

# The Crafty State

## By Michel Bounan<sup>1</sup>

“I warn you . . . to always be ready to defend yourself; tremble even in victory; it is then that he makes his greatest efforts and that he sets in motion the most redoubtable machines.” – Bossuet

“On the road of upheaval, the best elements are always surpassed by the worst. . . . Behind the honest revolutionary soon appears a troubled existence.” – Marshal von Moltke.

The industrial revolution in France experienced its most rapid expansion during the Second Empire, at the same time that it laid the bases for a truly modern State. Established in an authoritarian fashion by a *coup d'état* and maintained by an omnipresent and efficacious police force, the new instrument of government was indispensable to the ambitious project of its promoters. Two hundred fifty thousand civil servants were tied by oath to the Chief of State and closely surveilled by the prefects; the magistrates, reduced to the status of civil servants, were named and revoked by decree; the press was subjected to multiple financial constraints and legal threats; those opposed to the regime were purely and simply deported to Algeria. These means and the “blood pact” with the army permitted the militarization of productive labor and extraordinary industrial development.

The bankers, businessmen and industrialists, who supported the regime, in general considered themselves to be philanthropists; many were sincerely convinced by the socialist doctrines of Saint-Simon and believed that the dictatorship was only an intermediary stage in the new and blessed era that another Saint-Simonian<sup>2</sup> would later call “the great relief of man by the machine.”

Around 1860, the iron grip loosened, *apparently without any real oppositional force constraining it to do so* (the historians explain this mystery by “the sympathy” that Napoleon III always showed for the so-called “laboring” classes). Powers were thus yielded to the elected and the State itself facilitated the creation of a great, united opposition party. Simultaneously, contacts were made with workers’ delegates; workers were encouraged to meet their English *trade-unionist*<sup>3</sup> comrades; employers’ federations were created; the right to strike was finally recognized. The Empire had completed its task; modern democracy could now function. There would still be the shock of the Commune, and then nothing for a century, even between the two world wars, during the shocks in Germany, Italy and then Spain. One can definitively say that, in a few years, the French Second Empire alone had accomplished the work undertaken by the

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<sup>1</sup> *L'État retors* (“The Crafty State”) initially appeared as a preface to a new edition of Maurice Joly’s *Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu* (Editions Allia, 1992). It was published as a separate volume by the same publisher in 1992. Translated by Bill Brown and uploaded to the *NOT BORED!* website (notbored.org) in 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Duboin (1878-1976) was a French economist and politician.

<sup>3</sup> English in original.

European dictatorships and by their liberators, that is to say, the great relief of the statesman by what Nietzsche would call “the coldest of the cold monsters.”

In 1864, the same year that the International Association of Workers was founded in London, Maurice Joly wrote and published his *Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*. A former young rebel, member of the bar and future exile, he observed the setting up of the new mechanisms of power with an extreme lucidity.

In this work, Machiavelli is the spokesman for modern despotism. He cynically exposes its goals, its procedures and their historical development. Initially, that consisted of brute force, the military *coup d'état*, the reinforcement of the police and the army, the preeminence of high civil servants over the elected, and the forced obedience of the magistrates, the University and the press.

But force, ostentatiously deployed, always incites contrary forces. It should only be used to modify institutions and the Constitution, and to create legal forms for the new despotism. Thus, the imprisonment of journalists had to be rapidly replaced by economic dispositions for the press and by the creation of newspapers devoted to the government. Such tribunes, associated with astute electoral scripting, allowed the government to maintain a tyranny elected by universal suffrage.

To finish with all the old forms of opposition, parties, coteries, cabals and conspiracies, which so hindered the ancient despots, the modern State had to create the opposition on its own, bury it in suitable *forms* and attract malcontents to it. In addition, the State had to infiltrate all of the groupings, take control of them and lead them astray. It even had to use the police to manipulate all clandestine conspiracies, overtake them, lead them astray, discredit them. This is the principal force of modern power: to speak “all the languages” of the country so as to divert the river.

One last regulating mechanism guaranteed the perpetuation of the new regime: such a society quickly developed among its members an ensemble of qualities that worked for it. Cowardice, domestication and the taste for paid-informing were both the fruits and the roots of this social organization. The loop was looped.

