>31</sup> The party sought to establish itself as the watchdog of the people against the machinations of the coalition. It attempted to awaken populist protest with a running commentary on corruption and scandal in government, demands for privatisation of the bloated socialised sector of the economy and advocacy of increased freedom for private initiative. In spite of these moves, the exclusionary politics of the Proporz prevented the Freedom Party from becoming anything more than 'two-and-a-half-party system'. Likewise, it was nearly totally isolated from the mainstream of political competition.

Thus 1950s were the years of doldrums of parties extremely committed to defending Nazi ideas. However, these were also years of immigrant labour. Since 1945, Western Europe experienced successive waves of immigration. One involved the post-war phase of returning nationals displaced by frontiers or by process of decolonisation. Another phase surrounded the massive flow of workers and later their dependents. The main migrant stream to

---

<sup>31</sup>. Riedsperger, n.26, pp.22-24.

Britain came from the South Asian countries like India and Pakistan which were liberated from the colonial rule of the British a few years back. French immigrants were mainly from North Africa, particularly Algeria.

The immigrants, who remained from economic necessity became vulnerable to the respective countries' society and polity. Extreme violence was used against them. This treatment continued in the 1960s due to which the extreme-right parties became relevant once again.

#### **EXTREME-RIGHT AT THE END OF THE 'EMPIRE':**

During the days of the end of the Empires, it was primarily the result of the attraction which the higher standard of living enjoyed by Europeans had for the inhabitants of the countries which they formerly conquered and occupied. This had resulted in the 'politics of ethnicity', stemming from the fact that a number of people from Third World living in Western Europe had black and brown faces.

In France, industrialisation took place most rapidly during this period, largely in the electronics, engineering and automobile sectors. With the development of modern industry, the demand for unskilled labour went up as well which brought in many coloured immigrant workers. During this period from 1962 to 1965 large number of Harkis Muslims, who had fought for France during the

war, immigrated to France. This tightly knit community found it difficult to mix with other immigrant workers, composed mostly of single men who had come to France to work leaving their families at home. The harassment had become extreme with the climax of the Algerian War of independence. The racist prejudices fed on the exploitation of immigrants who took up unskilled, low paid jobs. They were seen as a threat as Algerian war had shown how dramatically and decisively French culture and society had been rejected.<sup>32</sup>

By now, the British fascism had regrouped within the National Front, which represented the convergence of neo-fascist and racist politics. It was the issue of immigration which had made it capable of breaking the mould of British politics. The immigration issue and the social and economic context provided the racists with the political opportunity for which they had waited so long. The rise of National Front during this time signified that votes could be won on the issue of race.

In case of Austria, the great concern of the public was always unemployment. In the 1960s this figure was held below 3%. Austria had full employment in 1960-61. Therefore, the "guest workers" were brought in to fill in general, menial jobs such as

---

<sup>32</sup>. Pierre Brechon and Subrata Kumar Mitra, "National Front in France: The Emergence of Extreme-Right Protest Movement", *Comparative Politics* (New York), vol.25, no.1, October 1992, p.71.

those in industry and domestic service, and as unskilled factory workers.<sup>33</sup> At this time, the coalition began to show the strains of the constant compromise necessary to hold it together. Both major parties courted the Freedom Party in case a small coalition should become necessary. In 1963, for the first time the Socialist Party broke the practice under which the members of parliament of the coalition voted as a block and joined the Freedom Party in opposing the People's Party's proposal to permit the return of Otto Von Habsburg to Austria. The Freedom Party of Austria (FPO) naturally hoped that this would lead to a small coalition government with the socialists that would end its years of isolation, but a lack of stability of democracy and the continued antipathy of many in both parties for the right-extremist FPO combined to force them back together again.

The first successful extreme right mobilisation in Germany came with the foundation of National Democratic Party (NPD) of Germany in 1964. At its highpoint, the party counted almost three quarters of the 'organised' German right wing extremists. However, its failure to overcome the five percent hurdle in 1969 elections was the beginning of its end. Even though it tried to revitalise itself by adopting immigration issue, the days were numbered and the future belonged to other extreme parties.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup>. Barbara Jelavich, *Modern Austria : Empire and Republic 1880-1986* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987), p.310.

<sup>34</sup>. Backes and Mudde, n.23, p.458.

The Italian politics witnessed the emergence of quasi paramilitary groupings of the far-right designed for those who wanted an active part in the struggle against the regime and 'reds' but who were alienated within MSI. It registered its worst performance of four per cent at the 1968 general election. Giorgio Almirante who took over the party secretary the next year tried to reassert its hegemony by adopting 'on the street' profile. According to it, every street action of the Communists would be met by a counter mobilisation spearheaded by MSI. On the other hand, there was to be a change in language with less emphasis on the nostalgia of fascist past and more emphasis on the task of defending Italy against the supposed concession to wing subversion.<sup>35</sup> The strategy seemed successful as in the next general election, MSI increased its electorate.

The colonies of the European countries had become independent. The loss of territory and hegemony over them was set back to the far-right supporters. However, by targeting the immigrants from these countries which increased over the years, helped the same parties to gain strength and reemerge in the political sphere of their respective countries. The harassment continued and along with the oil crisis in the 1970s, the extreme-right parties in Western Europe had another breakthrough.

---

<sup>35</sup>. Newell, n.25, p.472.

## **FAR-RIGHT IN THE YEARS OF OIL CRISIS AND IMMIGRATION:**

The ideas of fascism had survived the war, but it was the deepening crisis of 1970s which gave it the opportunity to expand its audience. Mass unemployment had created despair and insecurity amongst millions of Europeans, and many Governments felt obliged to carry out cuts in social welfare provisions. In such circumstances the presence of ethnic and cultural minorities offered a ready scapegoat for a whole range of social problems including unemployment, increase in crime, lack of housing and so on. It was in this climate that racists, extreme-right terrorists and neo-fascists found opportunities which many had thought would never arise again.

MSI in Italy had won nine percent of the vote in 1972 general election. However, it failed to appeal to the Christian Democrats because of its fascist nostalgia. In the 1976 elections, it lost a third of the support it had enjoyed in the previous election by gaining six per cent of the votes. Attempting to cut a figure for itself as the 'party of protest', it accepted isolation which benefited the party in the long run.

Austria was too affected by the general recession in 1974-75 caused by worldwide oil crisis. In 1975, Austrian economic conditions worsened, but the government and institutions of the social partnership were able to handle the accompanying problems; some foreign workers were sent home. In the general election which was held during this time the socialists used the 'catch-all party'

means to come to power. Bruno Kreisky who became the Chancellor remained in power for the next thirteen years.

In France under a series of rightist governments restrictive immigration measures coupled with an ever more virulent campaign against the 'clandestine' were introduced throughout the 1970s. The extreme right party Le Front National came into existence in 1972 under the leadership of Jean Marie Le Pen. Although this was of negligible importance at its time of inception it became a significant force in national politics in later years. It was nationalist and gave priority to defending the independence and integrity of the nation.

The issue of race and immigration became increasingly explosive with a massive outburst of racist violence against Algerians in 1973. By the time of the Presidential election in 1974, immigration was a central political issue, readily exploited by such groups as the extreme right *Ordre Nouveau* and *Le Front National*, which built up the 'clandestine' immigrant workers into the major threat facing France. The pressure against immigrants continued throughout the 1970s, with short lived attempt to prevent family reunification. The 'clandestine' began to be represented as the symbol of all that was 'undesirable', a charge on public funds, a threat to public order and a numerical threat to French identity. Inassimilable in the sense of simply not being French, they had to be purged from the body politic. Whatever the reason, anti-Arab

racism found a ready hold in the French mind and in French society.<sup>36</sup>

The increased hysterical racism of the 1970s, stimulated by the far right, promulgated by successive governments, promoted by media and endorsed by the popular sentiment achieved its objectives. The Austrian Freedom Party started to reap the fruits of long term strategy of relocating the Centre Party System. The stage was also set for the triumphal re-entry into the mainstream of French politics of the Racist Right, *Le Front National* in the early 1980s.

#### **CONSLUSION:**

The far-right parties which came into lime light once again in the 1980s, have their historical base in the pre-war years. An important basis on which some inter-war fascists could build was the presence of a native tradition of pre 1914 proto-fascism, for example national syndicalism in Italy, currents of *Volkisch* thought in Germany and the revolutionary syndicalists wing of *Action Francaises* in France. But since the inter-war period the fascist movement, which is very similar to the present day extreme-right parties, gained the support of the mass to a great extent.

---

<sup>36</sup>. Cathie Lloyd and Hazel Waters, "France : One Culture, One People?, *Race and Class* (London), Vol.32, No.3(1991), pp.56-67.



The First World War acted as the test for the liberal democracies in Europe. It had created a condition in which mass politicisation of society coincided with acute socio-economic problems, the polarisation of the radical left and the right and the weakening of the Parliamentary system. Thus in the immediate aftermath of the war the necessary structural conditions for the rise of potent fascist movements, namely defective liberal democracies undergoing major disfunction in a climate of crisis existed across the Westernised World.

After 1928 the situation changed rapidly as a new structural crisis hit the Western World. The Great Depression created the local conditions for Nazism's spectacular rise in electoral strength: the apparent success of Mussolini's totalitarian state in solving Italy's endemic problems of economic backwardness and political instability combined with the growing impact of the 'national awakening' led by Hitler, seemed viable solutions to the ills of the respective nations. By the time the war broke out in 1939, though it was only in Italy and Germany that fascism had a breakthrough, there was no shortage of fascists in other countries.

The years immediately after the World Wars were moderate and under control. European governments in all states put down any fascist movement which made them recall the past few years. In the 1950s and 1960s the glories of Nazi and fascist regimes were not so remote. The countries of Asia and Africa achieved

independence from their colonial masters during this period. This was a great loss to the European countries in terms of territory and power. The native supporters of the colonial rule moved to the countries in Europe in search of employment and better standard of living . This gave an opportunity for the extreme-right parties to use the question of immigration as its primary appeal. The immigration along with the oil crisis in the 1970s intensified the political participation of the far-right parties. The oil crisis triggered off the socio-economic upheaval and served the economic crisis. The situation which existed then was to an extent a deja-vu of the inter war period. The economic decline and unemployment was invariably related to the issue of race and became a key element in the unstable political situation. Politicians started to use the issue of racism as a means of getting elected and made great play with the officially published statistics about immigrations in order to hide the exact extent of the phenomenon. Amongst them Jean Marie Le Pen, the leader of *Le Front National* of France is committed to fascism. He echoes the slogan of the 1930s and dismisses the holocaust as 'a detail' in Second World War. These act as a code invitation to his followers to repeat the operation on the North African immigrants which result in the growth in the popularity of the many anti-movements in France.

## Chapter II

### FRONT NATIONAL OF FRANCE

**“I prefer my daughters to my cousins, my cousins to my neighbours and my neighbours to strangers.”**

**-Jean Marie Le Pen**

These words were spoken by Jean Marie Le Pen, the leader of the *Front National* (FN), the extreme – Right party of France. It showed his skills of acting as a spokesman for prejudice and racist ideas which according to him were self-evident truths of the French society. Though the party achieved unprecedented publicity and electoral support only in the 1980s, the presence of extreme-Right is not a new phenomenon in France: its existence can be traced back to the French Revolution when its hostility was turned towards Republican ideas, and its aim was to rehabilitate the monarchy. More recently, between the wars, while other countries witnessed the rise of fascism and totalitarianism, France saw the emergence of nationalist, anti-Communist, anti-Semitic leagues. After the war, though the extreme-Right was suppressed, the flare did not burn out completely. The movement gained little support when the French colonial rule ended in many African countries, especially Algeria.

Although it was of negligible importance during the time of its inception, it has been one of the key political parties in the French as well as the European politics. Born in 1972, it survived under

the leadership of Jean Marie Le Pen to become a significant force in national politics. The *Front National* was a confederation which gathered together various groups from extreme-Right: pro-Vichy, neo-Fascist, former Poujadist and monarchists in favour of Algeria. The contemporary ideology is nationalist in the sense that it gives priority to defending independence and integrity of the nation. It is populist in so far as it seeks to mobilise support by claiming to speak on behalf of ordinary, decent people against a corrupt, degenerated ruling elite.<sup>1</sup>

Influenced by the arguments of the New Right theorists concerning the ideological struggle and the need for thorough renewal of the right-wing political culture, the FN has devoted enormous effort to production and dissemination of ideology. This area of party's activity has been coordinated by *Delegue General* and his staff. This propaganda section produces posters, tracts, leaflets, audio and video cassettes etc. A separate section exists for organising major demonstrations, commemorations, festivals, public meetings and so forth. A training section runs the *Institute de Formation National (IFN)* to educate activists, organise lectures etc. The communication section deals with press releases and monitors the media. The theoretical journal *Identite* serves as a laboratory and showcase of ideas which is distilled into the party's manifesto.

---

<sup>1</sup>. Alistair Cole, *French Politics and Society* (London, Prentice Press Hall), p.175.

*Front National* derives elements from almost every major current of extreme right wing thought. It provides a common ground between the party's different ideological families: revolutionary nationalists / neo-fascists, classical nationalists, royalists, catholic traditionalists, nationalist conservatives and the New Right. Thus FN tolerates a considerable degree of internal diversity, subject to the prohibition of organised factionalism. At the same time, the FN has set out its common programme in numerous publications and has underpinned it with theoretical arguments developed in books and articles by party's intellectuals.<sup>2</sup>

#### **THE PROGRAMME OF THE FRONT NATIONAL:-**

The Front National's policies have appealed to a sizeable proportion of the French electorate. Over the time, the party has broadened its policy profile to counter the view that it is a single-issue movement and has tried to pose as a credible party for a government. Furthermore, as it moved from splinter or a small group status to a mass political party, it felt the need to fine-tune its programme appropriately.

**Anti-Communism** was a strong party line as long as communism remained prevalent at home and abroad. Though it was not a vote winner, it attracted a small number of supporters who were against abolition of private property and state ownership

---

<sup>2</sup>. Christopher Flood, "National Populism", in Christopher Flood and Laurence Bell (eds.), *Political Ideas in Contemporary France* (London, Pinter Publishers, 1997), p.105.

of means of production. However, the increasing unemployment, failure of government to understand people's needs and insecurity provided the party with a number of attractive policy issues in the 1980s.<sup>3</sup>

"We are the people against the Establishment"<sup>4</sup>, runs the heading of one of the sections in *Militer au Front*, a manual for FN activists. It denounces the oligarchies of the main political parties and claims that France is undergoing a crisis of values and identity, aimed as host of urgent social, economic and political problems. The blame for this state of affairs is placed squarely on 'la bandes des quatre' : the *Parti Socialiste* (PS), the *Parti Communiste Francaise* (PCF), the centre-right *Union Pour la Democratie Francaise* (UDF) and Gaullist *Rassemblement pour la Republique* (RPR). The FN claims the 'Gang of Four' use the method of 'media plot' to victimise it and deny its expression.<sup>5</sup> FN presents these parties as being equally statist, incompetent, devoid of idealism, different to the interest of the nation and often corrupt. The *Front National* asserts that it wants to return power to the French people and set up a real democracy where people could express themselves directly through referendums that they could also initiate. Thus, although FN professes to differ from the old extreme right because it

---

<sup>3</sup>. Paul Hainsworth and Paul Mitchell, "France: The Front National from Crossroads to Crossroads?", *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), vol.53, 2000, p.444.

