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The Challenge of Governance

The Left and Power Since the Dreyfus Affair

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The socialist century.

In one century, the Political Left has exercised power eight times in France for a total of more than thirty years, accomplishing considerable political, social, and societal work. Paradoxically, however, these accomplishments remain as underappreciated as they are little-known, as if some sort of automatic self-defeating mechanism kicked in every time the Left came to power. Some sort of imposter syndrome internalized by its successive leaders... The Left, it must be said, has no worse enemy than itself: its centuries-old division between responsible and revolutionary halves, its fratricidal hatreds, its reluctance to accept majority rule within its own ranks.

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