

# Terror disrupts French politics

by Philip Golub, Contributing Editor

Relatively protected, until now, from the terrorism and violence that afflicted Germany in 1977-78 and has created permanent political instability in Italy, France has fallen victim over the past two weeks to the most spectacular destabilization effort since the events of May 1968.

One week has passed since the bloody bombing of a synagogue in Rue Copernic, a bombing which, according to French security experts and official diplomatic sources, was not an act of blind terror by some handful of Nazi nostalgics, but a meticulously planned covert operation designed to shatter the domestic political equilibrium of the country, stimulate ethnic conflicts, weaken state institutions, and undermine the French police and security services. Informed political circles have noted that French security agencies are in the process of gathering evidence proving foreign secret service involvement. The investigations point in particular to a special outlaw operation of Israeli extremists, the capability earlier identified as being behind the terrorist bombings on the West Bank.

Whatever the investigations will subsequently reveal, the investigators are certain that a foreign-instigated "strategy of tension" is now operative, whose aim is to destabilize the French government and stop the reelection of President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in April 1981. These sources have let it be known that only the rapid and general mobilization of all police forces and security services, along with cooperation from moderate leaders of the French Jewish community prevented a major blowup of terrorism and violence following the bombing. One police official commented that had a hundred people, instead of four, been killed the night of the bombing, Paris would have been set on fire by the combined forces of armed leftist gangs, Jewish Defense League-style extremists, and terrorist provocateurs of all kinds. That threat, for the moment, has been contained, but politics as usual, the traditional dynamic of political forces in the country, has ceased.

A couple of months ago, most French political

analysts could still confidently assume that, given the normal play of parties and institutions, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing would achieve reelection with ease. An aging and increasingly isolated François Mitterrand, at odds with both the opposition within his Socialist Party and externally with his erstwhile Communist Party allies, looked—and still looks—far less presidential than in 1974. His chances of election were correctly evaluated as far poorer than at any previous time in the past five years. As a result, internal Socialist Party strife has been growing, and Michel Rocard, the leader of the more "modern" and extremely British-connected technocratic group in the party, is pushing for his own candidacy, which may yet materialize. London had already made clear its preference for Rocard some time back, but Mitterrand's stubbornness is not to be underestimated. Mitterrand knows full well that if he does not run this time, his political career will be over, and given that Mitterrand loves no one better than Mitterrand, he will not so easily release the grip he has gained on the party machine since the 1960s. Objectively, Rocard represents a greater danger to the electoral efforts of Giscard.

Added to this is the increasing problem of a diffident Communist Party, apparently no longer willing to endorse a Socialist Party candidate. This in part reflects foreign policy considerations and Moscow's rather clear preference for predictable détente-oriented alliances in the West. In 1974, the Soviet ambassador to Paris made it quite plain that a Gaullist solution would better preserve stability and peace in Europe than a popular front coalition government. This consideration, however, is not overwhelming and the Soviet Union certainly does not control the electoral habits of traditional Communist voters. A combination of such a clear Soviet preference and the real dislike in Communist ranks for Socialist Party leaders may significantly affect the results of the second round of elections. The second round, a runoff between the two top candidates, is the occasion for negotiations for multi-party support of the contenders.

At the same time, while the majority coalition between the Union de la Démocratie Française (UDF), Giscard's party, and the Gaullist Rassemblement pour la République (RPR), has also suffered from internal crises largely fomented by RPR president Jacques Chirac's inexhaustible political opportunism, the severe defeat sustained by the RPR in the last European Parliament elections, and the more recent major split occasioned by old-line Gaullist and former premier Michel Debré's independent candidacy, leaving Giscard as the only serious ruling coalition candidate for 1981. Insiders in France have pointed out that when Debré announced his candidacy, he managed to split the RPR in two to such an extent that, today, two Gaullist parties

function side by side, one supporting Chirac and one supporting Debré. To add to his problems, Jacques Chirac's intimate advisers have warned him that if he decides to run, he may well lose even to Debré, leaving the RPR—and his career—in the hands of Debré. If, on the other hand, he decides to abstain, they point out, he may also lose the party. Chirac's career is as endangered as that of Mitterrand, but his particularly vindictive qualities make him dangerous to the ruling coalition.