<sup>4</sup>. Flood, n.2, p.108.

<sup>5</sup>. C. Rodgers, "Le Front National" in N. A. Addinall(ed.), *French Political Parties: A Documentary Guide* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1995)

accepts democratic, republican principle, its vilification of the mainstream parties provides a substitute for the extreme right's traditional distrust of parliamentary democracy as such. The denunciation of these groups sometime echo the extreme right's eternal obsession with Jews who exercise a hidden control over the lever of power.

**Anti-Semitism** has a long and deep tradition in France, surfacing most notably in the response to German overlordship during the Second World War. Anti-Semitism has been an undercurrent in Le Pen's media interviews and is more explicit at rallies and in speeches by other FN leaders. Hatred against Jews and immigrants is the message underpinning Le Pen's demand for 'France for French'. Romain Marie, a FN Euro-MP criticised 'the tendency of Jews to monopolise the highest positions in western nations'. He added, 'The modern world is experiencing a new intrusion of the Jewish phenomenon...Marx and Rothschild are by the way of being two sides of the same coin'.<sup>6</sup> A few Jewish or Masonic associations, which have their own lobbies in the Government, are denounced as a threat to national interest. As in the past, the enemy within is linked to an enemy without. These lobbies and interest groups are seen to be locked into the emergent

---

<sup>6</sup>. Geoffrey Harris, *The Dark Side of Europe* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p. 73.

global system of political states and the European Union as its Trojan Horse<sup>7</sup>.

The emergence of the United States in the 1990s as the only surviving superpower was greeted with great ambivalence. It led to a **dislike for American society** which was multi-ethnic and encouraged consumerism and a debase mass culture. The American style of globalisation and US trade retaliation against European products resonated strongly with FN as well as other parties. **Anti-Globalisation** was followed by the party as it was regarded as the most serious threat to French national identity, destroying nations and cultures, differences and frontiers. In the 1980s, Le Pen fretted about France's borders. He won the support by linking domestic economic insecurities to threats from abroad. In the 1990s, he switched his targets from immigrants to globalisation. The fear of immigrants was easily translated into fear of foreign goods, labour and capital<sup>8</sup>. This debate on globalisation has spilled over and has affected French relationship with Europe.

The FN has never supported the idea that France should become a component of a fully federated European super state. But this is not to say that the party has been hostile to all forms of European organisation. On the economic and defence front, Le Pen has been using European Union (EU) as a buffer. As a number of

---

7. Flood, n. 2, p.110

8. Sophie Meunir, "The French Exception", *Foreign Affairs* (New York), vol.79, no,4, July-August 2000, p.110.



Euroskeptical groups have started praising EU as France's only realistic alternative to American – led globalisation, Le Pen has been forced to shift sides.<sup>9</sup> In the area of defence, the FN distinguishes itself from other parties by its apparent enthusiasm for North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Le Pen shows that he is prepared to break with the Gaullist tradition of foreign policy and to reintegrate the French forces into NATO military command structure. He also integrates the pro-European thinking of new-right into his view of a strong Europe, obviously white Europe, confronting the Soviet Union<sup>10</sup>.

However, as the self-proclaimed defender of identities, it purports to stand for a European Europe, just as it does for a French France. Its intellectuals have persistently expounded the nobility of the common European heritage of culture and civilisation with France as its epitome. In spite of these moves, the party has always claimed that the supranationalist concept which underlies the progressive integration of what has now become the European Union is unacceptable in principle and damaging in practice. Part of the complaint against EU centres on the claim that it aims not only to abolish internal frontiers but also to abandon meaningful external frontiers as well. FN publicists preached against the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT) agreement on the

---

<sup>9</sup>. *ibid.*, p.114.

<sup>10</sup>. Harris, n.6, p.81

grounds that no state or group of states should have international free trade imposed on it against its interests.<sup>11</sup>

Just as FN wants to protect French products and services, **protection from immigrant competition** is called for by the FN. As a single-issue movement, it is portrayed as rallying support around the theme of immigration. In France, the term 'immigrant' is used to describe widely differing population which in 1991 totaled around four and a half million people out of a population of approximately fifty six million. This included people from various European countries – particularly Portugal, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Poland and Yugoslavia ; asylum seekers from East Asia, South America and Middle East; large communities of Algerians, Moroccans and Tunisians whose presence is linked with France's colonial history.<sup>12</sup>

Front National's constant refrain is that immigrants are a major cause of unemployment among native French population as they act as rivals for jobs. They are even targeted to increasing crime, civil unrest, urban decay, deterioration of schools, alien religious and cultural practices. According to FN, the presence of sympathetic interest groups in the establishment has benefited the immigrants. They get an access to state benefits and services which are denied to the native French people. This is regarded as the

---

<sup>11</sup>. Flood, n.2, pp.132-3

<sup>12</sup>. Cathie Lloyd and Hazel Waters, "France : One Culture, One People?", *Race and Class* (London), vol.32, no.3, 1991, p.51

positive discrimination in favour of immigrants where negative discrimination against the French population.<sup>13</sup>

Le Pen goes a step ahead in the issue of immigration when he discriminates between the **European** and **non-European immigrants** – mostly black Muslims from countries of north Africa and Turkey. They are presented as a significant threat to French identity and are made scapegoats as the sources and bearers of all evils. Islam, the religion practiced by most of these immigrants, is the second religion in France, the size of the Muslim community is constantly increasing, mosques and Koranic schools are proliferating. According to FN, Islam is double faced – tolerant when it is not in a position of strength, but intolerant and aggressive when it is in an expansionist period. It adds that Islam has a theoretic, totalitarian world view which bases the political and personal spheres on the religion, consequently making it incompatible with European culture.<sup>14</sup> Over the years, FN has put forward a number of proposals to solve the problem of inassimilable immigrants. It includes ban on a new immigration, a ban on family regrouping, expulsion of unemployed and those convicted in criminal cases, restricted access to welfare benefits etc.

This ability of Le Pen to understand the fears in the minds of people and to speak the unspeakable makes him people's hero. Again, by the provocative handling of the **issues of AIDS** and

---

<sup>13</sup>. Flood, n.2, pp.117-8

<sup>14</sup>. *ibid.*, p.118

**homosexuality**, he poses as a defender of moral order. By touching on the collective fear and anxiety of millions of people and speaking for them in a way that a respectable politicians would never do, he attracts the attention of the mass. He denounces homosexuality linking it to the problem of immigrants. According to him, at a time when immigrants and the 'third world' are 'over breeding', he argues that homosexuality could bring France to the 'end of the world'. In his handling of the issues of AIDS, he claimed that people carrying AIDS virus should be isolated from the rest of the society in 'sedatoriums' as, in his view, condoms were an ineffective protection against the virus. **Abortion** is another issue which enables him to blame the establishment for the 'moral decline' of the country. He proposes to stop social security payments for abortions. By his usual skill of touching the problem in a way that puts everyone else on the defensive, he knows that the more panic he can create, the more chance there is that people will take his views seriously.<sup>15</sup>

The official programme of the *Front National* is more opportunistic in nature than a coherent programme. It caters to the popular anxiety at a time of collective uncertainty. It singles out particular groups as instruments of damage to nation's identity, cohesion and material well being. By performing a balancing act between the need to highlight the part's difference from the Right. It satisfies a hard core of neo-fascists and protects the party from losing too many moderate votes.

---

<sup>15</sup>. Harris, n.6, pp.78-79

## **THE ELECTORAL RISE OF THE FRONT NATIONAL :-**

The *Front National*, after its birth in 1972, had stagnated for a number of years. However, its dramatic rise in the 1980s has been one of the most significant developments in French politics. When Le Pen had its first electoral success, there was a tendency to dismiss his idea as a re-run of the Poujadist movement which had achieved success in 1956. The social crisis of the 1970s coupled with issues of immigration and insecurity made Le Pen phenomenon more significant politically and sociologically.

Success first occurred in relatively unimportant by-election where the candidates were well-known figures of the FN. In the Municipal election of 1983, Le Pen's list obtained 11.3 per cent in Paris's 20<sup>th</sup> *Arrondissement*. In Deux constituency, the candidates were - Deputy and Mayor Françoise Gaspard of the Socialists, who had a progressive view about immigrants, and Jean-Pierre Stirbois, Le Pen's second-in command as Secretary General of the FN, who had nursed the constituency for some time.

In the first ballot the list of the left received 42.7 per cent of the vote, the FN 16.7 per cent and the mainstream right 40.6 per cent. The odds were that the latter would win the second ballot. However, in order to pay it safe, the moderate right merged the list between the ballots by striking a deal within the FN. It granted the FN and its sympathisers twelve out of thirty nine seats and a number of aldermen. Eventhough some liberal leaders like Simon Weil rejected this strategy, the honourable leaders like Jacque

Chirac and Gaspard did not look back. Eventhough this victory did not matter much in political terms, it gave a major breakthrough to the FN. In the words of Daniel Singer it turned ‘ yesterday’s untouchable into tomorrow’s respectable allies’.<sup>16</sup> Le Pen became a favourite guest on various radio and television shows and proved quite an effective performer. Since then, FN has moved skillfully and swiftly to exploit the political space abandoned to it by Left’s failure to challenge racism established Right’s internal disarray.

### **The European Elections of 1984**

During this time, the political landscape of the country was in order. The centre-right opposition was still in disarray with leading figures vying with each other for all-important nomination for the coming Presidential election in 1988. This was accompanied by the crisis of the left. The communists had left the government but had lost so much credibility that they could not be a serious focus of opposition. Within the Socialist Party, there was a split between those who accepted the need for economic retrenchment and the acceptance of European Monetary System (EMS) and those who wanted economic growth, devaluation and dose of protectionism.

In this political turmoil, its real take-off came in the 1984 European elections when it registered its first spectacular victory on a national level by attracting 11.2 per cent of the vote and ten seats

---

<sup>16</sup>. Daniel Singer, “The Resistable Rise of Jean-Marie Le Pen”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (London), vol.14, no.3, 1991, p.373.

in European Parliament.<sup>17</sup> It became a step in the direction of political respectability which the far-right had been seeking for four decades. This was not an apparent breakthrough but was a culmination of years of effort and organisation throughout years of margins of electoral politics. The spectacular victory of the FN in this election was explained in a variety of ways. At first sight a great deal of Le Pen's success was explained by his ability to attract votes from those disappointed with the record of the left in power who were also unable to identify themselves with the unconvincing and divided opposition.<sup>18</sup>

The analyses of where the two million votes of Le Pen came from revealed that only a minority of supporters identified themselves with the extreme-right party. Most of the others were ideologically nearer to the traditional centrist, i. e. UDF, the Gaullists, i.e. RPF. By successfully exploiting the issues of immigration, law and order and unemployment, Le Pen had successfully attracted votes from them. His tough and humorous speaking style, in addition to the successful expression of racist sentiment, put him in a position to denounce the other parties as the 'Gang of Four'.<sup>19</sup>

Le Pen's success was also assisted by the fact that the UDF and RPR fought the elections on a joint list headed by Simon Weil.

---

<sup>17</sup>. Rodgers, n.5, p.70.

<sup>18</sup>. Harris, n.6, pp.73-74

<sup>19</sup>. *ibid.*, p.74, also see Cole, n.1, p.181.

As a minister under President Giscard d'Estang, she had piloted the Abortion Law. The catholic fundamentalists, who were against this, started a propaganda against it calling her ' Mrs. Abortion'. Since the electorate was aware of the permanent state rivalry among them, they did not show much interest in it.<sup>20</sup> Exasperated middle class voters, wanting for a strong leader from the votes, gave an unexpected success in this election.

### **The 1986 Parliamentary Elections**

From the very birth of the Fifth Republic in 1958, French Deputies were being elected in a single-member constituencies by a majority system. These elections comprised two ballots. A candidate who won an absolute majority of the votes was elected. If no candidate won a majority, then the second ballot would be held within a week. In this the candidates who had received less than the minimum prescribed per centage of votes would be automatically eliminated. Among the others, candidates who had bleak chances of winning would decide to withdraw in favour of the more fortunate candidates. These withdrawals would take place within each of the 'two-coalitions' i.e. Communists and Socialists on the left and the Gaullists and UDF on the right.<sup>21</sup>

This system had a strong majoritarian bias : a small percentage of the popular vote in favour of one bloc or the other

---

<sup>20</sup>. Harris, n.6, p.75.

<sup>21</sup>. Roy C. Macridis, "Five Years of Socialist Rule and the Election of March 16, 1986" in Roy C. Macridis (ed.), *Modern Political System : Europe* (Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1987), pp.136-7.



produced considerable majorities in the National Assembly. The electoral system thus discriminated against smaller parties and was unrepresentative. After the local elections of 1985, the Socialists began to consider seriously electoral reform. It was necessary because their electoral strength had declined sharply and all the public surveys showed that if legislative elections were held under the same system, the opposition would win an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly. Furthermore, the socialists were not certain whether they would receive the support for the Communists on the second ballot, and without it their strength in the National Assembly would be even significantly reduced.<sup>22</sup>

The new electoral system enacted in June 1985 was a return to the proportional representation which was practiced between 1945 and 1958. The system made it possible for small parties to campaign throughout the country instead of concentrating in areas where they had a large number of followers. This became an advantage to small parties and electoral novices like the FN.<sup>23</sup> It also promised to reduce considerably the prospective majority of the right in the new chamber, and to face there the respectable right with a new awkward partner, the FN. In the National Assembly elected in 1986 the left in general and the Socialists in particular duly lost their supremacy and the conservative coalition has the

---

<sup>22</sup>. *ibid*, pp.137-8.

<sup>23</sup>. Yves Meny, *The French Political System* (Paris, La Documentation Francaise, 1998), p.44.

barest of majorities. The real winner was FN making its parliamentary debut as Jean-Marie Le Pen re-entered the Palais Bourbon followed by thirty four supporters.

Most observers were taken aback by Le Pen's score of 14.4 per cent. That one French adult in every seven should have voted for the xenophobic FN, was really shocking.<sup>24</sup> The social and economic conditions which existed during that period, however, favoured the FN. Officially, unemployment had gone up from about 1.6 million in 1981 to about 2.3 million in 1986. The unofficial figures numbered the unemployed to be 2.7 million which was over 12 per cent of the working force. Seventy nine per cent of the French considered unemployment to be the central and most critical problem facing their country. Sixty five per cent mentioned "security" – law and order. It covered disorders, thefts, acts of violence and acts of terrorism in the streets of urban centres and was linked in the eyes of many to immigrant workers. According to the estimates, there were 4 million foreigners residing in France among whom 2 million were "non-Europeans". Not only that they were accused of violence and crime, they were also viewed as a burden on the economy and an additional cause for high rate of unemployment.<sup>25</sup>

Le Pen in his campaign cleverly exploited this situation to attract the votes. As the only man against the Establishment,

---

<sup>24</sup>. Singer, n.16. p.375.