Thus, the brutal force used by the old tyrannies was no longer needed, except in rare circumstances. In the era of mechanization, one knew how to make hostile forces work by means of suitable devices. One could even use their domestic energy to reduce the energy that might arise. This self-regulation is the basis of all truly modern societies.

Faced with the new power, personified by Machiavelli in Maurice Joly's work, what did Montesquieu represent? The old political, moral and ideological principles of the men who, a century before then, prepared to take control of the new society. The genius of [Joly's] Machiavelli consists in deliberately citing Montesquieu: the despotism of the Second Empire was not at all contradictory with those foundations and that ideology.

Our 20th century has richly illustrated Maurice Joly's theses. But one would be wrong to evoke here the many totalitarian dictatorships in which the army and the police displayed themselves everywhere and in which the tyrants did not hide their power. The model described by Maurice Joly is precisely beyond that historical stage: it is the model of the Chief of State elected by universal suffrage; the irremovable senior officials; electoral consultations that mask the real cooptation of political personnel. This mode of government is not that of the unique party, but that of pseudo-confrontations between the political parties that speak “all the languages” of the country; false conspiracies organized by the State itself; and, finally,

educational and mediatic<sup>4</sup> apparatuses, held in the hands of this same power, maintaining such an abasement of minds and morals that there is no longer any possible resistance. The system of government described by Maurice Joly is that of the modern State's *permanent occult conspiracy* to indefinitely maintain servitude, by suppressing – for the first time in history – the awareness of this unfortunate condition.

Such a work could not be tolerated by a still-fragile modern State. It was not. Printed in Belgium in 1864 and introduced clandestinely in France, the *Dialogue in Hell* was immediately seized by the police and its author was imprisoned at Sainte-Pélagie. The same year, a German translation strove to distribute this text elsewhere. In 1868, there was a new French edition, still printed in Belgium. Then the book apparently disappeared for 80 years, unknown to all except, obviously, the police services that had seized it.

The police interdiction of this work nevertheless was not a worthy riposte from a modern power, the functioning of which Maurice Joly had described; and first of all because such a response was insufficient with respect to a text about which its author remarked that it was not simply an individual work, but that it was already the fruit of an almost impersonal current of thought. Here was a dangerous force that, certainly, one could brutally reduce at first, but that a truly modern State would have to manipulate and make work for its own profit. What became of this book (and this awareness of the *occult, permanent conspiracy*) over the course of all the years that no one judged it good to reprint it?

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At the beginning of our century, there appeared in Moscow an extraordinary pamphlet, which soon would become a *best-seller*<sup>5</sup> and the second highest selling book in the world after the Bible: *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Today, the origin of this pamphlet is known:<sup>6</sup> it was a falsification of Maurice Joly's *Dialogue in Hell*, following a procedure that the French situationists would much later call "Masperization" (from the name of a Parisian publisher who made himself famous in this art). This procedure, which consists in seizing hold of an important text, changing certain words in it, suppressing a few phrases and inserting others, permits one to *conserve the structure* of a political analysis (about which one knows that it has already encountered too many minds disposed to understand it) but also to *modify the target* and thus direct an oppositional current that risks becoming dangerous towards actions that are inoffensive or even useful to the manipulators. Such a procedure allows the capture of minds so as to lead them astray; it precisely illustrates the procedure exposed in the *Dialogue in Hell*: to speak all the languages so as to divert the river.

Maurice Joly was thus a victim of the maneuver that he had denounced. In the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, one conserved the analysis of the *Dialogue in Hell*, the indictment of the occult totalitarian conspiracy, and the precise exposure of its convergent means (financial, political, juridical and mediatic). But the *governmental conspiracy to maintain order* is replaced

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<sup>4</sup> The French word used here, *médiatique*, has no precise equivalent in English.

<sup>5</sup> English in original.

<sup>6</sup> Though Bounan does not mention him, Philip Graves published a series of articles about the connection between the two documents in *The Times of London*, 16-18 August 1921.

by an alleged Jewish conspiracy that aims to seize power worldwide. The falsified text is presented as the minutes of an ultra-secret meeting of the leaders of the Jewish conspiracy.

