

Chirac named premier following crushing defeat of French Trilaterals

by Philip Golub

Following two days of intensive coalition negotiations between the two victorious parties in the March 16 elections, and discreet talks between Socialist President François Mitterrand and opposition RPR leader Jacques Chirac, the new French government, headed by Chirac, was announced late in the afternoon of March 20.

Chirac, leader of the largest and most powerful of the victorious coalition parties, the Gaullist RPR or Rally for the Republic, called on the country today to unite. "I call upon all French men and French women to unite to save the country," declared the new prime minister in unusually dramatic fashion.

In effect, the French election victory of the RPR and their coalition ally, the UDF (Union pour la Démocratie Française) came in the midst of multiple foreign policy crises for France, including a very bitter and harsh hostage crisis in Lebanon and an escalating military conflict in Chad.

The new ministers

The principal new ministers of the government include:

- Mr. Robert Pandraud, minister of national security, a new ministry created by the new prime minister to coordinate all national security affairs. Robert Pandraud has long experience in police and intelligence matters and served as head of the French National police for many years, until becoming chief of staff for Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris until his recent appointment as premier.

- Mr. Charles Pasqua, minister of the interior, whose responsibilities traditionally include internal security, oversight over elections, and law and order. M. Pasqua was chairman of the RPR group in the French Senate until his appointment and played an important role in the election campaign.

- M. André Giraud, minister of defense. M. Giraud was minister of energy under the presidency of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and was one of the architects of the French civilian nuclear power program; he is known as a supporter of the idea of French participation, in one form or another, in the

Strategic Defense Initiative of President Reagan as well as of an autonomous European high-technology defense effort.

- M. Michel Noir, minister of finance. Michel Noir headed the study group of the RPR on industrial affairs and was the RPR candidate in the Rhone Department (Lyon) against Trilateral Commission member Raymond Barre, a former premier. Noir scored a stunning success against Barre on March 16, gathering 21.7% of the vote, although the polls had projected that he would receive barely above 14%. Barre had been expected to win a landslide victory with over 29% of the vote, but just did manage to outdistance Noir with 22.8% of the vote. Noir has also been prominent in the RPR as a spokesman for a "Colbertist" industrial policy—a reference to government-directed economic development, as pursued by Louis XIV's greatest minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert.

Other ministers include the former diplomatic counselor to President Georges Pompidou and close friend of Chirac, Eduard Balladur as state minister, Republican Party Leader Leotard as minister of culture, Farmers Union head Guillaume in agriculture, and Bernard Pons of the RPR as minister of Overseas Territories, which will become an important, if not crucial, post given the years long destabilization campaign run by leftist and communist subversives and by Warsaw Pact intelligence services eloupe, la Réunion, and French Guyana. In a compromise between Mitterrand and Chirac, ambassador J. B. Raymond, a career diplomat, was appointed minister of foreign affairs.

The hostage crisis

The composition of the new government, and in particular, the creation of the new Ministry for National Security, underlines the desire of the new government and of Chirac to deal firmly with the foreign policy and security crises France is facing in the Middle East, Northern Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and in the overseas territories. According to sources close to the new government, one of the major priorities will be to combat international terrorism in an effective fashion,

a policy long neglected under the previous Socialist governments.

As the bomb attack the evening of March 20 at the Champs Elysée emphasizes, the Lebanese hostage crisis is the most acute and most immediate of these problems. There are presently seven French citizens who are hostages in or around Beirut. Three are hostages of the Iranian-controlled Hezbollah organisation, while four recently kidnapped journalists of French Television are said to be in the hands of an organization close to Syrian intelligence. An eighth hostage, Michel Seurat, was assassinated by the Hezbollah a number of months ago. His assassins released the pictures of his corpse only recently as part of a calculated pre-election psychological maneuver.

For months prior to the elections, the previous Socialist government negotiated frantically with both the Iranian and Syrian governments without any result. Systematic concessions were made to the Iranians, in particular, including not very discreet sales of weapons, in a futile attempt to achieve the release of the hostages.

Knowledgeable observers believe that this crisis will worsen before it gets better. The new prime minister is considered to have long-standing ties to Iraq, one of France's traditional trading partners in the Middle East. These same

sources note that both the Iranian and Syrian governments, albeit for different reasons, want to force France to shift its entire Middle East and Gulf policy. The Syrians in addition are said to want to force the French once and for all out of Lebanon, where French influence is still strong, particularly in the Christian community. Ultimately the hostage crisis will boil down to a fundamental foreign policy choice which the new government, in coordination with President Mitterrand, will have to make.

A novel arrangement

Constitutionally, the new French government arrangement is entirely novel. Never in the history of the Fifth Republic (founded by President Charles de Gaulle in 1958, creating a strong presidential regime supported by clear majorities in the national assembly) has there been a President presiding over a government of entirely different political party affiliations. Long thought to be unworkable or leading to ungovernability, it appears that the new government is the result of an agreement struck between the new legislative majority and the President; it therefore may have greater chances of lasting than originally expected.

The success of this arrangement will demand—has already demanded—t

European Labor Party exposed the Trilaterals

The European Labor Party, known in France as the Parti Ouvrier Européen (POE), ran candidates in 27 French "départements" (roughly, the equivalent of states) in the legislative elections, on a platform calling for a shift in economic policy to "Colbertist" fostering of high-technology industrial growth, and a defense policy of French cooperation in the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative. The party is headed by POE secretary Jacques Cheminade, who reached millions of voters in several incisive national television appearances during the election campaign. It is inspired by the ideas of American economist and political leader Lyndon LaRouche.