<sup>25</sup>. Macridis, n.21, p.141.

which was the cause for the above situation, he had told the Frenchmen in short : “You’ve seen them all; if you want to get on with inflation, unemployment, insecurity and foreign invasion, keep the ‘gang of four’. But if you want change, you can only vote for me.” And it did work to some extent, Le Pen had received about one quarter of the votes cast in the southern regions around Nice, Marseille and Toulon. In the industrial north, in the suburbs of Paris or in Alsace and Lorraine, and in towns particularly affected by the economic crisis , he gained about one fifth. In Brittany, with no immigrant workers in sight, he obtained between 8 and 9 per cent.<sup>26</sup>

Whether the issue of immigrants was real or imaginary was not important, but it became critical as the elections approached. Though it was not the only issue which it helped the FN to gain its majority, the change in the electoral system came as a blessing in disguise.

### **The Presidential Election :-**

The success of the mainstream right in securing a bare majority in the March 1986 elections, accompanied by the arrival in the legislature of a group of thirty five FN deputies, gave an immediate focus to immigration. The new government , particularly under the Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, was committed to restrict immigration. With Pasqua Law of 9 September 1986, the frontier controls were strengthened and expulsions of illegal

---

<sup>26</sup>. Singer, n.16, p. 375.

immigrants or those foreigners who had been convicted for more than six months were eased out.<sup>27</sup>

The presence of Jean Marie Le Pen as a candidate to the Presidential post could not but propel the issue of immigration, especially in the view of the strains between the two first-round candidates of the mainstream right – Raymond Barre and Jacques Chirac – on precisely this theme. However, in one of the television interviews before the elections, Le Pen put himself in a precarious position. During the interview he said, “I do not say gas-chambers did not exist....I have especially studied the question. But I do believe that it is a point of detail in the history of the Second World War.” When the shocked interviewers expressed horror that he could consider the death of six million people as a point of detail, he replied that the fact of the holocaust could not be considered “a truth, revealed in which everyone must be a moral obligation’.<sup>28</sup>

These remarks cost him to an extent. One of his key supporters in European Parliament, Olivier d’Ormesson left the FN as a response to Le Pen’s failure to withdraw his remark. Many commentators felt that Le Pen had run out of steam. *Le Monde* poll published in November 1987 claimed that Le Pen was a declining force, as a number of people saw him as a threat to the nation and

---

<sup>27</sup>. Christopher T.Husbands, “The Mainstream Right and The Politics of Immigration in France: Major Developments in the 1980s”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (London), vol.14, no.2, April 1991, p.187.

<sup>28</sup>. Harris, n.6, p.65.

as a man who should never become a Minister.<sup>29</sup> The election campaign was well under way in March 1988 and immigration proved to be a key election issue.

Jacque Chirac said that although he could not accept racism and xenophobia, he could understand it. The Socialist leader Lionel Jospin, responded firmly insisting that racism did not need to be understood but had to be combated. This clash hid in the fact that the consensus between the mainstream parties still existed.

Another issue which came up during this election was that of France's position in the existing European Community. With the dream of the German unification becoming a reality, France perceived it as a dominant force in the community. In the threatened years of national identity, the weakening of its position against the historical rival - Germany , became a cause of concern.<sup>30</sup>

However, contrary to the views of all opinion polls, in the Presidential election of May 1988 Le Pen had greatest impact and scored his greatest electoral success when he received 14.4 per cent of the votes cast. His extraordinary high scores in the *departements* of the Mediterranean belt – notably a quarter of votes cast in Bouches-du-Rhone, Var and Alpes-Maritime – may be largely explained by his campaign against immigration. The explanation of

---

<sup>29</sup>. *ibid.*, p.97.

<sup>30</sup>. Michael Sutton, "France: Who Beats the Nationalist Drum?", *World Today* (London), vol.47, no. 6, June 1991, p. 99.

this was not so much a preoccupation with immigration as fear of Europe, especially the Europe represented by the dismantling of the frontiers on the Rhine and the implementation of single market in the post 1992 period.<sup>31</sup> This analysis of election results confirmed that Le Pen's appeal had been effective beyond the single issue of race.

International concern greeted the FN candidates' election score and for a while Le Pen was on the front pages of most of the world's press. However, the foreign observers were duly relieved in a few weeks in the National Assembly elections where Le Pen's vote slipped below 10 per cent. This election was held on two-round system and not on proportional representation as in 1986 which had helped Le Pen with his first national level electoral success. Le Pen lost all but one of his parliamentarians, including his own. But this defeat was seen as the end of FN only by the superficial observers as the party achieved dramatic success in the coming second-round by-election run-off in December 1989 at Dreux.<sup>32</sup>

#### **The Issue of Islamic headscarf and the elections of 1989:-**

In the spring of 1989 Le Pen expressed the hope that in the Euro-elections he would improve his score. Even though Le Pen won only 10 seats with 11.7 per cent of votes in Strasbourg Assembly,<sup>33</sup> which was based on proportional representation, he

---

<sup>31</sup>. *ibid.*,p.99.

<sup>32</sup>. Anne Stevens, *The Government and Politics of France* (London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), P.268.

<sup>33</sup>. Rodgers, n.5, p.70 also see Sutton, n.30, p.98.

confirmed that under his leadership the FN had achieved a firm electoral base. Voting intentions which used to stagnate around 8 to 9 per cent jumped to 11 per cent in November 1989 and 12.5 per cent in the following month. This sudden increase was due to the issue of 'Islamic headscarf' of October 1989 which created a national stir and mobilised people in favour of the National Front.<sup>34</sup>

Three Muslim girls, two Moroccans and one Tunisian all of whom were pupils at a Secondary school in Creil in the suburbs of Paris, claimed the right to cover their heads in the classroom in conformity with the requirement of Islam. Since French law prohibits all forms of religious propaganda in state schools, the headmaster, who considered the action of Muslim girls to be 'provocative' asked them to cease wearing them in the classroom. In spite of it the girls repeated their action due to which they were not allowed to come into the classroom. When the media made it an issue it brought about a number of debates about French identity.

Among the Muslims this promoted 'a first step towards creating community structures in adverse social environment'. As a reaction to the views of liberal weekly *L'Express* which portrayed headscarf as a symbol of Islamic conspiracy, one of the Muslim leaders observed that 'a French woman with a scarf is a chic, but a

---

<sup>34</sup>. Pierre Brechon and Subrata Kumar Mitra, "The National Front in France: The Emergence of the Extreme Right Protest Movement", *Comparative Politics* (New York), vol.25, no.1, October 1992, p.66.

Muslim woman with a scarf is a threat to civilisation'.<sup>35</sup> In the Socialist Party, those who considered themselves to be defenders of non-religious education and feminists were generally in favour of total ban on headscarf, whereas the others were for tolerance in the name of freedom of expression. The Right was generally towards the total ban on the headscarf and the Centre of Social Democrats adopted a more moderate position and asked for tolerance all around.

The National Front, in marked contrast to the other parties used the incident for political propaganda. It argued that the incident demonstrated a form of religious and cultural colonisation of France that threatened the very identity. The incident served to catalyse French opinion on issues of the position of immigrants in France, particularly those from North Africa. The French hostility to immigrants was shown by a poll taken by the polling agency for LICRA (the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism) which found that 66 per cent of the French thought there were "far too many North Africans in France." Many polls since then have shown that 25 to 30 per cent of the French people agree with the ideas of Le Pen on immigration. On this theme, the leader of the FN drew a larger support in the elections of 1989.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup>. Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach, "Introduction: Islam in Europe and Politics of Religion and Community" in Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach (eds.), *Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community* (London, Macmillan Press, 1997), p.7.

<sup>36</sup>. Brechon and Mitra, n.25, p.68.



The FN candidate France Stirbois, widow of the former FN leader killed in an automobile accident, picked up 22.2 per cent in the first round of municipal voting in Dreux on 14 March 1989 and later in December 1989 she won a seat in the National Assembly, when she received over 60 per cent of the vote in the second-round by-election run off from the same constituency. The FN also came close to electing deputy from Marseille at the same time.<sup>37</sup>

Although these results were not expected, it did not come as a shock like the 1984 results which was sudden. The 'headscarf affair' eventually resolved itself but it evoked a reprise of all debates and discussions of the early and mid-1980s about the concept of identity. In spite of the lack of all politics in France, it remained as a political reality in many parts of France. Having held ground in 1989 in various elections, Le Pen developed into a force in French politics.

#### ***Front National in the 1990s :-***

During the early years of the 1990s the government of the Left in France made a concerted effort to put into effect a number of new policy of social integration for immigrants : the moderate Right wanted to stop new immigration and make it much difficult for foreigners to acquire the social welfare benefits. These measures, however, were never attractive to the general public and the intention to vote for FN grew slowly. This growing support to FN was

---

<sup>37</sup>. Harris, n.6, p.102. also see Husbands, n. 27, p.91.

also influenced by the economic and political situations of those times.

In the international arena, the European dream was beginning to turn sour. The national sense of identity was threatened by unstoppable flow of immigrants. Unemployment had risen and the Government insisted not on altering the economic policy. To add to this, the vague fear existed that France no longer counted among the world's leading powers. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany had put a question mark on the position of France in Europe. Within the country, politics had become a bore for the men on the streets and they had lost faith in the political leaders. All the main parties were in disarray, absorbed by their own rivalries. Corruption scandals abounded and the election abstention rates were at a record high. At this time, the only party that seemed to have anything to offer was the *Front National*.<sup>38</sup>

Le Pen, instead of losing a part of his support, profited from the incident at Carpentras. Carpentras, hometown of the oldest Jewish communities in France, became a name etched on many minds in the 1990. For many in 1990, the town's Jewish cemetery was desecrated and a corpse, taken off from the coffin was brutally profaned. The protest broke out against anti-Semitism and racism. France witnessed the march of some 20,000 people who detested

---

<sup>38</sup>. *The Economist* (London), 19 October 1991, p.57.

the incident. Although there was widespread suspicion at the involvement of *Front National* in act, this movement helped Le Pen gain more support. He declared himself the innocent victim of the affair when no FN connection was discovered and went on to say that the rest of the parties were trying to target him.<sup>39</sup>

All these resulted in the rise of voting intentions in July 1990, especially after the issue of desecration of Carpentras came to an end. However, the proportions went down in the second fortnight of September 1990 after the remarks of Le Pen in favour of Iraq. He argued that Iraq was historically entitled the territory and that Kuwait itself was an artificial creation of British Foreign Office. He added that conflict should be treated as a purely Arab affair rather than the concern of any coalition led by the United States.<sup>40</sup> Le Pen stuck to his opinion that France should not be engaged in any ill-judged Anglo-Saxon adventure. While seeking to assume the mantle of an expert in *realpolitik*, Le Pen turned a blind eye to the elementary principals of international law. While connecting these issues to the immigrants, it was believed that *Meghrebis* present in France would constitute the 'fifth column' of support for Saddam Hussain. The simple rationale behind this was that the *Meghrebis* would automatically support him because he was an Arab and that

---

<sup>39</sup>. *The Economist*, 6 April 1991, p. 48 also see Sutton, n.30, p.100.

<sup>40</sup>. Sutton, n.30, p.100.

they would be more likely to find sympathy with him than the western forces of which France was an active member.<sup>41</sup>

These remarks were not very controversial to the general public and therefore did not influence the voting intentions to any great extent. The support lingered on once the event lingered on. The first real test of the nation's political mood since election to the European Parliament of 1989, came about in March 1992 during the regional elections. The opinion polls agreed that the ruling Socialist Party would take a drubbing and the extreme-right wing FN and ecologists would see a purge in support. Accordingly, the FN candidate took a commanding lead in the first round with 38 per cent of the vote while Socialist scrapped only 12 per cent at the by election in Nice.<sup>42</sup>

Alarmed by this result the Socialists decided to take precautions so as not to lose out to the FN in the ensuing regional elections. They adopted the all out attack tactic : Socialist militants helped organise local anti-Le Pen demonstrations, which frequently degenerated into violence. The government then banned all the FN meetings on the ground that they constituted a threat to public order. Although Le Pen took advantage of the situation, he accused the socialists of creating 'an atmosphere of violence to intimidate FN supporters'. He appeared before millions of television viewers as a

---

<sup>41</sup>. Cole, n.1, p.231.

<sup>42</sup>. The *Economist*, 22 February 1992, p.48.

persecuted martyr who was upholding their democratic right of free expression against “totalitarian” practices of the government.

The *Front National* won 13.9 per cent of vote, up four points on its score in the previous regional elections six years ago. But it polled 13.9 nationally and failed to capture Province-Alpes-Cotes d’Azur, where he won only 19.76 per cent of the votes. This was well below the expectations of the FN leaders and supporters. It was mainly because – immigration and crime, FN’s two favourite themes were not considered of prime importance by the people other than Front’s own supporters. This election, on the other hand, expressed the general discomfort among the voters. President Mitterand gave the impression of having run out of steam after twelve years in office: no new ideas, no “grand project” with which to inspire nation. His misjudgement of foreign policy, especially opposition to German unification, was embarrassing and at home, the appointment of Edith Cresson as Prime Minister proved a disaster.<sup>43</sup> Thus the traditional supporters of centre parties shifted their support between the Greens and the FN. The situation worsened for the FN in the 1993 Parliamentary election. These were held in two rounds. The ruling socialist party halved its share of votes. The RPR became the strongest party while centre-right UDF became the second strongest. As a result RPR and UDF together controlled over three quarters of seats in National Assembly. Despite widespread

---

<sup>43</sup>. *The Economist*, 19 October 1991, p.57.also see *The Economist*, 28 March 1992, p.47.

disaffection with mainstream parties, small parties, including FN, did not fare well. FN lost the seat which it had held since 1989 by-election in Dreux when Marie France Stirbois lost by 105 votes. Jean Marie Le Pen himself failed to win Nice – a region where FN support was traditionally strong.

In 1994, at the European election, the mainstream parties of France lost support. Right-of-centre parties in general performed better than the left. *Front National* lost some of its electorate to Phillippe le Jolis de Villiers de Saintignon, a dissident right-wing deputy. His campaign had several themes in common with FN's – such as the defence of moral and family values, the assertion of France's greatness, and desire to see French independence from Europe. Thus de Villiers obtained 12.33 per cent of the votes in contrast to 10.5 per cent of FN.<sup>44</sup>

The tempo of the mass had continued during the 1995 Presidential election : none of the candidates managed to persuade voters that they had much to offer. The electorate was highly volatile and nearly a third of voters had not made up their minds until before the day of the voting. Confronted by what seemed to many as an unappealing choice between a third seven year term for Socialist President and a scandal plagued Gaullist government, more than half of France's voters either stayed at home or voted for a fringe candidate.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, Maastricht Treaty and European

---

<sup>44</sup>. Rodgers, n.5, p.70, also see *The Economist*, 18 June 1994, p.53.