To describe such a procedure as “plagiarism” (as one has done) lets it be understood that the *Protocols* is some kind of vague *literary* swindle made at the expense of an unfortunate *author*. To add that it is a “fake” and a “mystification” allows for the exoneration – with relief or regret – of the Jewish “malignancy” and for the conclusion that *there is no conspiracy*, unless it is perhaps against the Jews alone. In truth, this falsification of an actually important text is only a superficial aspect of a much more general maneuver that is at the heart of the worldwide counter-revolution of the 20th century.

The conditions in which the *Protocols* were fabricated and distributed permit us to follow the great movements of this story.

The first edition appeared in Moscow during the revolutionary agitation of the beginning of the century. Henri Rollin hesitated to attribute its merits to the Czar’s secret police, the famous Okhrana, or to the principal ultra-reactionary opposition supported by the large property owners.<sup>7</sup> In any case, the first two publishers are known: Krouchevan and Boutmi were co-founders of the “Black Hundreds,” a paramilitary organization tasked with arming henchmen to assassinate democrats and socialists.

During the first Russian counter-revolution in 1905, the work was widely distributed and the Bishop of Moscow ordered it read in all the churches of the capital. Then its distribution slowed, and exploded anew in 1917. Russian emigrants carried it in their bags as an overtly dictatorial power installed itself in the old Czarist Empire.

Over the course of the intense revolutionary ferment that followed the First World War, the *Protocols* was translated into 40 languages and spread throughout all of Europe, the United States and Japan. The book accredited the rumor – spread by other emissaries – that the democrats and socialists were only agents paid by an international Jewish conspiracy to seize [control of] the government of the world. It was one of the instruments of Nazi propaganda, first in Germany during the revolutionary conditions that followed the collapse of the Empire, then in its war against the countries with parliamentary regimes. So well in fact that Henri Rollin, an agent of the French secret services, allowed himself to reveal the swindle and its origin in 1940. His book was almost immediately seized by the German police and destroyed.

After 1945, the European empire once again became “liberal.” It succeeded in destroying or integrating the old revolutionary energies, thanks to the efficacious work of the Stalinist parties and their fellow travelers. The *Protocols* lost its utility and only survived among several standby sects. The book found a new terrain for maneuver in the Third-World agitation that, after the end of the war, followed the collapse of the old colonial empires and particularly in the Arab countries, where the text has been ceaselessly reprinted and distributed since 1951.

Recently, the disappearance of the Soviet empire – and the terrible economic depression that accompanied it – has seen the pamphlet reemerge in the very place of its birth, brandished and distributed by curious emissaries in the very faces of complacent journalists.

The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* has become one of the reference works of modern anti-Semitism, the resurgence of which still periodically nourishes the media-university problematic. The text, we are told, is a false theory created and spread by a “collective paranoia” that springs fully formed from tens of millions of sick brains. Thus one wisely but firmly warns us concerning the temptation “to demonize power” and especially to imagine everywhere an

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<sup>7</sup> *Author’s note*: Henri Rollin, *L’Apocalypse de notre temps*, Paris, Editions Allia, 1991, X-742 p.

alleged worldwide conspiracy with a thousand economic, political and media-university tentacles, [which would be] a true delirium that reveals a “collective phobia of archaic type.”<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, one must observe that the *Protocols* wasn’t forged in the diabolical pot of “collective paranoia,” but in the police recesses of an autocratic State; that it was not initially diffused by public rumor but by the hands of the Bishop of Moscow and two policeman-publishers; that the German National Socialist Party that was inspired by it was not brought to power by crazy riots but by German industrialists who financed it; that Henri Rollin’s work, which revealed the origin of the *Protocols*, was not destroyed by “collective paranoia,” but was seized and destroyed by a police state; that the *Protocols* was not propagated in the United States by a crazy rumor, but by the industrialist Henry Ford, who knew how to make other disabled people work to his profit; and that, finally, the book was not a “crude, miserable fake,” nor a [manifestation of a] “collective neurosis in the middle of the 20th century,” but a rational police maneuver, the iron lance in a counter-revolutionary war.

