

**TWO REPUBLICS BUT NOT QUITE
THE SAME POLITICAL SYSTEM**

France is a REPUBLIC

It's currently the 5th republic (5 different constitutions) whereas the USA has kept the same constitution since 1788

In a republic there are 3 separate power:

-**Executive** : it belongs to the president and the government

-**Legislative**: It belongs to the Assemblée Nationale and the Senate

-**Judiciary**: It belongs to judges who are public servants

COMMON POINTS AND DIFFERENCES WITH THE AMERICAN SYSTEM

Common points

The president is elected for two consecutive terms maximum

Only the French over 18 who are registered can vote

France never had a female president

The legislative power belongs to 2 chambers : the Assemblée Nationale and Le Sénat (Parliament= Congress)

The justice system is independent

The Conseil Constitutionnel does a part of your Supreme Court's job

Differences

The president's term lasts 5 years (quinquennat) and he's directly elected by the citizens

The Assemblée Nationale is elected for 5 years and the Senate for 6 years

The French president has more power than the American president

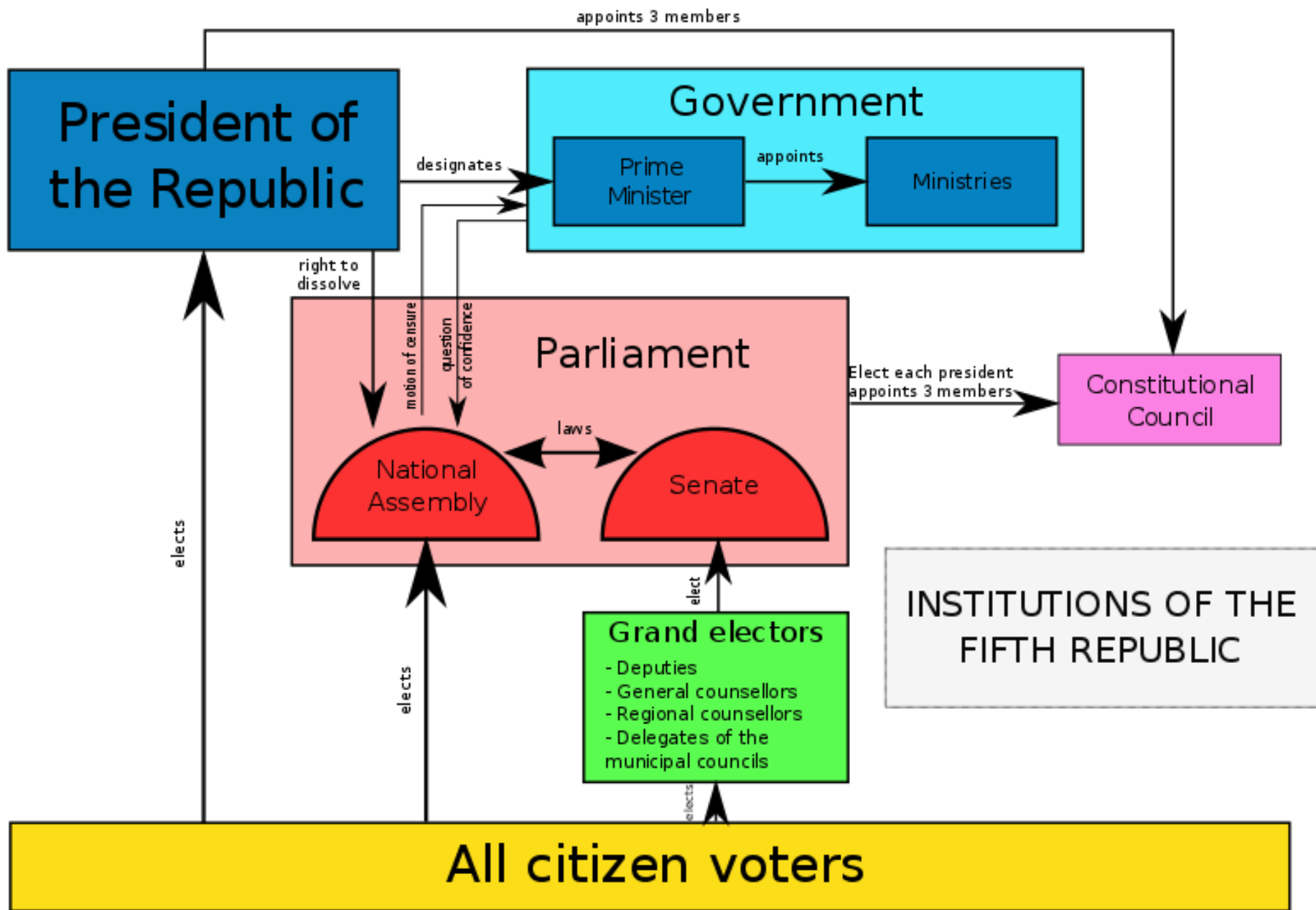
When a president dies or resign during his term there is another election

It's possible to have a president and a prime minister being from different political parties: COHABITATION

Money plays less part in elections than in the US

The president's powers

- to organize referendums (and bypass the Congress)
- to dissolve the National Assembly (US senate)
- has the power of mercy
- to sign the treaties
- to use the A Bomb
- to ask for full power for 6 months in case of emergency
- to be immune during his term (no impeachment)
- to appoint the prime minister



THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

It's a complex system of civil courts and penal courts.

French judges are called « » magistrats » and they are public servants (FONCTIONNAIRES)

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE FRENCH JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND THE AMERICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM

In France some differences:

- no release on bail

- no life imprisonment (Nordhal Lelandais- Mailis- 18/02/2022)

- Death penalty has been abolished in 1981

- It's rare someone under 18 years old is sent in jail.

- There are no juvenile centers for offenders under 18

- Someone under 13 is considered as irresponsible .

Some common points:

- probation is used (le sursit)
 - time without parole is possible (la / une période de sûreté)
 - protective custody is used (la détention préventive)
 - public defender (avocat commis d'office)
 - you are allowed to defend yourself.
- French magistrates have NO gavel and WE DO NOT SWEAR ON THE BIBLE (secularism: laïcité)