<sup>45</sup>. *The Economist*, 29 April 1995, p.57.

Community acted as the main issue in this election. Three leading critics of Europe – Jean Marie Le Pen of far-right, Communist Robert Hue and Conservative Phillip de Villiers counted themselves in and expected to pick quarter of the first round vote. De Villiers won 4.75 per cent while Le Pen raised eye brows and fears by winning 15 per cent of the vote – a record for his extreme-right, anti-immigrant party.<sup>46</sup>

The Municipal elections which followed next month were significant for FN for its capture of these large towns: Orange, Marignane and Toulon. This confirmed the party's progress at the local level and proved that grassroot work in the establishment of a party infrastructure was bearing fruit. The three cities where FN had a majority were in south and had large immigrant communities. Le Pen later announced on 19 June 1995 that in the municipalities election which it controlled, his party would implement a policy of "national preference" which would effectively disadvantage foreigners and naturalise immigrants in allocations in such areas as subsidised housing, social security benefit and jobs. In spite of these racial measures, FN continued to maintain the same support and in the 1997 elections repeated the results of 1995 presidential elections.

This, however, triggered the discontentment, which had lingered for sometime, to come into open. Antagonisms developed between the supporters of Le Pen and that of Bruno Megret. This

---

<sup>46</sup>. Rodgers, n.5, p.70.

schism was not over policy but about strategy, rivalry and ambition. Le Pen, the perennial party had obtained the record highest of 15 per cent. The 'megretistes' wanted to improve the support and increase the number of seats in National Assembly by forging an alliance with the centre-right parties of RPR-UDF. This meant giving up the commitment of the principle of national preference which would ultimately destroy the 'republican front'. This approach intensified after the result of 1997 election was announced: the failure of RPR-UDF and of the Front to form an electoral pact facilitated the combined left's victory; on its part, FN stabilised its voters to about 15 per cent. It had built its support largely on voters of the Right who emerged from traditional working-class constituency of the left.<sup>47</sup> The 'lepenists' rejected this strategy as they thought it would lose even the existing support by diluting its commitment to national preference. Promoting his stance, Le Pen emphasised that 'one does not ally oneself with forces en decomposition: one wants to pick up the pieces'.<sup>48</sup>

To add fuel to the fire, Le Pen committed three disastrous errors during and after the 1997 election which brought matter to the brink : between the ballots he mused aloud that he would prefer a left-wing government to be elected in the hope of President Chirac to resign, he decided not to stand for election in order to prepare

---

<sup>47</sup>. Martin A. Schain, "The National Front and the Legislative Elections of 1997" in Michael S. Lewis Beck (ed.), *How France Votes* (New York, Seven Bridges Press, 2000), pp. 69-71.

<sup>48</sup>. Hainsworth and Mitchell, n.3, p.450.



himself for regional council elections and for Presidential elections should Chirac resign and lastly announced that his wife Jany would head the list for 1999 European elections. This outraged the 'megretistes' who believed that the person second in command, i. e. Bruno Megret, should head the list. After a national council meeting in December 1998, which degenerated into a shouting march, Le Pen expelled Megret and his key supporters<sup>49</sup> – who went to organise themselves into *Movement National*.

This split within the Front promoted a scramble for votes and had a great influence on the extreme-right in France. The 1999 European elections saw the Front receive just over 5 per cent of the vote and had 5 members of European Parliament as compared to the *Movement National* which managed just over 3 per cent.

The 1990s saw the sudden rise of strength in the extreme right *Front National*. This alarmed the mainstream parties, whose failure to understand the needs of the masses was one of the reasons for FN to reach this height. However, discontentment and adoption of different strategies between the two leaders split the party. This led to the division of supporters and Le Pen lost a wide backing.

#### **ELECTORAL SUPPORT OF THE FRONT NATIONAL:-**

*Front National* draws its supporters from varied groups. Studies show that its electors cannot be stereotyped: they have

---

<sup>49</sup>. Paul Hainsworth, "The Right : Divisions and Cleavages in *fin de siecle* France" in Robert Elgie (ed.), *The Changing French Political System* (London, Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 52-53.

different reasons for voting. Whether it is political or economic, the reasons have changed over the years – policies, personalities, political circumstances and socio-economic changes are all relevant factors. From the outset, though the failures of a disillusionment with political parties owed much for the party to gain a break through, the protest factors has always been at work.

The tendency to recruit relatively younger, more ‘popular’ and least educated voters is a common trait. The gender factor, which invites an argument, is the most defining characteristic of the voter. It is regarded as the most masculine of all French electorates : considerably more men opt for party. The reasons for this could be the exhibits of the party which lays emphasis on child-rearing and family duties. Many women, on the other hand, feel that the numerous proposition of the FN are totally outdated and some FN policies are dangerous for the daily life of women in France.<sup>50</sup>

A second defining factor is age : the Front draws disproportionately from the 18-39 range, doing particularly well amongst the young, first time and hitherto absentivist voters. Where formal education, skills and experience are limited and unemployment is high, immigrants issue is brought about. At this point, the party which claims ‘La France aux Français’ polls especially well.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup>. Pascal Perinnau, “The Conditions for the Re-emergence of an Extreme-Right Wing in France : the National Front, 1984-98” in Edward J. Arnold (ed.), *The Development of the Radical Right in France : From Boulager to Le Pen* (London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 2000), p.258.

<sup>51</sup>. *ibid*, p.259.

The territorial composition of the vote for FN over the past elections could be used as a benchmark in this study. Support in its area of strength went up significantly in reaction to catalytic events like the headscarf. The relationship between fear, a state of insecurity, violent crime and rise of extreme right is further confined by the findings from the opinion polls. The electors of the FN appear to be much more xenophobic than average voter. Among the electors of FN, 63 per cent thought immigration to be the cause of unemployment, compared to 26 per cent for the country as a whole. They are largely favourable towards the idea of sending the vast majority back to “where they came from.”<sup>52</sup>

The other group which have been loyal supporters of *Front National* are the conservatives – classified mainly as lower middle class. In older age bracket, many have remained adamantly anti-Gaullist, regretting the Fourth Republic or *Algerie Francaise* or usually both. However among those who reached adulthood after 1958, there is apparently a significant proportion who consider themselves to be Gaullist. Thus, though it is difficult to say how many Gaullists are won over by FN, it is evident that there is always a shift between the two parties – depending on the issues at each election.

Religion has been playing an important role in French elections. Though Catholicism is the primary religion of France, the number of people declaring themselves to be Catholics is

---

<sup>52</sup>. Brechon and Mitra, n.25, p.70.

diminishing. The regular church goers are said to be far closer to FN than the non-believing and non-practicing group as their level of tolerance is much higher when compared to the latter group.<sup>53</sup> Le Pen who has been beating the nationalist drum by playing on the fears of citizens of France has won a substantial support for his movement.

Geographically, a large number of FN supporters came from the eastern half of France, especially in large cities with high concentration of foreign population. Presently, out of the total foreign population living in France, 46 per cent are of African origin. These 'visible immigrants' help FN indirectly by tapping the 'fear' – fear of unemployment, fear of crime and violence and fear of increase in tax – present in the local French.<sup>54</sup>

#### **COCLUSION :-**

In the early years of 1980s the Front stood very much at the crossroads: voters and members were sparse, and the fragmentation and internal divisions were commonplace. Infact, it was close to collapse and unsurprisingly the political commentators were writing off the French extreme right as a viable force. However, the system of proportional representation in the 1986 European and national election came as a boon in disguise. This plus Le Pen's charismatic leadership resuscitated its political life and

---

<sup>53</sup>. Daniel Boy and Nanna Mayer, "Cleavage Voting and Issue Voting in France" in Michael S. Lewis Beck (ed.), *How France Votes* (New York, Seven Bridges Press, 2000), pp.154-6.

<sup>54</sup>. Perinnau, n. 50, pp.263-4., also see Cole, n. 1, p.181.

consolidated it. From then, its electoral success was seen as the revelation of a developing crisis for the French society and its political system.

With the increase in the number of industries the demand for cheap labour became acute. The immigrants, mostly from Africa thus became the competitors of the French jobs. These immigrants, whose religion and culture was completely different from that of the natives of France, became the main targets of the *Front National*. The party, thus gained majority support in areas with immigrant population.

Thus the rise of FN since early 1980s has been due to economic, political as well as social causes. During its early days, the party attracted supporters from the conservatives who were *piéd noirs*, in other words, those who returned to France after Algeria freed itself from the French rule. With the development of industries and with the rise of immigration to France, economics played a major role. The urban youth which faced competition from the immigrant labour for the jobs, became the main supporters of FN. They are pure whites (*petits blancs*) of lower middle class origin who have ambition for upward mobility but feel threatened by the presence of immigrants whom they hold responsible for everything that is not right. Thus, the people, who live in daily fear of the “devilish” immigrants express their anger and resentment by voting for FN. This protest vote has been acting as a message to the government and therefore the overall support for it is unstable.

Widespread disillusionment with the European ideal, recession and unemployment do provide the kind of atmosphere of insecurity in which the extreme right thrives. Condemnations by the establishment, highly published gaffes and defections, court decisions and statements by leaders have not so far seriously weakened Le Pen's electoral strength.

Though reduced to a weak movement presently, what will happen in the future remain extremely unpredictable. What he represents cannot be wished away or dismissed as a passing fashion. Le Pen responds to the national crisis and that is where his strength lies. As Jean Pierre Chevenment put it : "He represents the feeling of a relative decline, unfortunately all too real."

## Chapter III

### FREEDOM PARTY AND AUSTRIA

**“We take the right stand at the right time to save Austria against the danger coming from outside”**

**-Joerg Haider**

The Freedom Party of Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Osterreichs* – *FPO*) is by far the most successful of an increasingly prominent group of European political parties which have often been termed – ‘populist’, ‘neo-Nazi’, ‘right wing-extremist’ and ‘neo-fascist’. Presently, under the leadership of Joerg Haider, the party holds power at the federal government as the coalition partner with the People’s Party (OVP). Thus in recent years, the Austrian politics has been fixated on its Nazi past, which allegedly demonstrates that the country is increasingly vulnerable to a revival of political extremism.

The Freedom Party is the direct descendant of the League of Independents (*Verband der Unabhangigen* – *VdU*), established in 1949, mainly to attract war returnees and half-a - million or so former Nazis. The League also sought to appeal to liberals and others not already incorporated into the Socialist and Catholic-conservative sub-cultures. The League was replaced by the Freedom Party, as it exists today in 1956. Its leaders were more inclined to see their party as the ‘Third Force’ in Austrian politics which would bring an end to the government by Proporz. In the

1970s a new youthful leadership cadre arose which ultimately took power with the intention of reducing the importance of German nationalism.

In 1980, the thirty six year old Norbert Steger was elected Chairman over Harald Ofner, who had been described as a “national” and a rightist. Steger in his acceptance speech emphasized the need for move towards the Neo-Liberal movement. The culmination of transition of the party from right-wing, nationalist splinter party to modern, liberal party of the centre appeared complete in 1983, when the Socialist Party(SPO) led by Bruno Kreisky lost the absolute majority it had held since 1971.Socialists with 90 seats and FPO with 12 seats together held a majority in the new 183 member National Council over Austria’s other party, the OVP which had 81 seats.<sup>1</sup>

Negotiations began at once to form a new government, leading to the announcement of an agreement in principle between the SPO and FPO on the formation of the coalition to be led by Alfred Sinowatz . The FPO leader Norbert Steger, who headed his groups’ negotiating team described the outcome as a “sound motive” and said that the party would have three ministers in the new government including defence and economic posts. Apart from the change in stand taken by the Freedom Party, various other issues also affected the fall of the socialists: the departure of the

---

<sup>1</sup> . *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), 12 May,1983. All references to the International Herald Tribune in this chapter are to the Paris edition of that newspaper.



Finance Minister following allegations in connection with his personal finances, the mismanagement of funds during the construction of the Vienna general hospital and the rising unemployment which had reached 6 per cent. Thus, it obliged Mr. Kreisky to resign after thirteen years.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year the elections to the *Landtag*, the provincial parliaments, were held in the provinces of Salzburg, Tyrol and Carinthia. While it won 2 seats in Tyrol, 4 each in the other two provinces with an increase of 4.3 per cent in Carinthia. The FPO in Carinthia was dominated by right-wing "pan-German" elements, whereas the party's national leadership under Herr Steger was identified with more liberal wing.

By 1986 the party's liberal tilt at the centre had alienated much of its German nationalist wing. While the FPO liberals had correctly recognised that "nationalist vote was increasingly to be found in the cemetery", they failed to understand that there was no significant liberal reservoir to tap for support. Right-wing tendencies in FPO started becoming evident in Carinthia under the regional leader Herr Joerg Haider. Finally, in the late summer of 1986, Haider challenged Steger for the chairmanship to be decided at the party's mid-September convention in Innsbruck. In an attempt to ward off a divisive floor battle at the convention, Steger warned that a Haider victory would spell the end to the coalition,

---

<sup>2</sup>. *The Economist* (London), 30 April 1983. All references to *The Economist* in this chapter are to the London edition.

while the press predicted chaos and a splintering of the party into oblivion. While the competition for the leadership for FPO was going on, the election for the post of the President were held.

The Presidential election which was held in May 1986 was described by the *Financial Times* as the “most bitter and divisive...in Austria’s post-war history.”<sup>3</sup> The election campaigns were overwhelmingly dominated by the question of the extent of involvement of Kurt Waldheim, the Socialist candidate, with the Nazi regime during the Second World War and his apparent efforts to conceal from the public this episode in his past. In the months preceding the election various documents concerning his activities during the War were released.

On the other hand, Otto Scrinzi, who was a member of the Freedom Party and a former Member of the Parliament decided to stand as an independent without the support of FPO. He was considered as having held a unit of the paramilitary storm troopers or the “Brown shirts”. He had since “championed the most nationalist causes” and was a member of the Carinthian Fatherland Service, an organisation of 30,000 members which was hostile to Slovene minority living in Carinthia.<sup>4</sup>

In the midst of these accusations and confusions, Waldheim was swept into power by 54 per cent of the voters. The result was influenced by the political developments. By now, the FPO party

---

<sup>3</sup>. *Financial Times* (London), 6 June 1986.

<sup>4</sup>. *The Guardian* (London), 17 March 1986.

congress had elected Haider, the FPO leader in Carinthia since 1983, as their leader.<sup>5</sup> This marked the culmination of the difference between the nationalist, pan-Germanic wing of the FPO in Carinthia and more liberal federal FPO of the centre. This discouraged the SPO to continue to share the power with FPO at the Centre. Therefore, the Social Democrats terminated the coalition and called for early election. Election to the *Nationalrat* were held in November. The SPO emerged as the largest single party. At this point, the Socialists decided to coalesce with the People's Party rather than continue governing with the now, Haider-led nationalistic FPO. In addition to it, the three years of coalition government of the SPO-FPO had been a chapter of political accidents with a number of scandals. Therefore the traditional SPO-OVP coalition was brought back.