In truth, anti-Semitism is to social critique what the *Protocols* is to Maurice Joly’s book: not a *crackpot theory*, as naive people do not cease to repeat, but the *police counterfeit of revolutionary agitation*. This is the reason for its popular success: it speaks the most dangerous language of the country so as to divert the river.

Anti-Semitic propaganda is diffused everywhere there emerges an awareness of the *permanent conspiracy of the modern State for the maintenance of order*, a conspiracy that not only includes the State apparatus itself and the economic forces of which it is the instrument, but also fake, spectacular opposition, the entirety of the press and the media, the labor market and the organized debasement of all public life.

During the course of its germination, this awareness is purely intuitive. Thus, in the 1960s, a rumor – which perhaps was not without foundation – was propagated in many provincial towns: the new trade in feminine garments and undergarments, which grew rich with the additional promised seductions, was only a disguised form of pimping. Dreamlike consciousness expressed it in this way: young women disappeared from dressing rooms through trap doors and then found themselves shipped off to become prostitutes along Baudelairean canals on lecherous trips. It was only after the serious events of 1968 that another rumor, the origin of which the police were apparently unable to find, was grafted upon the first: in reality, the young women were all held by Jewish merchants.

Another contemporary example: ever since the totalitarian dictatorships of the 20th century transmitted this method to the entire world, one has known that a modern power has the means to manipulate history to its profit. One guesses that it has few reasons to deprive itself of such an advantage, and recent history has itself become suspect. Diverse propagandists thus have reactivated the rumor that power is in the hands of Jewish coalitions. Thus, they have tampered with history to their profit and they have invented gas chambers, death camps, [even] anti-Semitism itself. The last Jewish infamy: to have invented an alleged anti-Semitism!

One finds at the source of modern anti-Jewish persecution the vague awareness of the totalitarian conspiracy, its ruses and its manipulations. At a second stage, there intervene strange emissaries whom history reveals to be of police origin or whom the police never again find. Behind all this, of course, there are the interests of the coldest of the cold monsters, and finances are passionless; they move according to their advantages. When the revolutionary danger

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<sup>8</sup> Here Bounan is referring to historical revisionists who have “repented.” For more, see Chapter VII of his book, *The Art of Celine and His Times* (Editions Allia, 1997).

recedes, one incriminates the folly of the torturers (but not their sponsors), one again denounces the “collective paranoia” and all the temptations to “demonize power.” This is the time of the tribunals and sociologists. Thus, those who serve as henchmen or soldiers in such maneuvers must learn from history that they are not protected from the repercussions of the cold monster: when their channeling and destructive tasks are done, they are abandoned, financially above all, defeated at Stalingrad, Courbevoie or elsewhere, coldly put down with or without trial. But of course the definitive emancipation of the anti-Semite must pass by way of the emancipation of the society of which anti-Semitism is the last rampart.

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In the 17th century, Pascal no doubt had excellent reasons for believing in [certain] historical events, the witnesses to which had their throats cut. Today, we have as good reasons to believe those that the police falsify. Our civilization, which is constructed upon the domestication of dangerous natural forces, has likewise known how to give itself a leadership capable of putting into its service – by falsifying them – all of the dangerous forces that are set against it. It is a ship that advances against the wind and thanks to it.

Thus, the anguish, despair and boredom born from inevitable market vulgarity would not *a priori* be favorable social forces if they were not adroitly diverted and used to make the market machine run. Today, this is why publicity is constrained to promise – with respect to neo-commodities or whatever – what the market world prohibits in general: individual adventure, originality and authentic life. These same negative forces are still used in multiple neo-trades that are designed to produce neo-commodities. And any partial critique of the system is likewise channeled into political parties, groupuscules and neo-sects, on which it suffices to impart a slight deformation to put them at the service of the institutions. One can say of our social organization that, in sum, it is nearly generalized self-management, plus the police.

