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**GENERAL DE GAULLE, ALFRED SAUVY AND THE FRENCH  
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[Le général de Gaulle, Alfred Sauvy et l'Institut national  
d'études démographiques (Ined-1945-1962)]**

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**General de Gaulle, Alfred Sauvy  
and the French Institute for population studies (INED) (1945-1962)**



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## *Abstract*

In accordance with General De Gaulle's wishes, the French Institute for population studies, INED (*Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques*) has been both a public think-tank and an instrument of family policy action – at least during the 17 years when it was led by Alfred Sauvy. To document what could *a priori* be regarded as an idle assertion, we first examine the double decision made by de Gaulle when he created this institution and put Sauvy at its head.

We also look more closely at the line adopted by INED and its journal, which was launched as early as 1946; two of its commitments are of particular relevance, in view of their close links with family policy considerations. We will then recall how the reputation of INED fulfilled General de Gaulle's expectations, and relate two episodes of exchanges between de Gaulle and Sauvy, in the 1950s. Finally, an evocation of the evolution of INED after de Gaulle will help better understand the previous period.

**Keywords :** Demography ; migration ; Institut national d'études démographiques ; INED ; De Gaulle ; family policy ; Alfred Sauvy

## *Résumé*

L'Institut national d'études démographiques a été, selon le souhait du général De Gaulle, un lieu de réflexion et un instrument d'action de la politique familiale, au moins durant toute la période de 17 années (1945-1962) où son directeur a été Alfred Sauvy. Pour démontrer ce qui pourrait être jugé *a priori* comme une simple affirmation, il convient d'abord de préciser la double décision du Général fondant cet institut et nommant son premier directeur.

La ligne de l'Ined et de sa revue, créée dès 1946, devra ensuite être précisée. Deux engagements de l'Ined doivent particulièrement être présentés, dans la mesure où leur lien avec la politique familiale est étroit. Puis, après avoir rappelé combien la notoriété de l'Ined a répondu au souhait du général de Gaulle, les deux épisodes relatant les deux échanges des années 1950 entre ce dernier et le directeur de l'Ined méritent d'être relatés. En conclusion, l'évolution de l'Ined après le général de Gaulle permet de mieux comprendre la période antérieure.

**Mots-clés :** Démographie ; Immigration ; Institut national d'études démographiques ; INED ; De Gaulle ; politique familiale ; Alfred Sauvy

In accordance with General De Gaulle's wishes, the French Institute for population studies, INED (*Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques*) has been both a public think-tank and an instrument of family policy action – at least during the 17 years when it was led by Alfred Sauvy. To document what could *a priori* be regarded as an idle assertion, we first examine the double decision made by de Gaulle when he created this institution and put Sauvy at its head. We also look more closely at the line adopted by INED and its journal, which was launched as early as 1946; two of its commitments are of particular relevance, in view of their close links with family policy considerations. We will then recall how the reputation of INED fulfilled General de Gaulle's expectations, and relate two episodes of exchanges between de Gaulle and Sauvy, in the 1950s. Finally, an evocation of the evolution of INED after de Gaulle will help better understand the previous period.

De Gaulle's role in the creation of INED was essential, and very directly linked to family policy concerns. It finds its basis in the General's determination to revitalise French demographics: in 1945, the population in mainland France was less numerous than at the beginning of the 20th century, in spite of the progress in sanitation and hygiene observed in the meantime. De Gaulle's objectives were in line with a national awareness which emerged at the end of the 1890s, more specifically in 1896, with the creation of an association for the increase of the French population. The *Alliance nationale pour l'accroissement de la population française*<sup>1</sup> was founded by the statistician and medical practitioner Jacques Bertillon and the medical Nobel prize winner Charles Richet, and counted many famous members, such as Émile Zola. It endeavoured to stimulate a trend of public opinion aimed at both reducing mortality, through better hygiene and sanitation, and encouraging fertility. Essential in this respect was the role of its vice-president Adolphe Landry (1874-1954), a former minister of the Third Republic, for many years the mayor and MP for the Corsican town of Calvi, and the author of seminal demography works such as *La révolution démographique*<sup>2</sup>. This movement helped encourage the State to develop a family policy, leading *i.a.* to the adoption, in 1939, of a Family Code, and to the establishment of a specialised high level committee (*Haut comité à la famille*).