With these developments in the background, the Freedom Party under the new leader Joerg Haider tried to broaden its base in order to get back what it had lost. The unpopularity of the coalition of Kreisky's successor, the scandal-plagued Fred Sinowatz made the voters susceptible to neo-populist protest. They felt that latent mode of protest had to be translated into active protest. The decline of People's Party due to its structural obsolescence in post-industrial society and its own inability to find a personality with strong image to lead the party in competition with the attractive Socialist Chancellor and FPO media – star Joerg Haider made it to

---

5. <http://www.adl.org//backgrounders/joerg-haider.html>

take a back seat. The people started turning their attention towards the newly elected FPÖ leader who showed the capacity to encompass the broadly based anger of voters and concentrated their protest stance. <sup>6</sup>

Under Haider, the Freedom Party entered a period of Populist Protest. Though it remained excluded from the national government, the party experienced unprecedented electoral success and a dramatic growth in the number of public offices it held. Organisationally, it underwent considerable centralisation, professionalisation and membership growth.<sup>7</sup>

#### **POLITICAL AGENDA:**

The Freedom Party during its period of populist protest, had three main goals traditionally ascribed to political parties: the pursuit of vote, office and policy. These were based on an agenda which was placed as policy demands. Foremost amongst these was curbing immigration.

**Immigration** remained high on Austria's political agenda after Haider first took up this issue. According to him, immigration offers no benefits to Austrian Society. Rather, immigration takes jobs away from Austrians and brings in crime from Africa, Eastern Europe and elsewhere. Some of his election campaign poster slogans included "stop the foreign infiltration" and "stop the abuse

---

6. Max Riedlsperger, "Heil Haider! The Revitalisation of the Austrian Freedom Party Since 1986", *Politics and Society in Germany, Austria and Switzerland*, vol.4, no.3 (Summer,1992), pp.18-47.

7. Kurt Richard Luthrer, "Austria : A Democracy Under Threat From Freedom Party?" *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), vol.53 (2000),pp.431-3.

of asylum". Other infamous Haider statements on immigration included: "The Africans who come here are drug dealers and they seduce our youth"; "We have got the Poles who concentrate on car thefts", he claims. "We have got the people from former Yugoslavia who are burglary experts. We have got the Turks who are superbly organised in the heroin trade. And we have the Russians who are experts in blackmail and mugging".<sup>8</sup> Thus the emphasis on crime was also laid. Most worrying for some observers was how its stance on immigration and on crime became fused into pronouncements on 'immigration crime'.

**European integration** was another area in which the party made a distinctive contribution. Though earlier the party was most in favour of Austria joining the European Community, at the end of 1994 referendum it vehemently opposed accession to European Union. In the event, 66 per cent of Austrians supported membership, but at the time of the campaign the governing parties worried that Haider's efforts might tip the scale against. Once Austria had joined the European Union, the Freedom Party started to mobilise popular concerns about the threat to Austrians' jobs posed by potential eastern enlargement.<sup>9</sup> Another side of support to European integration earlier was that it was seen as *Anschluss* (unity with Germany) by back door, but after Austria joined the European Union in 1994, Haider performed a *volte-face*. Detecting

---

<sup>8</sup>. File://A:\ austria\_elect 1.htm, p.7.

<sup>9</sup>. Luther,n.7, p.430.

the widespread fears that Austria would lose its identity in centralised Europe, he jettisoned the German nationalist element in the party programme and substituted “Austrian patriotism” which he claimed, was not “anti-foreigner” but “inland friendly.”<sup>10</sup>

Politically less salient, but none the less quite distinct, was the Freedom Party’s position on security policy. Its long standing support for **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) membership** although was not popular with the electorate, the debate over the neutrality versus NATO proved useful to the party. During the 1990s, this was an issue that increasingly divided the governing parties, enabling it to drive a small but significant wedge between the Social Democrats - staunch defenders of neutrality – and its own future coalition partner, Wolfgang Schussel’s People’s Party.<sup>11</sup>

The FPO claims itself to be **the only force of change in Austrian society**, as it pursues a strategy to change the system without confirming to given balances of power. According to it, the aim is to achieve the liberal ideas of fundamental rights and of liberty by liberating the citizens from political parties. The party regards itself as a large civil rights movement and declares ‘Austria should no longer be the republic of the Reds and the Blacks but the home of Austrians’.<sup>12</sup> In this way, it tries to challenge the rule

---

<sup>10</sup> *The Sunday Times* (London), 6 February 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Luther, n.7, p.430.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.fpo.e.or.at//englisch/english.htm>

of the “proporz” parties which talk a lot about democracy but in truth serve to hinder the free citizen.

Thus, **anti-parliamentarianism** becomes one of the criterion of the party programme. Activity in or around both parliaments has been the central focus of Haider’s political existence. He is highly critical of the existing political system. Coalition politics including, those of his own party, are seen as built on compromise by party elites on behalf of themselves and the bureaucrats they appoint and against the interest of the people. In order to correct such a flaw, he promised to seek a coalition with the people expressed through the vigorous use of citizens initiatives to force reform on coalition.

Apart from these main issues, the highlight is on their stand of **defending Nazis and their policies**. According to Haider’s critics, despite public disclaimers and overtures, Haider has a public record of defending the policies of Nazi Germany and of justifying individual actions during those years. Haider, indeed gained his first international attention in March 1986 during the controversy surrounding the return of Walter Reder, an Austrian born former major in the Nazi SS, who was freed by Italy from a life sentence he was serving for his role in the mass killing of Italian civilians in 1944. For Haider, controversy was ridiculous, as Reder was “a soldier who had done his duty”. to force reform on coalition.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup>. <http://www.adl.org/backgrounders/joerg-haider.html>

Dismissing Reder's wartime activities, Haider stated: "If you are going to speak about war crimes, you should admit such crimes were committed by all sides". More recently, Haider spoke out against Austrian Government's plan to compensate 30,000 Austrian victims of the allies, such as civilians who fled Austria during the country's occupation by the US, Soviet, French and British troops should also be compensated.<sup>14</sup> These features are not only to be found in frequent verbal *faux pas* by party speakers but are omnipresent in its verbal and written communication.

The party programme, from the liberal point of view, demands 'as little state as necessary' and, from the extreme right points of view of demands, 'more rights for citizens' and 'more freedom through more support for citizen'. Even though some supporters claim that the party on the whole does not have an extreme right leaning and that these attitudes are not widespread among the party elites, the fact that the party's discourses constitute extreme right features, like '*volks-gemeinschaft*', criticism of democracy, the desire for strong state, belief in autocratic leadership, German nationalism, xenophobia, relationship to the National Socialist past, creation of scapegoats, themselves show clearly its stand. This shows that the party's main ideology and aim, which deal with the opposition to central features of Austria's political consensus system including 'Proporz', has been sidelined.

---

<sup>14</sup>. File://A:\austria\_elect 1 htm,pp. 7-8.



People have therefore, started to recognise it more as a party with aggressive tone whose ideology resides in right wing extremism.

#### **ELECTORAL RISE:**

The rise of Haider as the party head had brought about deconcentration in the political system of Austria. The first evidence of this was seen in the state elections in 1986. In Burgenland, where SPO had governed alone since 1945, the FPO campaign tactic was two pronged assault on the SPO's federal and state policies. In this traditionally agricultural hinterland a large protest vote was significant.

The year before, farmers had mounted a tractor blockade in Vienna to demonstrate against the federal agricultural policy of the Socialists. In its election campaign, the FPO not only appealed for the farmers to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the SPO but also urged them to vote against the OVP for its failure to implement reforms it had promised in parliamentary campaign the year before. Unemployment which was at 3.5 per cent above the national average was another factor which favoured the FPO. When Governor Kery was charged by the Accounting Office with using his influence to obtain state subsidised low cost mortgages for Viennese to build vacation homes in Burgenland, the FPO's general attack on SPO corruption took its local substance.<sup>15</sup>

In the elections held on 4 October 1988, the SPO lost its absolute majority in the *Landtag* reducing its number of seats from

---

<sup>15</sup>.Riedlsperger, n.6 , pp.18-47.

20 to 17, and its percentage of votes from 53 to 47. The FPO led by Herr Haider won representation in the *Landtag* for the first time with three seats and 7.3 per cent of votes.<sup>16</sup> The victory of the FPO was based on the protest votes of the electorate who were dissatisfied with politics and SPO's corrupt rule. Haider's vigorous campaigning and trend towards personalisation of politics not only increased the support base of the party but also helped in bringing about what was known as the 'Haider-Effekt'.

For the Viennese municipal election to be held on 8 November 1988, the FPO had focused its negative campaign on Socialists, accusing them of mismanaging the city government for decades, for corruption and inefficiency. To attract the middle class sector of the electorate, it criticised OVP as the handmaiden of Socialists. Its positive programme proposed a 'new way' to a healthier, more secure, efficient and planned Vienna. The results showed that FPO had quadrupled its share of seats in the City Council to eight. This emphasised the 'Haider-Effekt' further.

#### **Provincial Elections in Salzburg, Tyrol and Carinthia-1989:**

In 1987, the FPO government in the province of Carinthia brought about a new plan which would effectively segregate German speakers and Slovenes in the Carinthian schools with effect from 1988-89. This gave rise to vehement protests by Slovenes in Vienna and Austria Consulates in Yugoslavia. While primary education had hitherto been bilingual when Slovenes were

---

<sup>16</sup>. *ibid*, pp.18-47.

registered for classes, the reform meant that children in future be separated if more than seven Slovenes were registered for classes. This reform, however had the support of the local Austrians.

In the campaign of state election of Salzburg, Tyrol and Carinthia the trend against the major parties worked to make the FPO the party of choice among the protest voters. The FPO made substantial gains at the expenses of the ruling FPO and OVP. In Salzburg, the FPO victory was seen more as restoring the party to its traditional strength than as a breakthrough. More than a quarter of the voters had either switched parties or abstained which worked particularly to the benefit of the FPO.<sup>17</sup> Its traditional strength among the best educated voters had improved only slightly, but significant breakthrough was made among skilled workers and employees in service industries.

In Tyrol, the greatest percentage of shift was with industrial communities in the capital of Innsbruck and in rural working class communities.

In Carinthia, personalities played an overwhelming role in the outcome. For FPO, chairman Haider in his adopted home state enjoyed somewhat a 'bonus' of his own by the introduction of bilingual elementary school classes. It ended SPO's traditional strong hold and became one of the two largest parties. The provincial parliament of Carinthia elected the FPO leader as

---

<sup>17</sup>. *ibid*, pp.18-47

provincial governor for a five year term at the head of the coalition of the FPO-OVP.<sup>18</sup> However, Haider was obliged to step down as the governor in a few months because of his comments about the Nazi employment policy.

### **The Years of Immigration and the Legislative Elections of 1990:**

The East European borders were opened which led to a massive influx of those seeking work and political asylum and to the introduction in March 1990 of visa requirements of Romanians, Bulgarians and Turks. As the grip of election fever tightened, the Socialist Chancellor Franz Vranitzky and the conservative president, Kurt Waldheim started adopting populist, vote-getting measures. The government announced that 7000 Romanians whose asylum application had been turned down and those who had neither shelter nor work would be returned to Romania. 15,000 soldiers had dispatched to patrol the frontier with Hungary in a bid to push back Romanians who were entering Austria in search of better life.<sup>19</sup>

The political situation was in a turmoil. The SPO, once a model of stability and success, had fallen on hard times. Chancellor Bruno Kreisky's death two months ago had dealt the party a psychological blow. His immediate successor, Fred Sinowatz along with the former interior minister, Karl Blecha and

---

<sup>18</sup>. <http://www.adl.org/backgrounders/joerg-haider.html>, p.3

<sup>19</sup>. *The Times of India* (New Delhi), 17 September, 1990.

former foreign minister Leopold Gratz were on trial for fraud and misuse of power.

However, the election to the *Nationalrat* turned out to be a curious election. Many Austrians, disillusioned with the outgoing coalition of the Socialist and People's Party at the Centre had not bothered to vote. Yet the clear victory was for the Socialist Party, the leading partner in the disappointing coalition. The FPO led by Fraz Vranitzky increased the won number of seats from 18 to 33.<sup>20</sup>

The FPO passed the OVP to be the second largest party. The success of FPO was because of the extra support won from voters nervous about ethnic strife in neighbouring Yugoslavia and about the trouble in the Gulf. He also had a special following in Carinthia. About half of his supporters were die hard nationalists and ex-National Socialists. With Austria's nationalists lined up behind him, Haider went on to appeal to young liberals with tirades against country's Establishment. Immigration from Eastern Europe gave him another target. The FPO campaign exploited the fears of the 'alien food', demanding no importation of crime, immigration only in cases of need on the labour market and where adequate housing exists, introduction of seasonal status for foreign labour. The slogan "Vienna must not become Chicago" played strongly on the anxieties of voters who voted for FPO in particularly large numbers where East European invasion was most evident.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup>. *The Economist*, 12 October 1990, p.65

<sup>21</sup>. Riedlsperger, n.6, p. 18-47

## **Haider's Faux Pas and his Resignation as the Governor of Carinthia:-**

During a *Landtag* debate Haider was attacking socialism and corruption. In this process he suggested to the Carinthian parliament that the reduction of unemployment would be incentive to return to work. When the chairman of the opposition SPO fraction shouted that this was akin to the forced labour of the Third Reich, Haider retorted: "No, this was not the case in the Third Reich, because Third Reich had a sound employment policy, which your government in Vienna cannot even manage". In the face of a national and international uproar which came about immediately, Haider apologised for his remarks, but said "What I said was a statement of fact: that in the Third Reich a large number of work place were created through an intensive employment policy and unemployment was thereby eliminated".<sup>22</sup>

The federal coalition parties, SPO and OVP, called for Haider's resignation on the ground that his comments 'defamed millions of people who endured unending suffering under the Nazis'. The OVP in Carinthia, although it was a part of provincial governing coalition dominated by Haider's FPO, nevertheless supported an SPO resolution passed by the *Landtag* calling Haider's resignation. On 25 June 1991, Haider was elected the

---

<sup>22</sup>. *File://A:\austria\_elect 1. htm*, p.7

deputy governor with OVP abstaining and SPO walking out of the chamber.<sup>23</sup>

With this setback, Haider had lots to lose. His constant criticism of the government and his promises to keep foreigners out had gained him a lot of support. Now he had to keep his head down as the deputy governor of Carinthia, rather than leading his party in the national parliament.