The art of *détournement* is indeed the rudder of our market civilization at its current stage [of development]. The word “*détournement*” had previously been employed<sup>9</sup> to characterize the procedures that aimed at revealing the truths of market falsifications. The term is unfortunate. Today, it is market domination that *détourne*s. It creates lures that resemble desired objects that are necessarily falsified because all of the new desires result from new deprivations produced by the market world and spontaneously converge towards its destruction: a bronzing cream, the profession of sociologist or the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* are indeed the effects of the same mechanism.

This method of managing modern societies permits us to deduce two laws that can be of great utility:

- 1) Falsifiers always deceive [*roulent*] for the police;
- 2) All that is durably maintained in the media is necessarily a decoy, often double-faced, which must be turned around and reunited.

Because the current mode of domination invents almost nothing. It is only opposed (in exceptional cases and only in the urgency caused by a surprise) to enterprises that are hostile to it

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<sup>9</sup> Following Guy Debord, who wrote about “*détournement*” in 1956, the members of the Situationist International practiced the *détournement* of art and politics. In French, the word *détournement* means diversion, embezzling or corruption.

(Maurice Joly and Henri Rollins in their times, and Los Angeles and Mantes-la-Jolie<sup>10</sup> today). To the extent of what is possible, the current mode tries to rapidly recuperate the forces that are manifested and to put them into its service.

Thus, the police falsification of Maurice Joly's book, and the mediatic success of this mystification, sufficed to guarantee the dangerous truth of the original. The *Dialogue in Hell* was not recently rescued from oblivion so as to demonstrate the falsity of the *Protocols*; on the contrary, it was the mediatic-police operation of the *Protocols* that proved the truth of Maurice Joly.<sup>11</sup>

Mechanization has certainly made great progress in the last century, as much in automation as in the mechanisms of control, the utilization of theoretical models and the capacities to intervene in the intimacy of matter; and no doubt its progress has been identical in the police-governance of men. But its broad outlines had already been sketched out in Maurice Joly's time. It was in the same years in which Gramme, Lenoir and Bell prepared to patent the dynamo, the gasoline engine and the telephone [respectively] that the author of the *Dialogue in Hell* described for the first time the principle mechanisms of the cold monster: the manipulation of language, the [actions of the] State-journalist, and the omnipresence of the police, under other names of course, "if the name displeases."

Fake terrorist conspiracies were already among the means of government of the time: "it is necessary that they exist." One will have them executed by the opponents of the regime. Everything is said in a few phrases: "to speak their languages," "to penetrate into their ranks," "there are directions to be given, forces to be set in motion," "this will be like an annex of my police forces," "I am the leader of their school," "if he prepares a conspiracy, I will be the leader."<sup>12</sup> The advantage is triple-fold: to discover potential conspirators, to make them execute base police operations, and then to publicly discredit them.

Our century of mediatic speech therapy and generalized isolation, of alleged civil wars and fake terrorism, has sinisterly illustrated Maurice Joly's remarks. But the masterpiece was the détournement of the *Dialogue in Hell* itself and the police organization of the fake Jewish conspiracy. Nevertheless, it is necessary to note that if Hitler had not been such a bumpkin, mocked by Stalin himself, he would not have employed henchmen to assassinate the principal leaders of the S.A. so as to please his sponsors: a modern State knows how to execute its tasks by using the opponents to its regime. Whatever: today, Maurice Joly's analysis finds itself doubly accredited, by the historical continuations that have confirmed it and by the mediatic-police falsification to which it was subjected.

Nevertheless, this point of view remains fragile in an era when so many notoriously qualified people pronounce otherwise "authorized" judgments on the problems of the social order and claim every week "to have done with" the Jewish question, the role of the State and the defense of the so-called democratic institutions. As for us, we do not at all have the excessive ambition to have done with such serious questions, which will always be posed again, which will

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<sup>10</sup> When Bounan was writing *The Crafty State*, Los Angeles (and other areas of America) were the locations of riots that followed the acquittal of the police officers who were videotaped beating a black motorist named Rodney King. Mantes-la-Jolie is a French town in which the vast majority of the inhabitants are immigrants and their children; there were riots there in 1991.

<sup>11</sup> In Chapter I *Incitement to Self-Defense*, Bounan notes that this sentence was singled out for criticism by Michèle Bernstein and praise by Guy Debord.