The POE became known for spearheading opposition to Trilateral Commission policy schemes designed to destroy France's sovereignty, beginning with last year's "Greenpeace" affair. At that time, POE spokesmen exposed the U.S. Trilateralist lawyer Lloyd Cutler, attorney for the environmentalist-terrorist Greenpeace organization, for attempting to destroy French intelligence capabilities to the benefit of the Soviet Union. The POE then

took the lead in exposing the dangerous ambitions of Swiss bankers' agent and Trilateralist Raymond Barre, who was played in the press as a major force in the opposition. The heavy defeat of Barre-linked candidates was one of the biggest upsets of the March 16 vote.

On March 20, the daily *Le Monde*—France's "newspaper of record," which had ignored the POE's entire electoral campaign—wrote that the campaigns of the European Labor Party, "in particular those against the Club of Rome, the Trilateral, and in favor of Third World development, make a sound that, in effect, evokes the Gaullism of the left rather than ultra-conservatism." The article was *Le Monde's* response to a Soviet-orchestrated slander campaign, attempting to link the European Labor Party to the Palme assassination (see pages 22-25).

Le Monde otherwise notes that the POE claims to be in the tradition of (Socialist) Jaurès, former President Charles de Gaulle, and Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the 17th-century founder of the governmental policies conducive to industrial capitalism. The article labels the POE's attitude on the Soviet Union "obsessional," but adds that this has led to a strong support for President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.

Despite meager resources, a blackout by the national media, and a wildly variegated slander campaign, the POE candidates were officially credited with 43,000 votes.

on foreign policy, traditionally considered to be the "special domain" of the President, as well as security policy and economic policy. The delimitation of powers is clear in the constitution in the case of a unified presidency and government. In the present case, this delimitation is more blurred, but can be practically resolved by a minimal consensus on major issues on the part of the President and the prime minister. President Mitterrand, of course, will remain chief of the armed forces and sole guarantor of the nuclear option, although defense policy will be worked on between both the presidency and government.

It is too early to say whether the agreement between the new government and the Elysée (presidential palace) will work. Mitterrand has over 40 years of political life behind him and is known for his versatility in dealing with such situations. If, however, the arrangement (known as *cohabitation* in France) were to break down, this would inevitably lead to early presidential elections and a new round of legislative elections soon after.

Raymond Barre had based his entire campaign on this latter assumption, expecting an early government crisis and presidential elections which would permit him to run for the country's highest office. His relative defeat during the elections March 16 has certainly momentarily neutralized any early attack on his part upon the new government, although it has in no way cooled his ambition.

Barre, a leading member of the Trilateral Commission and an advocate of détente and "East-West convergence" theories—i.e., a global Russian empire—cannot now afford to lose further ground among the conservative electorate which desires stability. Barre is said to hope that the new prime minister will become inextricably stuck in the Lebanese quagmire and hence discredited. This perilous game could turn against him, however, if the new government scores significant successes in any major foreign policy or economic field, such as the fight against terrorism.

A strong military policy will also enhance Chirac's chances to succeed, and thus prepare for his own presidential candidacy in 1988.

As far as the relative electoral success of the right-wing populist National Front is concerned, this will in no way seriously affect the actions of the government. It will be very difficult for the rabble-rousing Jean-Marie le Pen—who polarized nationalist discontent and was used by the Socialist Party to limit the victory of the RPR and UDF—to denounce a "weak government" when the latter includes both R. Pandraud and C. Pasqua.

The French elections thus demonstrate a shift in the French population itself, demanding a fundamental change in French economic and foreign policy. The stakes are high and the new government needs a couple of major successes to overcome the international and domestic obstacles it is already facing.

For the Trilaterals, it's on to Moscow

by Mark Burdman

Leading lights of the Trilateral Commission are reportedly most unhappy about a report that appeared in the Italian magazine *Panorama* on March 9, claiming that the Commission is planning to hold a plenary meeting in late 1986, or in 1987, in Moscow. But certain evidence, available to *EIR*, lends credibility to the *Panorama* report.

The article was written by Rome correspondent Pino Buongiorno. We present segments of his unusual exposé:

"Here in the office of Count Giovanni Auletta Armenise, president of the Banca Italiana dell'Agricoltura, on Tuesday March 11, the 20 Italian members of the Trilateral Commission, first among them Gianni Agnelli [of Fiat], will meet. On the agenda: the general assembly in Madrid, in the middle of May, of the powerful international organization that collects industrialists, financiers, bankers, and politicians from Europe, Japan, and the United States. There are two issues for the important meeting: 'The next phase with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe,' and 'The conditions for partnership in international economic organizations.'"

Buongiorno added that the Trilateral Commission "gained its bad name with the election, in November 1976, of the 'unknown' Jimmy Carter, to the presidency of the United States. Carter was one of the most active members of the Commission. He called into his administration 18 Trilateralists: first of all, as adviser for national security, Zbigniew Brzezinski, exactly the same man who had the idea to create the organization, then supported by the banker, David Rockefeller. Was it not the Trilateral Commission that imposed that administration, many asked themselves?"

Noting that many have considered the Trilaterals a dangerous international conspiracy, Buongiorno published a disclaimer from one leading Trilateral leader in Italy: "'The truth is that the Trilateral Commission is only a place for discussion, of exchange of experiences. The influence we are trying to have is only at the level of public opinion of the leading classes,' says Piero Bassetti, former Christian Democratic parliamentarian, and now chairman of the Union of Chambers of Commerce, one of the first members of the Commission."