In 1945, de Gaulle, as Head of the temporary French government, confirmed the significance he attributed to family matters and demographics<sup>3</sup> by creating on 12 April

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<sup>1</sup> It later became the *Alliance nationale contre la dépopulation* by a decree of 15 June 1953, and then *Population & Avenir* by a decree of 3 November 1983.

<sup>2</sup> 1934, re-published by INED, 1982.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. in particular the journal *Espoir*, n° 21, December 1977.

1945 a committee (*Haut comité de la population et de la famille*) of which he personally chaired<sup>4</sup> six meetings between April and July 1945.

### *The context of the creation of INED*

In this context where population and family matters were of great concern at the highest level of the State, several additional elements contributed to the comparatively rapid creation of a French institute for population studies, the *Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques*. The first element was the decision to be made about a foundation launched by Marshal Pétain. As Head of State, Pétain had quoted the decrease of French fertility as the first cause of the debacle. Hence, by a law of 13 November 1941, the Vichy government created a foundation for the study of human problems (*Fondation française pour l'étude des problèmes humains*), aka *Fondation Alexis Carrel* as it was directed by the medical Nobelist. The foundation, which combined biology and social sciences and favoured social medicine and economics, was instituted in the autumn of 1942. After the Liberation, as Alain Drouard<sup>5</sup> wrote, "the temporary debarment of Alexis Carrel by the Liberation government on 21 August 1944 directly raised the question of the survival of this important official institution of the Vichy government, which still counted over 250 employees in January 1944 and had large means at its disposal<sup>6</sup>. Indeed, although it had lost its director, the foundation had not been dismantled by the Liberation government. So, during several months, the situation remained unclear. On the one hand, the government did not know what to do with an institution accused of collaborationism": on the other, as Alfred Sauvy noted<sup>7</sup>, "it could not lay off civil servants nor overlook population questions and the need to encourage fertility". Therefore, this institution, which could not be maintained because it was collaborationist, was very much coveted by a number of republican or communist personalities.

The second element was that a man, esteemed by General de Gaulle<sup>8</sup> as well as by many others because of his fundamental role in the decree-laws of 1939 aimed at establishing the family policy, had made himself available: this man was Alfred Sauvy. At the beginning of 1945, the minister of Public Health, François Billoux, member of the

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<sup>4</sup> Debré, Robert, « Le général de Gaulle et la natalité française », *Espoir*, Journal of the Charles de Gaulle Institute, December 1977.

<sup>5</sup> Drouard Alain, « La création de l'INED », *Population*, 47th year, n°6, 1992, pp. 1453-1466.

<sup>6</sup> As well as its own budget of 40 million francs in 1942, the foundation had offices and laboratories at its disposal, both in Paris and in the Paris region. Cf. Drouard, Alain, « Une inconnue des Sciences sociales. La Fondation A. Carrel 1941-1945 ».

<sup>7</sup> Sauvy, Alfred, « Politique de la famille et études démographiques depuis un demi-siècle », *Economie et humanisme*, 251, 1980, pp. 27-33.

<sup>8</sup> The later achievements of Alfred Sauvy show how right General de Gaulle (already) was to appreciate this man, who left us a monumental work, still relevant; cf. Dumont, Gérard-François, « Pour répondre aux défis du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle : la pensée d'Alfred Sauvy », *Population & Avenir*, n° 708, mai-juin 2012.

French Communist Party (Pcf), offered him a high level administrative post, that of Secretary General in charge of family affairs and population. On the advice of Pierre Mendès France, who rightly considered that he was made more for research than for administration, Alfred Sauvy refused. On 19 October 1945, in a dramatic turn of events, François Billoux suppressed the General Secretariat for family affairs and population. De Gaulle decided to change the government, thus reducing the risk of François Billoux opposing the current projects, and examined the possibility of creating a demographic research institute. On reflection, he accepted the solution advocated by Robert Debré, *i.e.* to create a national institute for population studies, taking over one of the offices of the Alexis Carrel Foundation and the small portion of its employees dealing with population matters. De Gaulle's populationist determination, his interest in building an immigration policy combined with his desire to ensure an institutional role for Sauvy, this "humanist in the Land of Numbers"<sup>9</sup>, were decisive.