<sup>12</sup> These are all phrases from the *Dialogue in Hell*.

always find new interpreters and new actors, benevolent or remunerated, as long as we have not finished with this [market] civilization itself.

Bad news now reaches us concerning the state of the planet and the survival of its inhabitants. It seems that having turned all living activity against itself for so long is not truly profitable for life. Some pessimists even affirm that an ecological and epidemiological disaster is inevitable. The unshakable order of the world that was described 130 years ago by Maurice Joly, and that has made so much progress since then, incites one in any case to think that such an end will probably not be checked by the all-too-few individuals who see it coming, but more generally feel [it]. Certainly it will be much more frightfully felt by those who haven't taken time to measure it.

## Appendix

Several examples of plagiarism by the author of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* from the *Dialogue in Hell*.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Dialogue in Hell*** **First Dialogue**

The bad instincts of man are more powerful than the good. . . . Fear and strength are more in control of him than reason. . . . All men aspire to domination, and all would be oppressors if they could: all or almost all are ready to sacrifice the rights of the others for their own interests. Who among them restrains the devouring animals that one calls men? At the origin of society, there was brutal and unchecked force: later, it was the law, that is to say, force regulated by form. You have consulted all of the sources of History: everywhere force appears before rights. Political liberty is only a relative idea.

### ***Protocols* (trans. Lambelin)<sup>14</sup>** **First Protocol**

Men who have bad instincts are more numerous than those who have good ones. This is why one expects better results by governing men by violence and terror. Each man aspires to power, each would like to become a dictator if he could; at the same time, few are those who are not ready to sacrifice the goods of all to attain their own. Who has restrained the ferocious beasts that one

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<sup>13</sup> *Author's note:* these extracts, which constitute Appendix II to the book by Norman Cohn, *Histoire d'un myth: la conspiration juive et les Protocols des Sages de Sion*, Gallimard, 1967, are representative of the procedure utilized in the fabrication of the *Protocols*. For his part, Henri Rollin, in *L'Apocalypse de notre temps* (Allia, 1991), enumerates more than 160 extracts from the *Dialogue in Hell* in the *Protocols*. [Translator: Cohn's book was originally written in English and published under the title *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1967).]

<sup>14</sup> Roger Lambelin (1857-1929), a French soldier and anti-Semite, translated the *Protocols* from Russian into French in 1921. We have checked our translation of Lambelin's French against other English translations of the *Protocols* to assure its accuracy.



calls men? . . . At the beginning of the social order, they were subjected to brutal and blind force, later to the law, which is merely the same force, but masked. I have concluded that, according to the law of nature, what is right is force. . . . Political liberty is an idea and not a fact.

### **Seventh Dialogue**

I would institute immense financial monopolies, reserves of the public fortune, on which the fate of all private fortunes would so closely depend that they would be swallowed up along with State credit the day after any political catastrophe. As the leader of the government, all my edicts would constantly tend to the same goal: to excessively develop the preponderance of the State, by making it the sovereign protector, promoter and remunerator. . . . At present, the aristocracy has disappeared as a political force; but the landed bourgeoisie is still an element of dangerous resistance to the government because it is independent; it would be necessary to impoverish it or even ruin it completely. To do this, it would suffice to increase the taxes that weigh upon real estate, to maintain agriculture in a state of relative inferiority, to favor commerce and industry to the limit, but principally speculation, because the too-great prosperity of industry can itself become a danger by creating a too-great number of independent fortunes. . . .

### **Protocol VI**

Soon we will institute enormous monopolies, reserves of colossal wealth, upon which the fortunes – even the large ones of the Christians – would depend, such that they would be swallowed up along with State credit the day after a political catastrophe. . . . We must develop by all possible means the importance of our supreme government, by representing it as the protector and remunerator of all those who willingly submit themselves to it. The Christian aristocracy's political strength has disappeared, we no longer have to reckon with it; but, as the owner of real estate, it can harm us to the extent its resources can be independent. Thus, we must absolutely dispossess it of its lands. The best means for doing this is increasing taxes on real estate. . . . These measures will keep real estate in a state of absolute subjection. . . . At the same time, it is necessary to strongly protect commerce and industry and especially speculation: without speculation, industry would multiply private capital. . . .