From the standpoint of the Presidency, this situation clears the road for a possibly very profound change in the structure of national politics. Chirac's RPR, although it labels itself Gaullist, is increasingly technocratic, increasingly populist and *poujadiste* [Poujadism was a 1950s lower-middle-class tax-revolt movement—ed.], as Gaullist Alexandre Sanguinetti once remarked. A cleansing of the political parties and a weakening of the RPR are viewed by the Elysée as a precondition for effective rule.

Thus President Giscard's strategy can be summarized as an effort to split irrevocably the Left Union of the SP and CP while simultaneously seizing control of the parties of the majority.

### **Fifth Republic versus Fourth**

With that in mind, under normal conditions, even under conditions of severe international crisis, these two factors of domestic dynamics would have guaranteed the reelection of the President.

Yet, as the past two weeks of intensifying terrorist violence so clearly demonstrate, the 1981 presidential election will be no routine affair. While reasonable observers scarcely expected a serene campaign, the level of violence culminating in last week's bombing has now convinced the nation that the April vote will certainly be the most decisive event in French political life since May 1968, perhaps even since the Algerian war. The bombing has accelerated the normal process of confrontation, bringing it out into the open, showing the real depths of the fight that underlies the daily political process, and revealing the commitment of the enemies of Gaullism in New York, London and Tel Aviv.

What was at stake in the civil strife of 1960-62, in the events of May 1968, and in the ongoing struggle is the maintenance of the republican order itself, that is, of the institutions of the Fifth Republic and the domestic and foreign policy orientations embedded in the Gaullist state. The quite explicit policy intent of de Gaulle still remains intact and have made France into a major modern power. The technological achievements of the past two decades in the nuclear industry, aerospace, defense, and electronics, are the byproduct of this earlier policy orientation. The corollary of technological progress was and remains a well-defined, though inadequate, independent international monetary policy, for-

mulated by Jacques Rueff, adopted by de Gaulle, and finally institutionalized in the European Monetary System agreements between France and Germany in 1978. It is that fundamental policy which is under attack.

As those numerous foreign and domestic enemies of the Fifth Republic recognize, a second electoral victory for Giscard will consolidate Gaullist rule over France for at least a decade, perhaps far longer, thereby making French Gaullism "permanent." Thus while the destabilization effort that began with the bombing in Rue Copernic certainly has conjunctural reasons relating to French Middle East policy, more broadly, the 1981 elections represent a "last chance" for the Carter-administration-linked Socialists to seize power in this century.

Given the nature of the presidential mandate under the present constitution—broad powers are delegated to the President for a seven-year term—a new Giscard *septennat* would be powerfully entrenched and the nature of domestic politics would undergo major transformations.

It is this feature of the constitution which the modern Jacobins of the Socialist Party denounce as a "new form of monarchy" only to counterpose to it the merits of the British parliamentary system. It is, of course, hardly accidental that precisely the parliamentary democracy so espoused by the Socialists was the cause of the complete legislative anarchy, social breakdown, and collapse of the 1945-58 Fourth Republic.

While significant evolutions have begun to occur within the parties, somewhat altering the four-party game, the underlying struggle in the country is defined by the continuing conflict between the partisans of the Fourth Republic and of modern Gaullist institutions.

### **The Socialist Party**

The Socialist Party itself is a creature of the Fourth Republic, of the strange blend of alliances between the extreme right-wing colonialist crowd then behind Banque de Suez et d'Indochine, Banque de Neuflyze, Schlumberger et Mallet, and others, and the French variant of British socialism, the Socialist Party then called SFIO (Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière). It is thus that all of France's post-Second World War colonial conflicts were either directly led by, or heavily involved, the Socialist Party. The Algerian war, the French-Indochinese wars, were Socialist Party wars; a more detailed analysis would show in effect that the heroin trade in France—the famous French connection—is a byproduct of these colonial enterprises bringing together the OSS-connected Corsican mafias, certain Socialist Party circles, and the remnants of the French Empire's prophets and mercenaries.