#### *De Gaulle establishes INED...*

To transform the Foundation for the studies of human problems, which the Pétain government had installed, in Sauvy's words, "to give themselves a clear conscience"<sup>10</sup>, seemed the best way. A legal Order was therefore prepared to create a national institute, the *Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques*, which would succeed the foundation, excluding the biology section as well as that of architecture and urbanism. According to one of Alfred Sauvy's memoirs, *De Paul Reynaud à Charles de Gaulle*, the adjective "demographic" appeared at the time as a neologism, as it was not commonly known. Alfred Sauvy relates that the two State councillors in charge of studying the draft legal Order "burst out laughing" when they read the name of the institute, in particular the word "démographique". After they had examined it with what Sauvy describes as "the jaded expression of those who have seen it all", the Order became law on 24 October 1945. It was signed by General de Gaulle, "By the temporary Government of the French Republic", Charles Tillon, "Minister of Aeronautics, interim Minister of Public health", and René Pleven, "Minister of Finance".

This Order, which consists of only nine brief articles, covers hardly more than a page. As indicated in article 1, the *Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques* is a public establishment "endowed with financial autonomy". This is a recognition that autonomy is a condition for the independence of research and, at the same time, the warrant of its efficiency. Another very important article, the longest one although it is only six lines long, is article 2, which describes the missions of the new institute:

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<sup>9</sup> Hecht, Jacqueline, « Alfred Sauvy, le maître que nous avons perdu », 15 janvier 1991.

<sup>10</sup> Sauvy, Alfred, *De Paul Reynaud à Charles de Gaulle*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, p. 178.

“Article 2. — The *Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques* is responsible for studying population questions under all their aspects.

To this end, the Institute collects all useful documentation, launches surveys, carries out experiments and monitors experiments implemented in other countries, examines all the material and moral means which could contribute to the quantitative growth and qualitative improvement of the population, and ensures the propagation of demographic knowledge”.<sup>11</sup>

The meaning of article 2 is perfectly clear: the mission is not only to analyse population matters from all angles, but also to examine all the possible means to help increase the population of France, including family policies as part of these means. In other words, the aim is to develop a scientific discipline, demography, but as an applied science which can help boost the demographic vitality of France. With this new institution, France is a pioneer, as there is no strictly comparable establishment anywhere else at the time. It is true that France, in view of the specific trend of its population trajectory, especially in the last century and a half, is in a unique situation in Europe and the world at large<sup>12</sup>.

*... and chooses its first director*

Ten days after the date of the Order, by a decree of 3 November 1945 discussed in the Council of Ministers, Sauvy is nominated Director of INED, a post that he will occupy until 1962. During this whole period, the personality of its founder, economist, statistician, demographer, but also chronicler and author, will imprint its mark on the institution, on both its scientific orientations and its methods of work.

The General de Gaulle's legal Order has created the conditions for a possible success of INED, first of all because it gives the director full autonomy. In the wording of article 3 of the said Order, the Board “assists” the director and is therefore not above him. Its first President is in fact Adolphe Landry, with whom Alfred Sauvy maintains close relations<sup>13</sup>. In parallel, the Order creates a Technical Committee, whose role is to assist the director on scientific aspects, by regularly giving opinions and advice, not by imposing binding directives. Moreover “the Committee members are appointed in their

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<sup>11</sup> Order (*Ordonnance*) published in: *Population*, n° 1, 1946, p. 187-188. This text was then, logically, complemented by a decree in the State Council (*décret en Conseil d'Etat*) of 11 February 1946 and an ordinary decree dated the same day, which respectively fixed its administrative and financial regime and the status of its personnel. The Institute is placed under the financial control of the State, as provided for by the decree of 25 October 1935.

<sup>12</sup> Dupâquier, Jacques, *Histoire de la population française*, Paris, PUF, volume 4, 1988 ; Dumont, Gérard-François, *La population de la France, des régions et des Dom-Tom*, Paris, Éditions Ellipses, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Sauvy, Alfred, « Adolphe Landry », *Population*, vol. 11, n° 4, 1956, pp. 609-620 and Dumont, Gérard-François, « Adolphe Landry et Alfred Sauvy, deux grands démographes du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle », September 1997.

personal capacity and not as representatives of organisations. In this way, high level scientists whose main activity lies at the frontiers of demography may nevertheless be associated to the effective direction of the work”<sup>14</sup>.