### **Application for Austrian Membership to the European Community and the Municipal Election of 1990:**

Haider's Carinthian setback was almost sidelined once the debate on Austria's membership in the European Community (EC) came up. Aware of the shifting economic forces in Europe, Austria had applied for EC membership. In contradiction to this, the voters shocked the business and political communities by shouting a "no" in a referendum. The decision had been interpreted variously as a reaction against anticipated higher wages, already rising housing prices and fears of corruption. But to a number of observers, the vote effected a growing Viennese concerns about an unpredictable East Europe and a resistance to Vienna's traditional claim.

"There is a kind of xenophobia growing in Austria and in Vienna in particular" said Thomas Chroher, editor-in-chief of *Die Presse*, a Vienna daily. "The referendum was a sign of what people think about city's situation in the midst of events around us" he

---

<sup>23</sup>. *The Economist*, 29 June 1991, p.50

added. “ When they heard the predictions of the millions of visitors, many of them felt the streets are already filled with East Europeans, the majority said ‘we do not need this’ ”.<sup>24</sup>

The joining of EC meant a move away from neutrality, which Austria had followed since 1955, towards the European political union. With the break up of the Soviet Union many officials argued that neutrality was not relevant and that Austria could even contribute to the European security force.<sup>25</sup> However, it made Austrians uneasy as they always felt neutrality meant security, peace and influence.

Haider played on the fears of being hit by a wave of poverty-stricken immigrants from the East and of losing their identity in the whole process of becoming a member of the European Community. This was evident in his slogan-“Vienna for Viennese.” In the Viennese elections FPO more than doubled its share of vote to 23 per cent thrusting the Austrian People’s Party into third place and cutting the Social Democrats to 48 per cent, their poorest result since 1945.<sup>26</sup> With this election result, Haider made an asserting comeback and moved a step closer to entering the Austrian government.

---

<sup>24</sup>. *Christian Science Monitor*(Boston), 21 June 1991.

<sup>25</sup>. *The Economist*, 16 November, 1991, p.60.

<sup>26</sup>. *The Economist* , 16 June 1991, p.60.



## **The Presidential Election of the 1992:**

After enduring Kurt Waldheim as their President for six years, Austrians were more than ready for change. They had elected him despite foreign complaints about his murky war record. But since the time of their application for the membership of the EC, they felt the need for a president whom the other states would not boycott. The close contest in this election was between the Socialists headed by Rudolf Streicher and the People's Party under Thomas Klestil. The FPO candidate was Heide Schmidt instead of Haider. The reason given for his staying away was that, after Waldheim's era few people would be willing to vote for a man who was on record as praising the employment policies of the Third Reich. However, it was his eye for weightier job than the ceremonial one of president which had made him head the FPO campaigning.<sup>27</sup>

Kurt Waldheim's lonely presidency ended with the victory of Thomas Klestil - the OVP candidate. Heide Schmidt was eliminated in the first round as it had only 16 per cent of the votes. Therefore, a number of Freedom Party voters switched their backing to Klestil in the second round, helping him to victory. A close analyses of this support showed a sign of new trend in the coming governments: People's Party leaders always claimed they had no plans of switching to a coalition with Haider who was famous for his extremist language. However, plenty of the OVP supporters felt that their party was being harmed more by the alliance with Social

---

<sup>27</sup>. *The Economist*, 18 April 1992, p.55.

Democrats than that it would be by one with the Freedom Party, which included liberals as well as right-wing extremist.<sup>28</sup> Thus, though Klestil's election marked the end of Waldheim's era, it was doubted whether it had paved the way for a Conservative government in the future.

### **FPO'S Initiative in "Austria First" and the State Elections of 1993:**

Late in 1992, the FPO reached for even broader mass support when it attempted to capitalise on the government's rejection of its restrictive proposals on immigration by launching an initiative campaign entitled "Austria First". It proposed to add a statement to the Federal Constitution declaring that "Austria is not a country of immigration"<sup>29</sup>, and to institute a number of other measures to deal with public health, education, welfare and housing that, it contended, were badly affected: immigration be stopped until there were sufficient housing and work to accommodate immigrants, immigrants with criminal records be deported, all foreigners be obliged to carry identity cards at work and the number of foreign or immigrant children be reduced in school classes i. e. they be limited at 30 per cent.

A counter campaign started immediately. In the largest rally since 1945 some 200,000 people demonstrated in Vienna against

---

<sup>28</sup>. *The Economist*, 30 May 1992, p.60

<sup>29</sup>. *From Protest to Radical Right-Populism: The Freedom party of Austria 1990-1996*, [www.multimedia.caloply.edu/libarts/mriedlsp/publications/gsa96.html](http://www.multimedia.caloply.edu/libarts/mriedlsp/publications/gsa96.html), p.4.

xenophobia and racism. Participants included political, trade union and church leaders and prominent artists and other celebrities. Similar demonstrations were held in other cities. Former General-Secretary and 1992 FPO presidential candidate Heide Schmidt, ex-Defence Minister Friedhelm Frischenschlager and a few others defected to form a Liberal Forum.

A few days after the demonstrations, Austria decided to abandon its policy of neutrality and entered into negotiations in Brussels to join the European Community. Upon the success of the negotiations, it would become the member of Western European Union, a collective defence organisation set up in 1950 and subsequently or possibly join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

Although end of the Cold War was one of the reasons for its application of the EC, the war going on in the next door republic of Yugoslavia made Austria feel insecure. To escape the war, about 100,000 people had come over and taken refuge in Austria. Austrian economy was stressed by the influx of the refugees. Though the war had not threatened its internal security, it had made Austria nervous.<sup>30</sup> This was exploited by Haider and related the issue of membership of the EC, contrary to the moves taken by ruling government, to the issue of immigration, culture and national identity.

---

<sup>30</sup>. *The Pioneer* (New Delhi), 6 February 1993.

Less than two months later in March 1993, FPO extended its record of electoral success in three state elections. In Carinthia it won 33.28 per cent and came within one seat of parity with the SPO and made small gains in both Salzburg and Tyrol. Exist polls in all three elections again showed protest against SPO-OVP coalition, against its recently negotiated treaty for entry into the European Union and fear of immigration to be dominant factors in the FPO vote.<sup>31</sup>

However, the June 1994 plebiscite held in Austria approved the government's decision to join the EU. The result represented the defeat of the FPO and of Joerg Haider, who had sought to turn the poll into a vote against the government.

#### **Provincial and General Election of 1994:**

Austrians' approval for the negotiations with the European Union in the previous year was seen as a defeat of Haider. What this interpretation failed to recognise was that the FPO's success in the past eight years had not been built on any kind of nostalgic right-extremist ideology, but rather on protest against the established order. A 'yes vote' for EU did not in any way temper the alienation of the electorate. This was seen in the provincial elections in Volarberg in September 1994 where the FPO became the second largest party increasing its share by 2.5 to 18.5 and taking 7 seats.

---

<sup>31</sup>. From Protest to Radical Right Populism...,n.29, p.4

In the general elections which followed, the FPO campaign was based on immigration, crime, moral values and charges of scandal on the ruling coalition. FPO vote jumped by almost 6 per cent, to 22.5 per cent, a result which was described by Haider as “terrific”. While FPO lost middle-class voters to the Greens, the Liberal Forum and to the abstentions, defections from the SPO are accounted for two thousand votes. With this, Haider’s expectation soared high. He believed that Chancellor Franz Vranitzky’s government coalition would collapse within a year or two under the weight of what he termed as “bankrupt policies”, paving the way for him to lead a new government. He said in an interview that he expected a part of conservative OVP to break away from the governing coalition and vote with his party on several issues, forcing general elections in less than two years. Even if this does not happen, he said, “ I am sure that I will be the Chancellor by 1998”.<sup>32</sup>

Haider’s rise caused the two mainstay parties of Austrian politics to suffer losses they had not experienced. The SPO garnered only 35 percent of the vote, receiving only 66 seats. Their coalition partner, the OVP dropped to 28 per cent receiving only 52 seats.<sup>33</sup> The coalition continued until its breakdown in October 1995.

---

<sup>32</sup>. *International Herald Tribune* , 12 October 1994.

<sup>33</sup>. [http://www.adl.org/backgrounders/joerg\\_haider.html](http://www.adl.org/backgrounders/joerg_haider.html), p.3.

## **The 1995 National Elections:-**

The year began with the resignation of the People's Party Chairman Erhard Busek. He was succeeded by Wolfgang Schüssel who then sought to define himself by trumpeting the newly fashionable, conservative idea of a small government, frugality and deficit reduction against his SPÖ partners in the government. In the month of October, the grand coalition of the SPÖ and ÖVP collapsed when the parties failed to agree on how to reduce the deficit of the 1996 budget. Parliament was finally dissolved and an early general election was called for in December 1995.

The centre piece of the FPÖ campaign was a 20 point "Contract with Austria" project, a programme designed to develop the 'Austrian Democratic System into a citizen's republic'. It called for reduction in taxes, the replacement of subsidies to business with tax incentives, an end to early pension, the elimination of national debt and the balancing of the federal budget, defence against a loss of right to the EU, the strengthening of direct democracy through the initiative and referendum process and restricting immigration. Added to it were the anti-foreigner programme and allegations of corruption in main parties.<sup>34</sup>

The FPÖ was gaining support but a journalistic bombshell which was fired just from across the border by the German ARD television network upset the whole scene. Just four days before the election Haider was shown speaking at a gathering of war veterans,

---

<sup>34</sup>. From Protest to Radical Right Populism..., n.29, p.8.

including former *Waffen-SS* members, as a part of the festivities surrounding the Ulrichsberg celebration. In his address he said "only that some people cannot stand that in this world there are still respectable human beings, who have character and who stand by and have remained true to their convictions even against the tide... We have money for terrorists, we have money for newspapers that urge terror and we have money for lazy rabble, but we do not have money for respectable human beings".<sup>35</sup>

With this remarks, the party saw its first electoral setback in thirty years. The ruling SPO emerged victorious; OVP gained one seat and FPO failed to make the breakthrough and lost two seats.

#### **The European Election of 1996:**

For the FPO, 1996 was dominated by the European Parliament elections which were held in Austria for the first time. It succeeded in narrowing the gap between itself and the governing coalition parties in terms of both votes and percentage. One of the means used by Haider to achieve this end was the appointment of Peter Sichrovsky, a Jewish Viennese journalist, as his number two candidate.<sup>36</sup> Many attributed Sichrovsky's appointment to a move by Haider to avoid criticisms of anti-Semitism.

In October 1996, Austria's first direct election of Members of European Parliament took place. In this election, the SPO suffered serious electoral set backs, in contrast with both OVP and FPO,

---

<sup>35</sup>. *ibid.*,p.10

<sup>36</sup>. *File://A"australia\_elect.1.htm*, p.9.

which increased their vote share: the FPÖ which had campaigned for a delay in the European Monetary Union, the preservation of the schilling and much slower eastward enlargement, polled 27.6 per cent of the vote.<sup>37</sup> Haider's party broke through the projected 25 per cent ceiling that had until then been assumed for the European far right.

"People are fed up with the old parties that never live up to their promises", he said. "They want action on everyday problems, whether it is job security, housing or uncontrolled immigration. So when we say we can deliver, they are ready to try somebody new."<sup>38</sup> Haider in this election pointed to new classes of voters who were flocking to his movement: blue collar workers fearful of losing their jobs to immigrants, who accepted lower wages, dissatisfied young people who could not find work commensurate with their education, and women who said that crime, drugs and more decline had been ravaging family life.<sup>39</sup>

Herr Haider's tub-thumping speech against foreigners – "Vienna, not Istanbul" appealed to many. Membership of the EU was the turning point for Haider. Rash promises that food prices would drop, that everyone would be better with a heavy income, that tourism would blossom and jobs would be secure had not

---

<sup>37</sup>. *Times* (London), 15 October 1996. All references to the *Times* are to the London edition of that newspaper.

<sup>38</sup>. *International Herald Tribune*, 2 December 1996.

<sup>39</sup>. *International Herald Tribune*, 2 December 1996.



been fulfilled. So Haider, who had campaigned against EU, was seen as a prophet.<sup>40</sup>

The following year the results were improved when it captured 28 per cent of votes in elections to the European Parliament. The new party programme "*Freiheitliche Partei Osterreichs*" defined its "new" ideological principles which substituted the 1985 programme was policy of renewal regarding all relevant areas in government, society, economy and culture.

#### **State Elections in Carinthia of 1999:-**

The recent election victory of FPO in Carinthia was surprising because of the crisis within the party. As in other European parties of the extreme right, violent internal clashes had nearly led to the disintegration of the FPO.

However, the 'racist demagogues' found support in Carinthia, where the social and political problems of Austria are concentrated most strongly. Unemployment is above average and the social crisis is most pronounced in this region with a weak infrastructure, and characterised by small-scale farming and tourism. The widening gulf between the rich and the poor is very evident. This area also had the strongest Slovenian minority in Southern Austria. In eight of its districts, Slovenian is the second language.

With all these factors being advantageous to Haider, he stressed the social questions in his demagogic election speeches.

---

<sup>40</sup>. *Times*, 15 October 1996.

He demanded that factories with more than 20 per cent foreigners in their work forces should lose all state subsidies. He combined his well-known rabble-rousing against the European Union with a call for a guaranteed existence for farmers in the form of “jobs premium” . Families and single parents should receive more support, including state benefits. Moreover, he called for a drastic lowering of rents and for mass tax cuts. The FPO message in the final days of his campaign was that it was “time for a change”. Carinthians were urged to initiate a “new phase of political renewal” which was personified by Haider.

The results brought the FPO its highest votes ever. With almost ten per cent less in the popular vote than the FPO, the SPO lost the majority that it had held since 1945. The votes for FPO rose by 8.8 per cent giving it 42 per cent of the total.<sup>41</sup> It pushed the SPO into second place with 32.9 per cent.

#### **General Election of 1999:**

Haider’s ambition for the party were never limited to local and provincial office or even to increasing its share of MPs, but always included entering national government office. Until the 1999 general election, the SPO and OVP had succeeded in thwarting that goal. However, this election resulted in a significant shift in party strengths. The SPO remained the largest party, but with only 65 of the 183 seats; the OVP and FPO each had 52. The

---

<sup>41</sup>. Riedlsperger, n.6, p.14.

OVP and FPO made it clear that they would not tolerate a minority SPO government and most observers agreed that early further election would strengthen Haider's party.<sup>42</sup>

Freedom Party led by Haider was included in the government by the OVP as Social Democrats abandoned the efforts to form one. Austria's President, Thomas Klestil had no other choice but to approve the coalition government including FPO and OVP ignoring threats of international isolation.<sup>43</sup> Because of the protest within and the from outside, Haider decided to stay away from power and remained the governor of Carinthia. He appointed Susanne Reisse-Passer as the Deputy Chancellor.

