

Independence!

De Gaulle's Constitution Defeated!

Yesterday's constitutional referendum has delivered a resounding rebuke to Charles De Gaulle and his French Fifth Republic, with 67% of the Federation voting against the new constitution and sending a message that the time for independence has come! The leader's ultimatum, to approve his constitution or lose the protection of France entirely, has been a failure - the people of the Federation have declared that they no longer need the stewardship of the mother country and are ready to forge a brave new stage in the nation's future.

Reaction from the independence movement has been jubilant, with Paya Yarruwa of the People's Movement for Independence declaring that:

Today is an historic day - a day where we put the interests of our neighbours, of our children, and of our nation first. With independence comes freedom, the freedom to forge a new Republic as we so wish. True representation! True equality! We do not shy away from the challenges that we face - we welcome them! Only through adversity will the character of our great nation be solidified and strengthened, and only through adversity will we achieve our goals.

The opposition has conceded defeat with grace. Phillipe De Croix and Manya Jirru, leaders of the United France Association, released the following statement:

The people of our nation have let their voices be heard - independence is the next great challenge of our nation's future. While we do not believe it to be

the right step, there is no denying that this choice has been made democratically and with the utmost consideration, and we urge all those who oppose the result to refrain from any inflammatory actions and to accept this defeat graciously. We all have a part to play in the coming decades, and we all have the right to play this part.

Constitutional Conference Awaits

The Council of the Federation have announced the formation of a constitutional conference beginning next week on October 4th to begin the process of drafting the republic's constitution. Those present will include representatives from each state and party delegates. Already representatives have begun to put forth their position on the content of the new constitution.

A divisive conference appears likely, with Socialist Party leader Antoine Proudhon declaring that his party will fight for the inclusion of universal healthcare and education in the proposed Bill of Rights, writing that:

We have a crucial opportunity to set the parameters of the future. Do we want to see a land of unfettered capitalism, of greedy businessmen taking all they can of our precious natural resources for their own enormous profit? Or do we want to see an egalitarian society, where black and white walk hand in hand, where all classes have the right to education and health?

Already, the Libertarians have indicated that they will not agree to the inclusion, with leading member Marie Jiyanu calling the move "an absolute

ambush, and an attempt to smuggle partisan ideas into a non-partisan process".

Other issues set to be controversial include the naming of the new republic, with opinions divided as to whether it should be French or native, as well as the distribution of taxation between states. Smaller states, including Saint Frion, are expected to take the opportunity to renegotiate a larger slice of national funds.

Vote Count Reveals Demographic Tensions

As expected, the vote count differed drastically between black and white. The native population overwhelmingly voted for independence, with 92.2% voting against De Gaulle's constitution, whereas the white vote was 59.0% against. However, fears of heightened racial tensions have been nullified by the fact that both black and white delivered a majority in favour of independence.

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