Another element in the conditions of success for Sauvy’s INED derives from a flexible administrative environment. Sauvy can hire whom he likes, which means retain talent, without the multiple constraints that administrations’ love of procedure has engendered since. And Sauvy demonstrates a very special ability to surround himself with high quality people, regardless of his psychological or political preferences. Thus he endeavours to give INED a very strong multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary character, by gathering researchers with very diverse trainings and backgrounds.

In 1949, there are only about thirty researchers, but their diversity makes it possible to embrace the multiple aspects of population issues. As Secretary-General Roger Peltier underlines<sup>15</sup>, most of INED researchers “come from the major State, university and *Grandes écoles* recruitment competitions. They count, among others, a member of the State Council, several teaching fellows, in law, history and philosophy, five former students of *Ecole Polytechnique*, an engineer, a medical doctor, an anthropologist, a geneticist, doctors and bachelors of law, science and literature”.

“The recruitment of the project directors and their colleagues is very strict. The scientific qualifications must be impeccable; strong notions of a second subject matter are required in most cases, as well as a working knowledge of at least one foreign language. Qualifications and efficiency are constant preoccupations, at all levels”.

“The gathering, within the same organisation, of lawyers, economists, mathematicians, demographers/statisticians, biologists, psychologists, sociologists, historians, expected to work as a team, is probably a formula rarely seen anywhere else in the world. The basic concepts of scientific research are thus revisited. Partitions are removed between hitherto isolated disciplines, which mostly used to ignore each other and now see both their data and their results systematically confronted.” This helped overcome the vast difficulty of bringing high quality, highly trained people, with an independent mind and a concern for their own carriers, to work together towards a common end.

It is also worth underlining the intelligence of the work method. For example, Alfred Sauvy led a weekly meeting, every Thursday at 9 am<sup>16</sup>. He raised relevant questions which built synergies among apparently separate competencies. Peltier also explained: “A programme presents a summary of the institute’s activities as well as a review of work in progress. To this end, it differentiates finalised projects from current research or

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<sup>14</sup> Peltier, Roger, « L’Ined, Organisation, travaux et résultats », *Population*, vol. 4, 1949.

<sup>15</sup> Peltier, Roger, « L’Ined, Organisation, travaux et résultats », *id.*

<sup>16</sup> As Alain Girard recalled in *L’Institut national d’études démographiques. Histoire et développement*, Paris, Ined, 1986.

simple proposals. Annotations include a chronological record, the description of the work, the name of the person or persons in charge, the starting date, the projected – and eventually final – closing date, and the purpose: reporting to the public authorities, article or brochure. The programme indicates, at all times and on a monthly basis, the state of progress of each item. Well in sight at the entrance of the institute, it is a useful source of information for visitors”.<sup>17</sup>

The framework for thought and principles which guide INED activities are stated in the introduction to the first issue of its journal, *Population*. Although unsigned there is no doubt that it was written by Sauvy.

### *A creation that fits into the "national recovery"*

This text first pays tribute to the decisions of July 1939 in which Sauvy participated: “in July 1939 was promulgated the Family Code, which introduced in our institutions, and in particular in our public finances, measures which were so innovative that only the approach of critical events could overcome the traditional forces of inertia.”

“In April 1945 was instituted the General Secretariat for family affairs and population, a measure which was followed in November 1945 by the replacement of the Ministry of Public health by a Ministry of Population, renamed in January 1946 Ministry of Public health and Population. Thus, for the first time in France, an official institution was put in place to take constant action in favour of the recovery of the French population, in both quantity and quality. This action was led in three directions: sustaining and increasing fertility, reducing mortality and sickness, organising immigration rationally.”

The creation of INED thus took place in the context of a high ambition for France, i.e. national recovery: “The creation of a specialised institution, responsible for looking into the whole question of populations, and especially the French population, appeared as an essential condition for national recovery.”

INED must not act in isolation, its researchers wallowing in exchanging analyses inaccessible to the *vulgum pecus*. It must be both scientific and pedagogic, as Sauvy underlined:

“The *Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques* must answer two concerns:

- be a research organisation whose work has an indisputable scientific basis and is led with total objectivity;
  - ensure that the knowledge already acquired is disseminated as widely as possible.
- This educational mission is no less important than the other one, such is the depth of general ignorance of facts which are yet well established.”

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<sup>17</sup> Peltier, Roger, « L'Ined, Organisation, travaux et résultats », *Population*, vol. 4, 1949.

With this aim, as soon as 1946, Sauvy endows the Institute with a scientific journal, *Population*, of which he is the main editor and where the introductory paragraphs cited above can be found.