### **Twelfth Dialogue**

I foresee the possibility of neutralizing the press through the press itself. Since it is as great a force as journalism, my government will be a journalist. This will be journalism incarnated. . . . I would count the number of newspapers that represent what you call the opposition. If there were 10 for the opposition, I would have 20 for the government; if there were 20, I would have 40; if there were 40, I would have 80. This is how I would use the faculty, which I have reserved for myself, of authorizing the creation of new public papers. . . . The masses will not suspect this tactic. . . . Like the god Vishnu, my press will have 100 arms, and these arms will be in favor of all the nuances of every opinion in all corners of the country. One will be of my party without knowing it. Those who believe they speak their language will be speaking mine; those who believe they are rousing their party will be rousing mine; those who believe they march under their flag will be marching under mine. . . . You must know that journalism is a kind of Freemasonry; those who practice it are all more or less linked to each other by the tie of professional discretion; like the ancient augurs, they do not easily divulge the secret of their oracles. They do not gain anything by betraying themselves, because, for the most part, they have more or less shameful wounds. It is quite probable that at the center of the capital, in a

certain circle of people, things are not a mystery; but everywhere, elsewhere, one will not be suspicious, and the vast majority of the nation will march with the most complete confidence along the track of the guides that we have provided. . . . It is in the provinces that the greatest part of the influence of my journalism would be exerted. There I always have the temperature of opinion that is necessary for me and each of my attacks will surely be carried out there. The provincial press entirely belongs to me, because, out there, there is no contradiction or possible discussion; from the center of the administration where I am seated, one will transmit . . . the orders to make the newspapers speak in such-and-such a way, even at the same time, in every corner of the country; such influence will be produced, such impetus will be provided, quite often before the capital suspects it. . . . The opinion of the capital will, when necessary, lag behind the exterior movement that envelops it, if need be, unknown to it. . . . I do not want things such that the country can be agitated by rumors that come from within, nor even by simple, tame news. When there is some extraordinary suicide, some crude affair concerning money . . . I will forbid the newspapers to speak of it.

## **Protocol XII**

Literature and journalism are the two most important educational forces; this is why our government will be the owner of the majority of the newspapers. This will neutralize the harmful influence of the private press. . . . If we authorize 10 newspapers, we will found 30, and so on. The public will not be suspicious. All the newspapers published by us will apparently present the most oppositional tendencies and opinions . . . which will attract our adversaries to them without mistrust. . . . They will have, like the Hindu god Vishnu, one hundred hands . . . which will conduct public opinion in the direction that is suitable to our goals. . . . The imbeciles who believe they are repeating the opinions of the newspaper of their party will be repeating our opinion or one that pleases us. They will imagine that they are following the organ of their party and, in reality, they will be following the flag that we hoist for them. . . . Already, at least in the form of French journalism, there exists a Freemasonic solidarity. All the press organs are linked together by the professional secret; like the ancient augurs, none of its members will yield the secret of its information, if they do not receive the order to do so. No journalist will decide to betray the secret, because none of them will admitted into the literature if they do not have a shameful blemish in his past; his blemish would be immediately revealed. As long as these blemishes are someone's secret, the halo of journalism attracts the opinion of the majority of the country and one follows it with enthusiasm. Our calculations especially extend into the provinces. It is necessary that we excite there hopes and aspirations that are opposed to those of the capital and that we present them as the spontaneous hopes and aspirations of the provinces. It is clear that the source will always be the same: it comes from us. As long as we do not yet enjoy complete power, we will sometimes need things to be such that the capitals are enveloped by the opinions of the people, that is to say, the majority, maneuvered by our agents. It is necessary for us that, psychologically, the capitals do not discuss the matter, because it has already been accepted by the provincial majority. When we enter into the new regime, which will prepare our rule, we cannot allow the revelation by the press of public dishonesty; it will be necessary that one believes that the new regime has so completely satisfied everyone that crime has disappeared. . . .