It is therefore understandable that the vast armed insurgency undertaken by the OAS (Organisation Ar-

mée Secrète) under Jacques Soustelle was not-so-secretly coordinated with domestic parliamentary actions on the part of the Socialists, dirty tricks inside the secret services, NATO involvement, and British and American covert operations. The coalition of insurgent forces against de Gaulle was a very broad international phenomenon, similar to the internationally coordinated destabilization effort today.

In the same way John Foster Dulles conceived of de Gaulle as a serious threat, and Harold Macmillan was involved in the efforts to destroy the Fifth Republic, so today the presidency of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing represents a systematic and serious problem to the Carter administration, which has been rightly accused by France of incalculability, incoherence, and strategic folly. The French government in private has made known many times their anxiety that the Carter administration is leading the world to war by miscalculation, a view shared by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and other European leaders.

### Policy conflicts

It is for similar reasons that the election of Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain exacerbated the always latent modern—and historic—conflict between France and England. The parallel extremisms of Margaret Thatcher, Keith Joseph, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Menachem Begin have, in the French view, made the world increasingly unmanageable.

The secret services who placed the bomb at Rue Copernic chose their targets meticulously. Their foreknowledge—or perhaps coordination—of Socialist Party response and the vast manipulation undertaken afterward to shake the foundation of French institutions reveals the extent of the policy conflicts described above. The large, tense, and divided Jewish community of France was used as the fuse of social confrontation. While the French Jewish community differs from the U.S. Zionist lobby and has never given itself to the political and ideological fanaticism of a Begin, a Flatto-Sharon or a Kahane, the terrorists played on poorly buried memories of World War II. The leaders of the French Jewish community, who have conflicted openly with Begin, and who approved, if not always wholeheartedly, the French government's Middle East peace efforts, were thus pushed to join with Begin.

It is only now in the columns of the *Washington Post*, in the articles of the *New York Times'* Flora Lewis, in the caricatures of the *Miami Herald*, in the pages of the *London Guardian*, and in the mouth of Socialists here that one hears that Nazism is on the rise in France. It is pure manipulation and lies, designed to create an environment within which to attack the government of France, and create terrorism and violence in the expectation of destroying the Fifth Republic.

## Splinter faction runs Israeli terrorism

by Paul Goldstein

An unofficial member of the Israeli cabinet has been publicly exposed as an instigator of the wave of "anti-Semitic" terror on both sides of the Atlantic.

Operating outside official Israeli intelligence channels, Rafael Eytan, special adviser to Prime Minister Menachem Begin for "warfare against terror," is linked by French-based journalists to the kind of assassination capability used in the Oct. 3 bombing of a Paris synagogue, which killed four people and potentially destabilized the French government. Eytan's special agency is a crucial component of the Israeli mafia's takeover of government policy over the past three months.

Eytan, known in Israel as "Dirty Rafi" for his links to domestic criminals and to U.S. mobster Meyer Lansky, has been given sweeping powers outside official channels to deploy so-called counterterror—that is, assassination—operations.

The latest issue of the Paris-based journal *Israel and Palestine* contains a lengthy exposé of Eytan's role in the bombing attacks that maimed two Palestinian mayors this June. The article frankly reports on Israeli intelligence factions' discontent with Eytan, both in the Mossad, the foreign intelligence service of which Eytan is a former member, and the Shabak, formerly the Shin Beth, Israel's internal security apparatus.

The Eytan "splinter faction's" networks have also been activated in the United States, high-level sources in Paris and Washington warned this weekend, citing "an expected wave of bombings in the U.S." Within 24 hours, the Turkish consulate in New York City was bombed by a group calling itself the "Secret Armenian Liberation Organization."

### The French focus

French newspapers the week of Oct. 11-17 maintained a high profile of leaked rumors that an Israeli intelligence group was behind the Oct. 3 synagogue bombing. *Le Figaro* adds to these reports that the "Begin faction" in the French Jewish community—most of whom have by no means fully supported Begin's policies in the past—was delighted by the