*A journal for a scientific and useful demography*

These paragraphs are complemented by a presentation of the editorial line which Sauvy assigns to the journal. Its “main object is to broadcast the institute’s findings. It is not directed only to specialists, but also to all those who are concerned by great questions of national interest.” This is confirmed by the wide range of subjects: the decrease of birth rates, ageing populations, economic questions, immigration...

For example, already in the first issue, the role of family policies is underlined in an article entitled “Salaries and family allowances”, which starts with these lines: “Family allowances have become an indispensable complement to salaries. Without bringing it to the level of a childless worker, they improve the condition of the worker in charge of a family and thus contribute to reduce infant mortality and maintain, if not increase, fertility.”<sup>18</sup>

Thanks to its actuality and its quality, the journal rapidly gained a large audience both in France and abroad. The actuality derived from the fact that it could publish the results of studies without delay, as Sauvy did not, and never would, create an editorial board, as is commonplace in scientific journals. Moreover, in each number, he published an editorial entitled “Facts and issues of the day”<sup>19</sup>.

*Population* also owed its quality to Sauvy, who vetted all the draft papers. Once he had decided to publish an article, he would not hesitate to himself rewrite whole passages, deleting laborious turns of phrases and those convoluted arguments which scientists often delight in. He also wrote a short foreword presenting each article.

In addition, in conformity with General de Gaulle’s thought and a number of his writings and speeches, INED presented itself as anti-Malthusian.

*INED engaged against Malthusianism and looking at the influence of legislations on fertility*

In this context, we wish to quote two papers. The first one appeared in the year 1946, a year in which the French birth rate went up to a level unseen since 1903, and also the year when the law on social security completed the implementation of a family policy initiated by the decree of November 1938, followed by the Family Code and the Vichy legislation.

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<sup>18</sup> Quillon, Bernard, *Population*, n°1 1946.

<sup>19</sup> *Population*, n° 2, 1946, pp. 197-202.

Alfred Sauvy wrote in his “Facts and issues of the day” chronicle: “the outstanding fact, which dominates the French picture in the year 1946, is the strong recovery of fertility. Mr Bourgeois’s paper on the current population situation contains interesting developments on the importance of this phenomenon and its immediate causes. We will limit ourselves here to a reminder that this is due, for a large part, to the return of prisoners and deportees, which constitutes an incidental peak comparable to that of 1920, but also results from a real increase in fertility observed in France in the last four years, contrary to projections and to the precedent of 1914-1918. This victory of the forces of life at one of the most sensitive moments of our history is a comforting symptom”<sup>20</sup>.

Alfred Sauvy remains prudent, however: “It is difficult, at this stage, to make inferences on the deep causes of this unexpected upturn, as the detailed statistics which can bring very instructive precisions have not yet been established for 1943 and the following years. However, it already seems that the institution of the Family Code in 1939 has had a beneficial influence, by tipping the scales favourably in the numerous cases when parents had not quite taken their decisions and the difficulties of family life made them hesitate. To this element, specific to France and a few other countries, other reasons must be added to explain the general increase of birth rates observed during the war in most of the infertile populations”.

“The many plausible explanations can be classified in two groups: circumstantial, incidental, temporary factors, such as a sudden increase of nuptiality, hitherto hampered by the world economic crisis of 1929, and durable factors, less easy to circumscribe.”

“If only the first factors were at work, we would observe the return of a secular trend of lower fertility, after a temporary interruption. If, on the contrary, the durable factors play a role, then the upturn in birth rates would mark an inversion of this underlying trend, with considerable effects on the economic, social and political developments in nations.”

“Without venturing to rule on this important question, we are personally inclined to think that the Malthusian forces will be felt unless they are countered by public intervention?”<sup>21</sup>

With such a statement, Alfred Sauvy implicitly approved General de Gaulle for continuing the decisions of former governments, including of the French State. At the same time, he underlined the necessity of pursuing this course by fighting what he called “the Malthusian forces”.

This struggle which was deemed necessary against Malthusianism was again described, under its different aspects, in a text published by the journal *Population* in 1949

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<sup>20</sup> *Population*, n° 2, 1946, pp. 197-202.