The international threats were immediately put into practice by various countries. On 31 January 2000 fourteen other European Union countries, acting not on behalf of the European Union, which would have obliged them to include Austria, but as a group of like-minded governments suspended all bilateral talks and imposed sanctions. The Prime Minister of Portugal, Antonio Guterres, whose country held the rotating presidency then said, "... the measures agreed by the fourteen countries will take effect . As long as this situation remains, we shall maintain this stance." <sup>44</sup>

The United States and Israel also threw in their weight by bringing its ambassador for "consultations" and by recalling its

---

<sup>42</sup>. Luther, no.7, p.432.

<sup>43</sup>. *The New Indian Express* (Chennai), 5 February 2000.

<sup>44</sup>. *The Hindu* (Chennai), 5 February, 2000.

ambassador respectively. Even though all these moves were to show dis-content with the country's government, some observers felt that this only served to bolster Haider's support. As Anneliese Rohrer, domestic affairs editor of the Vienna daily *Die Presse*, put it, "Austrians do not like to be kicked around. They are saying 'well, if they hate him, he must be good'."<sup>45</sup>

### **CONCLUSION:**

The Freedom Party since its inception was named mostly as the 'two and a half party'. However, it increased its mass base after Joreg Haider took up the Chairmanship of the party in 1986. Since then it has turned nationalistic and xenophobic like the other extreme-right parties of Europe. By targeting the immigrants it has been attracting the attention of the citizens.

Inspite of the various *faux pas* by its leader Joerg Haider, like praising the employment policy of the Third Reich, the party has continued to increase its mass base. The attractive speeches by Haider make the people believe that it is the only party which could offer solution to the everyday problems.

The last general election placed it as the second largest party in the country just a bit ahead of OVP. This attracted a great number of antagonistic reaction both from within the country and from outside. However, the public opinion at that point showed that in any election under the country's system of proportional

---

<sup>45</sup>. *Time* (New York), vol.155, no.6,14 February 2000, p.24.

representation, Haider would secure the largest number of Parliamentary seats and thus qualify for Chancellorship.

However, Haider was forced to withdraw from the post of Deputy Chancellor. He accepted to remain the Governor of Carinthia and place Reisse Passer took his place as the Deputy Chancellor. However, he still remains the leader of the FPO and it is said that it might help him in influencing the national policies indirectly. The big question which is in front of the countries, mostly of European Union, is how to deal with these extreme-right parties. The following chapter deals with this issue.

## Chapter IV

### CONCLUSION

The extreme-Right parties of Europe have been a subject of considerable attention in recent years. But the entry into the government of the Austrian Freedom Party is seen as a threat to the democracy worldwide and has brought back the dreaded memories of the fascist regimes of Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. In contrast to the defeat of Germany by the Allies, which ended the Second World War and had eliminated all the fascist powers, these movements grew slowly and gained support of the people. Widely known as 'racial', 'neo-Nazi', 'fascist', these extreme parties do not hesitate to call themselves 'nationalist', 'populist' and 'anti-immigrant'.

The rise of fascism in the inter-War period could be seen largely as an emotional response to the shattering political and economic framework, coupled with a threat of Bolshevism. The First World War had shattered the economies of all the European countries. Italy had emerged from the war as a badly shaken and frustrated country. Moreover, the Paris Treaty had not kept up the promise of territorial gains. In addition, the economy was in complete disarray, unemployment was high and food was scarce. These conditions of confusion and hardship brought about a large number of supporters to a new movement called Fascism with Benito Mussolini as the leader.

Germany, on the other hand, was a defeated power. As a result, it had to face the humiliating Versailles Treaty and it was expected to pay the war damages. Along with this, like other countries of Europe, it faced rising unemployment. The economy, which was weak due to War, got worsened because of inflation. It was at this point that a new voice –Nazism of Adolf Hitler – was heard in the country and the people began to drift towards it.

The essence of these fascist and Nazi movements were militarism; they despised the parliamentary system and encouraged personality cult. Even though Mussolini showed little interest in the racial differences, it became a marked feature of Hitler's movement. Both the movements were dedicated to the violent doctrine of nationalism, anti-Bolshevism and total allegiance to their leaders. Their impact was so strong that they not only gained large support in their own countries but also helped in generating similar, though less powerful, movements in other countries of Europe : Nationalist Socialist Democratic Party of Austria (NSDAP), *Action Francaise* and *Croix de Feu* under Colonel de le Roche in France and the British Union of Fascists (BUF) under Oswald Mosley.

With the defeat of fascist regimes in the Second World War, it seemed that fascism had disappeared from Europe. Denazification was used as a means to eliminate these ideas. But they lingered on as denazification was stopped midway. The Italian Socialist

Movement (MSI) , which is one of the political parties at the national level at present, came into existence in Italy during this time. In Austria, the League of Independents (Verband der Unabhangigen : Vdu) was founded in the immediate post-War years. It put an end to the historical practice of Proporz and started acting as the 'Third Force' in the political system of the country.

1950s were the immediate years of the extreme-Right parties. Almost all the countries of Europe were resisting these fascists/extreme-Right movements, which caused great losses in the Second World War, from capturing power. Thus, they became almost insignificant in these years. However, 1950s and 1960s are seen as the years of immigration – the first wave of immigrants were those of natives who were serving in the colonial countries. They had to return to the motherland once the colonies gained independence from their rule. They later became strong supporters of the extreme-right parties. The second wave was due to the falling industrial growth of the European countries : due to the losses of life in the war, the need for labour became very acute. It was at this time that the European countries encouraged immigration and the immigrants which were expected to work in industries and in other sectors. The high standard of living in Europe attracted a large number of people of these countries to become 'guest workers'.

They were followed by their families and dependants. Thus the immigrants, who mainly came as labourers, were regarded as liabilities of the countries' economy after a few years. It



was at this time that the extreme – Right parties started harassing these immigrants for all the follies in the country. The coming of the oil crisis only worsened the situation for these immigrants thus helping the extreme-Right parties to gain strength.

The crisis of the 1970s worsened the economic conditions in Europe. The governments were forced to introduce a cut in the social welfare measures, taxes were increased to meet the needs of the economy. Immigration was almost stopped and in many countries guest workers were asked to return home. In this situation, the extreme Right saw in these immigrants a cause to improve their political fortune. They were blamed for the increase in tax, unemployment, bad housing, etc. It was at this time that the extreme-right Front National emerged in France; even though they could not attract a large number of electorate , they improved their position in Austria, Italy and Britain.

Since the 1980s, a variety of extreme-Right parties have achieved notable success. Among them, the National Front (FN) led by Jean Marie Le Pen of France and Freedom Party of Austria (FPO) led by Joerg Haider are in a better position. *Front National* has stabilised its electoral support to 15 per cent and the Freedom Party shares power with the People's Party (OVP) in the national government with 27 per cent of the electoral support.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>. Roger Eatwell, "The Birth of the Extreme-Right' in Western Europe?", *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), vol.53 (2000), pp. 11-12.

Although the Freedom Party of Austria (FPO) and the *Front National* (FN) of France were formed in 1956 and 1972 respectively, they achieved their electoral success only in 1980s. Their programmes are more or less similar. Even though in the initial stages they were formed ostensibly to deter the spread of communism, their political agenda shifted towards 'immigrants versus the nationals'. They saw in immigrants an easy target for all the problems of society: unemployment among the nationals was because of immigrants who took up unskilled jobs at low pay; the social welfare benefits were reduced to the citizens and taxes were increased in order to improve the conditions of the immigrants; they also became an object of attack of the extreme-Right when it came to crime. Therefore their campaign included a ban on new immigration, end of family regrouping and expulsion of those who are unemployed and of those who were convicted in criminal cases. They demanded for the preference of nationals over immigrants in all areas.

Even though the FPO supported the integration of Austria with the European Union in the initial stages, its opinion got completely reversed once it became a member. Presently it shares a common view with the FN about Europe. They are apprehensive of losing their national identity in a centralised Europe. This threat to national independence is extended to the cultural aspect too. The parties argue that the increase in the number of immigrants , which would be a result of eastward enlargement, would

undermine the countries' culture, heritage and identity. However, their campaign during the European elections include – calls for the Europe of Fatherland and for the preservation of the unique European identity. Thus, their present aim is 'to preserve diversity within while fending off diversity from outside'.<sup>2</sup>

The *Front National* and the Freedom Party claim to be anti-Establishment. According to them, the declining economic and political situation of their countries is a result of the inefficiency of the main political parties and their failure to implement the policies effectively. By speaking out the existing 'fears' in the minds of the people, they attack the ruling parties. According to political philosopher Chantal Mouffe, both these parties have been able to articulate the demands of the common people because of their populist rhetoric. Thus they try to present themselves as the only guarantors of the sovereignty of the people.<sup>3</sup>

However, their support to the Nazi past and their policies have been the greatest drawback. Even though both the parties reject the extremist label, their leanings to the Nazi policies is very evident in the speeches of their leaders and their rallies. FN's rejection of human rights, its racist propaganda and anti-Semitic remarks, its often revisionist stance and aggressive populist discourses leave little doubt about its place on the far-right. In the

---

<sup>2</sup> Catherine Fieschi, "European Institutions: The Far-Right and Illiberal Politics in a Liberal Context", *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), vol.53 (2000), p.521.

<sup>3</sup> Oliver Machart, "The 'Fourth Way' of the Ultra-Right: Austria, Europe and the End of Neo-Corporatism", *Capital and Class* (London), vol.73 (2000), pp.11-12.

same way, Joerg Haider in one of his blunders, praised the employment policy of the Third Reich which made him relinquish his post temporarily as the governor of Carinthia.

Another factor which attracts the people towards the extreme-right parties is the party leaders themselves. Both Jean Marie Le Pen and Joerg Haider are good elocuters. They attract the attention of the media and the people with their speeches and interviews. They can speak the unspeakable truths of the society which makes them the 'favourites' of the electorate.

Thus the extreme-right parties share a common set of programmes. By blaming the main parties for their flawed policies which according to them increase the foreign population in the country, they increase their support.

Explanation of the success of the extreme-right includes an analyses of who votes for them, why do they vote for them and where do they come from. This includes three aspects broadly – the economic, political and geographic. Most of the voters who support the extreme-right parties are young, uneducated and low skilled, mostly from the age group of 18-35.

Their intention to vote could be connected to the issue of immigration. They see immigrants, who take up unskilled jobs at low pay, as competitors. The extreme Right parties preach from their stand point and demand implementation of policies to deal with such problems. They include curbing immigration and expulsion of unemployed immigrants. They are seen as the only

solution. Whenever the issue of immigration has come up, like that of the Islamic Headscarf issue in 1989 in France or the reducing of number of Slovene children in the Carinthian schools in 1987, the extreme-Right of respective countries have fared in the elections better compared to the rest of the parties.

More men seem to vote for the extreme-Right parties than the women. They seem to be more chauvinistic than the other parties. Their views on family, working women, abortion etc. are more conservative and outdated.

The political aspects also helped the extreme-Right parties to an extent. Whenever the economy was undergoing a bad phase, the political situation was in a turmoil and the parties were doing very little to improve the conditions, the extreme-Right have performed better. This could be seen from the very first success of the FN in 1984 election and that of FPO in 1986. This is known as the 'protest effect' when the extreme-right parties attract voters from the centre-Right parties. In the recent past, this has been considered more important than the issue of immigration in strengthening their position in the country.

Another aspect which helps the extreme right to gain large support is the type of electoral system. In France, the proportional system of voting replaced the first past the post in the 1986 election. This gave an opportunity for FN to hold campaign throughout the country than concentrating in areas where it

already enjoyed a considerable support. As a result, Le Pen's party experienced unexpected results in that election.

The geographical analyses once again could be connected to the issue of immigration. The extreme Right parties draw their support mostly from the regions which have a high concentration of foreign population. This could be based on the facts that the largest share of vote to the FN comes from regions like – Toulon, Marseille, Dreux etc. FPO also maintains the same position which is very evident in the Carinthian constituency which has been the traditional strong hold of the party. With slogans like 'Vienna must not become Chicago' and 'Two million unemployed equals two million immigrants too many', they appeal to the xenophobia on which they base their success.

Thus success in ballot box depends on various factors – absence of an attractive alternative for right-wing voters, the economic circumstances and political crises. Moreover, sympathy for the extreme right is apparent not only in social structure and in problems of modern society but also in a particular kind of personality structures.

However, an analyses of the regional, national and European elections show that the voting pattern changes with each election. More often it is seen that, the extreme Right parties like the FN and FPO perform better in regional elections. The best example could be that of the constituencies of Dreux and Carinthia where FN and FPO respectively have a traditional strong hold. It is because these

constituencies have a high concentration of foreign population. The evident 'fear' and immediate need to solve it lead the people to vote for such parties.

But the same does not hold good when it is about the national level elections. Even voters who define themselves sympathetic to the extreme Right do not prefer to vote for the same at the national level. Because electoral success for the extreme Right parties depends on the ability to mobilise potential support, as the propaganda skills of the leadership and on the economic and political circumstances in which parliamentary elections take place. In normal circumstances it appears that most voters who consider themselves on the extreme right will give their support to centr-Right parties like the Gaullist RPR-UDF in France and to the People's Party in Austria.<sup>4</sup>

This could be seen in the elections of 1994 and in the national elections which followed after a few months in Austria. With a call to lowering tax and a demand for 'jobs premium' for the farmers, the FPO gained 42 per cent in the state elections of Carinthia. In the national election which followed, even though the party fared better than the previous general election, its voter share remained only 27 per cent. However, the OVP with an ambition to hold the Chancellorship, made FPO as an ally. However compared

---

<sup>4</sup>. Geoffrey Harris, *The Dark Side of Europe* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p.161.

to the result in the state election and national election, the difference was very evident.

The elections for the European Parliament provide an obvious chance for extreme-Right elements, as the public has very little idea of the role and function of the institution for which they are required to elect members.<sup>5</sup> In addition to it, it is from these elections that the parties have gained enormously – despite their anti-Europeanism. Moreover, the European elections have given them success to a considerable extent which domestic electoral system could not provide. The FN which always had below marginal mark, achieved its first electoral success in 1984 European election when it gained ten seats in the European Parliament.<sup>6</sup>

In a nutshell, many extreme right voters look for stability and predictability in political life. In a world which involves processes like migration and formation of a number of international organisation, it is difficult to offer a permanent solution. But the hope for a better and secure world inspires the people to vote for these extreme right parties. However, a well planned programme – within a particular country and internationally, should protect the countries from the threat of rise of extreme Right parties.

---

<sup>5</sup>. *ibid*, p.135.

<sup>6</sup>. Fieschi, n.2, pp.521-2.



In the October 1999 election in Austria, the Freedom Party secured the second position with 27 per cent of votes cast in its favour. After about five months, in February 2000, the People's Party leader Wolfgang Schussel decided to break the tradition of aligning with the Socialists. Thus it made Haider's FPO as a partner at the centre. This has sent shock waves worldwide. For the first time a party of extreme xenophobic Right had come into power at the centre. This was followed by a number of condemnations.

The member states of the European Union decided to put Austria under diplomatic quarantine and to reduce bilateral relations to technical level. They also decided that no member country will support any Austrian candidate for any posts in international organisations. Thus EU's vehement objection to Austria's electoral choice as well as the warning it issued to Austria, shed much light on its role as an international actor as well as on the tensions which domestic politics of the far-right introduce in European arena.