<sup>21</sup> *Population*, n° 2, 1946, p. 197-202.

under the signature of Roger Peltier: “The poor sales of some agricultural products and fears of an economic crisis have revived the economic Malthusianism which was so destructive before the war and was rather closely linked to demographic Malthusianism. It is a pessimistic frame of mind, which leads too easily to the destruction of riches. The Institute has put this question on its agenda and will pursue its research work in order to counter this negative stance.”<sup>22</sup>

In parallel, the same paper insists on the impact of family laws on fertility: “Some subjects, on the other hand, are not easily approached through direct surveys. It is the case, *i.a.*, of the influence of family legislation on birth rates. If it is still rather tricky to measure this phenomenon with precision, it can no longer be questioned that this influence is real. The lag between France and other countries, in particular Belgium – a country whose general circumstances are closest to our own – bears witness to the efficiency of family allowances.”

“Two connected questions of great practical interest have been dealt with in turn in *Population*: controls on the use of family allowances, and two modalities of the policy of aid to families: benefits in cash and benefits in kind.”

“Family benefits are only one aspect of demographic policies, of which the current issue of *Population* propounds a tentative definition.”<sup>23</sup>

Would INED’s commitments be an asset or a liability with respect to its reputation?

### *The enormous prestige of INED*

After a short while, as Alain Drouard underlines<sup>24</sup>, “the prestige of INED and *Population* is considerable. Alfred Sauvy and Jacques Doublet now play a major role in the high-level advisory Board (*Haut comité consultatif de la population et de la famille*), created in 1950. The director of INED chairs, from 1951 to 1953, the United Nations Population Commission and, from 1961 to 1963, the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population.” Jacqueline Hecht notes that, under Sauvy, “INED replaced the French Administration and French Railways in the admiration that awe-stricken foreign people were supposed to feel, and served as a model for many other demographic research institutes around the world.”<sup>25</sup> INED’s undeniable success is formulated thus by his daughter on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Alfred Sauvy’s birth: “The

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<sup>22</sup> Peltier, Roger, « L’Institut national d’études démographiques. — Organisation, travaux et résultats », *Population*, 4th year, n° 1, 1949 pp. 9-38.

<sup>23</sup> Peltier, Roger, « L’Institut national d’études démographiques. — Organisation, travaux et résultats », *Population*, 4th year, n° 1, 1949 pp. 9-38.

<sup>24</sup> Drouard, Alain, « De la Fondation Carrel à l’Ined », in : Dupâquier, Jacques, *Histoire de la population française*, Paris, PUF, tome 4, 1988.

<sup>25</sup> Hecht, Jacqueline, « Alfred Sauvy, le maître que nous avons perdu », 15 janvier 1991.

small, high quality, group gathered in this way, and which only counted about twenty people, was to produce a remarkable work and ensure INED's good reputation. Punctuality and efficiency were required."<sup>26</sup>

Indeed, at the end of the 1950s, the way in which Alfred Sauvy allied science and the common good within the framework of INED was recognised by the *Collège de France*, who elected him to a chair entitled "social demography" (funded by the City of Paris). Among the many people whom he evoked in his inaugural lecture of 10 April 1959, Alfred Sauvy associated in a same sentence the Head of the French State and the man of 18 June 1940, who had both worked towards the implementation of a family policy: "Philippe Pétain and Charles de Gaulle condemned each other to death; their foreign policies were radically opposed. However, they both saw the necessity to encourage youth and worked in that direction. Their common adversaries, the communists, accompanied them on this point. Conservatives and progressives also aligned their views." Alfred Sauvy took this opportunity to stress that the strength of France's family policy was that it placed itself within a continuum in spite of profound political changes. "The trend in favour of families was sustained in such a way, from 1939 to 1946, that a remote or backward looking observer, informed on this point alone, would be struck by the admirable continuity of views of successive governments, during the most troubled period of our history!"<sup>27</sup>

This being said, did the support given to family policy mean that immigration should be rejected?

### *Maintain family policy, as immigration does not replace it*

Sauvy was in favour not only of an increase of fertility but also of immigration. In 1946, he personally signed an "evaluation of the needs for French immigration", as France lacked manpower, in view of the depleted generations of the previous decades, and needed what was not yet called replacement migration<sup>28</sup>. Sauvy's evaluation reached 2.5 million adults. However, strengthening the recovery of fertility, and therefore the family policy, remained a priority; this derived implicitly, in particular, from the only interview Sauvy had with General de Gaulle in the 1950s.

It will be recalled that, during this whole period from 1945 to 1962, Algeria was French. One could therefore imagine that a slackening of the family policy in metropolitan France might have little effect on the French population since, on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea, the birth rate was high and, above all, children were more and

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<sup>26</sup> Sauvy-Wilkinson, Anne, « Alfred Sauvy aurait cent ans », *Population & Avenir*, n° 642, March-April 1999.

<sup>27</sup> Sauvy, Alfred, *Leçon inaugurale*, Collège de France, 10 April 1959.

<sup>28</sup> An old reality, but the term became usual only after the publication in 2000 of a UN study with that title.

more numerous, thanks to the improvement of the sanitary infrastructure and to the progress of hygiene, reducing the mortality of children, teenagers and mothers.

As it happens, since he had left the government on 20 January 1946, de Gaulle had had no contact with INED, *i.e.* with its director, all the more so as Alfred Sauvy had declined Michel Debré's invitation to join the RPF (*Rassemblement du peuple français*) the party founded by General de Gaulle on 14 April 1947.

But the year 1954, a day in spring to be precise (therefore several months before the beginning of the war in Algeria on 1 November 1954), was marked by an audition granted by de Gaulle to the Director of INED, which was to show how well the General kept himself informed of the analyses of the demographic situation published by the Institute.

In his book *De Paul Reynaud à Charles de Gaulle*, Alfred Sauvy mentions: "I have a serious concern: we are at a time when economists have learnt to calculate investments in development and in population growth, comparing them with the national income. The efforts to undertake in this direction are considerable and the dilemma is clear: either we raise the North Africans to our level or we will have to give them back their freedom."

"In a paper published in *L'Express*, I give evaluations of the necessary investments, without pronouncing on the choice to be made. Personally, I incline towards the necessary sacrifices (a singular dream) and am remote from all Cartierism\*. In the train, in front of me, a young man reads the article, without realising I am the author, and tells his neighbour: "If that's how it is, I prefer we let go of Algeria". At that moment, war has not yet started."

"Enlightened action. This constant watchword appears to me more imperious than ever. Thinking of de Gaulle, I tell myself: here is a man who, sooner or later, will take in hand the destiny of the country. It is useful to inform him of the economic aspect, so badly known, of the matter."

"I request an audition, with motivation. A few weeks later, the General receives me rue de Solferino\*\* and listens to me with an attention rarely seen in a statesman. Without entering into any political considerations, I first describe the increase in population: the 20 million North Africans will be 40 in twenty or twenty five years; I then give him some evaluations of the necessary investments in education, food, employment, etc."

"After listening to me in silence, de Gaulle responds and I discover with astonishment that he is very well informed. Going further and approaching the political ground, he also mentions Black Africa, which is not yet on the agenda, and I have the impression that he has already written off the whole matter of colonialism."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Sauvy, Alfred, *De Paul Reynaud à Charles de Gaulle*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1972, p. 199

So it seems that, during this audition, the subject of family policy was not expressly raised. Yet, it was of direct concern in an interview which showed that the French demographic situation could not rely upon the population potential of colonies that would eventually no longer be. And since it depended first on demographic trends in metropolitan France, the family policy following from a whole set of former decisions must continue. However, because it had been successful<sup>30</sup>, this family policy had demographic effects.

\* A reference to Raymond Cartier, a French journalist opposed to colonialism on pragmatic grounds (Translator's note)

\*\* The site of the RPF offices in Paris (Translator's note)

### *De Gaulle and the "rise of youth"*

Able to read and analyse demographic statistics better than anyone else, INED's director anticipates a "rise of youth". He makes it the subject of several press articles. In May 1959, one year after de Gaulle's return to power on 13 May and six months after the establishment of the institutions of the Fifth Republic, after reworking and synthesising the subject, he publishes a book with this title<sup>31</sup>. He considers that "the rise of youth is the most pregnant fact of our history", and that France must prepare for it.

In 1959, Alfred Sauvy sends his book to General de Gaulle, a book where, as he also underlines in *De Paul Reynaud à Charles de Gaulle*, "the future revolt [that of May 1968] is clearly announced, if nothing is done to welcome them". General de Gaulle, now President of the Republic, does not just ask one of his collaborators to prepare an answer. He sends Sauvy a handwritten letter:

"My dear Sauvy,

In *La Montée des jeunes*, there is a wealth of positive data, of ideas, of hopes. Like you, I believe that "welcoming" young people is, so to speak, the whole essence of the French economic and social problem, insofar as the world peace would be ensured for a generation.