As far as EU's role is concerned, it was for the first time since 1958 that EU had taken an unanimous decision. Whether it was Common Foreign and Security Policy or Maastricht Treaty, each of the members had maintained different views and could never come to a common stand. Thus this decision of EU in bringing about a diplomatic boycott or the 'sanction' seemed as if they were driven more by the opportunity to strengthen perceptions

of it as a community of countries which can behave as an international actor rather than by the requirement of the situation.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, it is important to note that warnings and threatening of Austria was not endorsed by all member states. Enthusiastic sanctioners were France, Germany, Italy, Belgium and Portugal. This was because they shared two traits: they all had or had had a national problem with far-right parties and they were states perceived as most committed to further integration. Britain, Denmark, Sweden who were less keen were less comfortable with EU's decision to intervene in what was considered a domestic matter. They also had fewer problems with the politics of extreme right at home and were those who considered EU as something less of a community of nations and maintained more traditional concept of national interest.<sup>8</sup>

These arguments put a question mark on the role of EU in curbing the extreme Right parties. Critics suggested that it does not exhibit the characteristics of a state – according to them it is a forum in which governments meet periodically in order to maintain bi-lateral and economic relations. However, the supporters countered the views of the critics when they argued that EU feels increasingly justified in behaving as an international actor. They based their argument on the resignation of Joerg

---

7. *ibid.*, p.527.

8. *ibid.*, p.528.

Haider from the government which showed that member states could no longer afford to ignore the views expressed by the EU.<sup>9</sup>

Thus the implementation of 'sanctions' seemed that EU member states were not prepared to accept racist parties in government. However, it turned out to be a short-lived phenomenon. The EU set up a commission to file a report on human rights situation in Austria as well as on the nature of the FPÖ. The report when published denied any severe infringement of rights. Thus it acted as a clearance certificate which lifted diplomatic sanctions against Austria. It is said that in future, this report might be considered a historically unique document in being the first official clearance certificate for an alliance between conservative parties and ultra-Right populism.<sup>10</sup>

The extreme right parties and their racist policies are not new to Europe. Contemporary events confirm that the ideas of fascist and racist politicians were not just the product of a particular historical period or something which appealed only to parts of Europe. Although they were prominent in the inter-war period, they have grown and have played an important role in the domestic as well as the European politics. The racist ideas propagated by them are dangerous to the society as a whole and increases violence, hatred and insecurity. To tackle this problem, it is necessary that social, economic and political situations existing

---

<sup>9</sup>. *ibid.*, p.530.

<sup>10</sup>. Marchart, n.3, pp.7-8.

in the society have to be improved rather than just planning out how to control them electorally.

Different countries have different legal provisions for dealing with political extremism. These mechanisms range from formal bans on fascist and Nazi parties to vaguely worded provisions against threats to democracy to general. For historical reasons Germany and Italy have constitutional provisions which are supposed to prevent the re-establishment of fascist or Nazi parties. However, these have not been very effective for the simple reason that banning an organ from regular political activity forces it into underground activity such as terrorism; imprisoning activists can create martyrs or heroes for those who see their activities as one on their behalf.

Historically, fascist and neo-nazi parties have been cause of innumerable internal conflicts and it is , therefore, necessary that member countries of international organisations, like the United Nations, and regional organisations, like the European Union, should attempt to work together to eliminate racism – only condemning or discrimination or imposition of sanctions for a certain period of time is not important. But effective measures like banning their membership and imposing strict sanction – both political and economic would discourage the country from electing these extreme parties.

However, more responsibility lies with the political parties and with the people of respective countries. The Centre-Right

parties of late have been adopting tactics to increase their vote share. In order to shift the attention of the people from the corruption charges of their ministers and their inefficiency. They started blaming immigrants for all the drawbacks of society. However, it could be more of a responsible act if they realise their loopholes in administration and instead of adopting far-right stance, they should be bringing about effective policies to solve the existing problems of society. They should also introduce programmes which would encourage awareness of history so that the young see the deadly danger that exists behind a certain type of political appeal.

As the extreme-Right parties mostly appeal to the young generation, it is the responsibility of the local authorities to keep a check on the extremist activity within schools.

But the most important task would be the development of a multi-racial society, rather making the simple citizens aware of the need for it. The need for it is important from of two angles : it is apparent that Europe's economic need for immigration is a continuing reality. Most of the countries of Europe face a low death rate and lower birth rate which has turned the demographic pyramid upside down i.e., to say that a big groups of people consist of the older people. This is leading to labour shortage in certain industries and regions. Immigration, therefore is not only a result of attractive life style and high living standard of Europe but is very

often a response to the needs of the labour market.<sup>11</sup> The development of a multiracial and multicultural Europe is now an economic and political necessity. Just as politicians have learnt to talk positively about the need to build up Europe's independence and economic strength, they must realise and encourage the need for a multiracial Europe.

The need of the hour is to check the growth of the extreme – Right parties, not only because they reduce the overall level of tolerance, but also because some democratic parties are trying to contain the success of extreme-Right by taking over some of their ideas. This development is dangerous for Europe. The last time they were in power, the countries had experienced complete distraction and nobody prefers to repeat such nightmare. It is therefore necessary to realise the existence of the extreme-Right parties and the threat prevailing from them. To quote Geoffrey Harris “it may be only a shadow of the past, but it is the shadow which is cast menacingly across society and politics to Western Europe....”

---

<sup>11</sup> Harris, n. 4, p.176.

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Secondary Sources Books

- Addinall N.A., *French Political Parties : A Documentary Guide* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1995)
- Ardagh, John, *France in 1980s* (Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1982).
- Arnold, Edward J., ed., *The Development of the Radical Right in France : From Boulanger to Le Pen* (London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 2000).
- Baradat, Leon P., *Political Ideologies : Their Origins and Impact* (New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc., 1984).
- Beck, Michael S. Lewis, ed., *How France Votes* (New York, Seven Bridges Press, 2000).
- Bell, David S., *Parties and Democracy in France : Parties Under Presidentialism* (Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2000).
- Blinkhorn, Martin, *Mussolini and Fascist Italy* (London, Routledge, 1994).
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed., *Fascists and Conservatives* (London, Urwin Hyaman, 1990).
- Blum, Jerome, Cameron, Rondo and Barnes, Thomas G., *The European World Since 1815: Triumph and Transition* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).
- Cole, Alistair, *French Politics and Society* (London, Prentice Hall, 1998).
- Cordell, Karl, ed., *Ethnicity and Democratisation in the New Europe* (New York, Routledge, 1999).

- Elgie, Robert, ed., *The Changing French Political System* (London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2000).
- Flood, Christopher and Bell, Laurance, eds., *Political Ideas in Contemporary France* (London, Pinter Publishers, 1997).
- Fox, Edward Whitting, *The Emergence of the Modern European World: From 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Essex, Blackwell Publishers, 1991).
- Griffin, Roger, *The Nature of Fascism* (London, Routledge, 1993).
- Hagopian, Mark N., *Ideals and Ideologies of Modern Politics* (New York, Longman Inc., 1985).
- Harris, Geoffrey, *The Dark Side of Europe* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1994).
- Hewelett, Nick, *Modern French Politics: Analysing Conflict and Consensus since 1945* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1998).
- Hughes, Stuart H., *Contemporary Europe: A History* (New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1961).
- Ingersoli, David E. and Mathews, Richard K., *The Philosophic Roots of Modern Ideology: Liberalism, Communism, Fascism* (New Jersey, Prentice – Hall Inc., 1986).
- Jelavich, Barbara, *Modern Austria : Empire and Republic 1880 – 1986* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- Kitchen, Martin, *Europe Between the Wars : A Political History* (Essex, Pearson Education Ltd., 2000).
- Lewis Beck, Michael S., ed., *How France Votes* (New York, Seven Bridges Press, 2000).
- Lome, Peter, *Europe Since 1945* (London, 1985).
- Macridis, Roy, ed., *Modern Political Systems: Europe* ( New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1987).



- Meny, Yves., *The French Political System* (Paris, La Documentation Francaise, 1998).
- Morris, Peter, *French Politics Today* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1994).
- Parker, R.A.C., *Europe 1919-1945* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969).
- Stevens, Anne, *The Government and Politics of France* (London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996).
- Stromberg, Rolland, *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (New York, Prentice Hall , New Jersey, 1988).
- Swecmy, Jim and Weidenholzer, Josef, *Austria : A Study in Modern Achievement* (Hants, Avesbery, 1988).
- Thody, Philip, *Europe Since 1945* (London, Routledge, 200).
- Vertovec, Steven and Peach, Ceri., *Islam in Europe : The Politics of Religion and Community* (London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997).
- Westerland, David and Svanberg, Ingvar, eds., *Islam Outside the Arab World* (Surrey, Curzon, 1999).
- Williams, Phillip M., *Crisis and Compromise : Politics in Fourth Republic* (London, Longman, Greens and Co. Ltd., 1964).
- Wood, Anthony, *Europe 1815 – 1960* (Essex, Longman Group Ltd., 1984).

## **Articles**

- Backes, Uwe and Mudde, Cas, "Germany: Extremism Without Successful Parties", *Parliamentary Affairs* (Liverpool), vol.53, 2000, pp.457-468.

- Balibar, Etienne, “*Es Gibt Keinen Staat in Europa: Racism and Politics in Europe Today*”, *New Left Review* (London), vol.186, March-April 1991, pp.5-91.
- Brechon, Pierre and Mitra, Subrata Kumar, “National Front in France : The Emergence of Extreme Right Protest Movement” *Comparative Politics* (New York), vol.25, no.1, October 1992, pp.63-82.
- De Master, Sara and Le Roy, Michael, K., “Xenophobia and European Union”, *Comparative Politics* (New York), vol.32, no.4, July 2000.
- Eatwell, Roger., “The Rebirth of ‘Extreme – Right’ in Western Europe ?”, *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.53, 2000, pp.407-425.
- Feldlum, Mirian, “Paradoxes of Ethnic Politics : The Case of France – Maghrebis in France”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (London), vol.16, 1993, January, pp.52-74.
- Fieschi, Catherine., “European Institutions : The Far Right and Illiberal Politics in Liberal Context”, *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.53 2000, pp.517-531.
- Findies, Hans – Jurgen., “Fundamentalism in France”, *Journal of Asiatic Society*, vol.38, No.1, 1996, pp.50-60.
- Hainsworth, Paul and Mitchell, Paul, “France : The Front National from Crossroads to Crossroads?”, *Parliamentary Affairs* , vol.53 2000, pp.443-456.
- Hargrives Alec G., “The Political Mobilisation of the North African Immigration Community in France”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.14, no.3, 1991, pp.350-367.
- Hoffman, Stanley, “Thoughts on the French Nation Today”. *Deadalus* (Cambridge), vol.122, no.3, 1993, pp.63-80

- Husbands, Christopher T., "The Mainstream Right and Politics of Immigration in France : Major Developments in the 1980s", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* vol.14, no.2, 1991, pp.170-198.
- \_\_\_\_\_., "The Support for the Front National :Analyses and Findings", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.14, no.3, 1991, pp.382-416.
- Krishnan, Raghu, "Right – Wing Defeat in France", *Economic and Political Weekly* (Mumbai), vol. XXXIII, no.28, 1997, pp.1693-1696.
- Lloyd, Cathie and Waters, Hazel., "France : One Culture, One People?", *Race and Class* (London), vol.32, no.3, 1991, pp.49-65.
- Luther, Kurt Richard, "Austria : A Democracy Under Threat from Freedom Party?", *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.53, 2000, pp.426-442.
- Marchart, Oliver, "The 'Fourth Way' of the Ultra-Right: Austria, Europe, and the end of Neo-Corporatism", *Capital and Class* (London), Winter, 2000, pp.7-14.
- Meunir, Sophie, "The French Exception", *Foreign Affairs* (New York), vol.79, no.4, 2000, pp.104-116.
- Newell, James L., "Italy :The Extreme Right Comes in from the Cold", *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.53, 2000, pp.469-485.
- Noor, Farish, "Rise of Austria's Freedom party marks a Step Backwards for Europe", [http://www/jaring.my/just/austria\\_farish.htm](http://www/jaring.my/just/austria_farish.htm).
- Ogden, Philip E., "Immigration to France since 1945: Myth and Reality", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.14, no.3, 1991, pp.294-317.
- Riedlsperger, Max., "Heil Haider ! The Revitalisation of the Austrian Freedom party since 1986", *Politics and Society in Germany, Austria and Switzerland*, vol.4, no.2, 1992, pp.18-47.

- \_\_\_\_\_., "Haider's Reach for Power',(prepared for the 1999 meeting of the German Studies Association), (Atlanta), 8 October 1999.
- Rizzuto, Franco, "France : Something of a Rehabilitation", *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol.50, no.3, 1997, pp.373-379.
- Rupnik, Jacques, "Reawakening of European Nationalism", *Social Research* (New York), vol.63, no.1, 1991, pp.41-75.
- Singer,Daniel, "The Resistible Rise of Jean Marie Le Pen", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.14, no.3, 1991, pp.368-381.
- Soucy, Robert J., "French Fascism and *Croix de Feu* : A Dissenting Interpretation", *Journal of Contemporary History* (London), vol. 26, no.1, 1991, pp.159-188.
- Spektorowski, Alberto, "Regionalism and the Right : The Case of France", *The Political Quarterly* (Oxford), vol.71, no.3, 2000, pp.352-361.
- Sutton, Michael, "France : Who Beats the Nationalist Drum?", *World Today* (London), vol.47, no.6, 1991, pp.98-102.
- Virost, Milton, "Muslims in France", *Foreign Affairs*, vol.75, no.5, 1996, pp.78-96.
- Zizek, Slavoj, "Why We All Love to Hate Haider", *New Left Review*, vol.2, March-April, 2000,pp.37-47.

### **Periodicals**

*Frontline* (Chennai)

*The Economist* (London)

*Times* (New York)

*New Statesman* (London)

## **Newspapers**

*Christian Science Monitor* (Boston)  
*International Herald Tribune* (Paris)  
*New Indian Express* (Chennai)  
*Sunday Times* (London)  
*The Guardian* (London)  
*The Hindu* (Chennai)  
*The Pioneer* (New Delhi)  
*Times* (London)  
*Times of India* (New Delhi)

## **Internet Sites**

<http://sicsa.huji.ac.il/8soimcha.htm>  
<file:///A:\Anti-semitism Worldwide 1997-8-Austira.htm>  
<http://www.anl.org.uk/06-lepen-htm>.  
<http://www.sho.org//news/gb/SRN 13-14-98.html>  
<http://www.adl.org/backgrounders/joerg-haider.html>.  
<http://www.jaring.my/just/austria-farish.htm>  
<file:///A:\austira-elect1.htm>  
<http://www.fpoe.or.at/english/english-htm>.