I thank you for letting me know, in this very well developed form, how you approach this capital subject.

Please receive, my dear Sauvy, my very cordial and devoted regards.

Ch. de Gaulle"

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<sup>30</sup> To confirm this, it is enough to compare the post-war demographic situations of 1918 and 1945 in France or to make comparisons within the European Union; cf. Dumont, Gérard-François, « Politique familiale et fécondité en Europe », *Population & Avenir*, n° 681, January-February 2007.

<sup>31</sup> Sauvy, Alfred, *La montée des jeunes*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1959.

### *INED after de Gaulle's presidency*

Nobody can escape the passing of time, so it becomes necessary, at the beginning of the 1960s, to reflect on a new director for INED. Sauvy would have liked to be succeeded by Jean Fourastié, Councillor of the public institution in charge of economic planning, the *Commissariat général au plan*, but this candidature runs up against the *esprit de corps* of researchers.

Sauvy launches an election “in conclave”, following which he proposes three names to the government: Jean Stoetzel, Jean Bourgeois-Pichat, then posted in New York, and Louis Henry. On 1 July 1962, Jean Bourgeois-Pichat becomes the Director of INED. Half a page is turned for the Institute, only half a page as Sauvy keeps an office, a secretary and, above all, the direction of the journal, *Population*, until 1976.

When General de Gaulle puts an end to his presidential functions, France is not aware of the future decrease of fertility, which Sauvy anticipates.

After a number of tensions resulting in the departure of the Director Jean Bourgeois-Pichat in 1971 and the appointment of a temporary administrator who will remain 18 months, a decree of February 1973 modifies the legal Order of 1945 in its articles on governance, but not Article 2 on the missions of INED. On 17 May 1974, a decree creates the status of research personnel.

Another change is introduced in 1986: INED becomes a public science and technology establishment (EPST) placed under the joint authorities of the Minister in charge of population and the Minister in charge of research. Time has passed, twenty articles and four and a half pages, i.e. four times more than in 1945, are now necessary to regulate INED and it needs six articles to specify its missions, versus one in 1946.

Article 3 of decree n°86-382 dated 12 March 1986 redefines the missions of INED, discarding the initial part which required that the Institute “contribute to the quantitative growth and qualitative improvement of the population”. The following points are developed:

Article 1.- It undertakes, develops and encourages, on its own initiative or at the request of the public authorities, all research work aimed at the study of populations under all their aspects;

Article 2.- It evaluates, realises or contracts out all researches useful to demographic science and its contribution to the economic, social and cultural progress of the country;

Article 3.- It collects, centralises and enhances all the French and foreign research work in its field of activity; in particular it informs the Government and the public authorities of the knowledge acquired;

Article 4.- It brings its support to the training to and through research in the areas of its competency;

Article 5.- It ensures the information of the general public on demographic matters;

Article 6.- It ensures, at an international level, the propagation of French demographic work and the development of demographic information, promoting the use of the French language.

Nowadays, under the same name, the Institute continues, with a number of researchers very much increased<sup>32</sup> with respect to the period 1945-1962. But is the momentum initiated by General de Gaulle still there? By signing a flexible legal Order and entrusting Alfred Sauvy with the direction of INED, General de Gaulle had contributed to one of his main objectives, see a revived France, and achieved another objective: support a successful researcher who, with his team, served the prestige of France in what it was best at. The newly instituted recruitment and functioning procedures would have prevented Sauvy from hiring the large variety of competencies which he mobilised and from building among them a perfect synergy, resulting in a considerable influence, both in France and abroad.

Today, France still counts many high quality researchers, but one must admit that administrative and procedural straightjackets strongly hinder their missions, confirming at least partially General de Gaulle's assertion: "Researchers who search you find, but researchers who find you search".

The history of INED from 1945 to 1962 shows that family policies need both to be borne by committed statesmen and to rely on scientific analyses. Faced today with the risk of curtailment which weighs on France's family policy, it is important to revive the flame and spirit of these exceptional men who were General de Gaulle and Alfred Sauvy.

G.-F.D.

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<sup>32</sup> According to its 2012 report, INED employs a total of 239 person, of which 52 are tenured researchers. To these can be added 5 researchers emeriti, 44 associate researchers and doctoral students. The expense budget is 21.7 million euros.