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**Socialist France Faces
The World**

Edward A Kolodziej

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lavish receptions organized by the ministry of culture did little to change the GNP's of developing states

Nor should fundamental policy shifts be equated with motion. The twists and turns of the Mitterrand government's economic policies illustrate how far one can move and yet stand still—and at considerable expense to the value of the franc, domestic investment, government deficits and arguably economic growth and jobs.

Finally, partisan pronouncements are a poor measure of what the Socialist government has been able to achieve. The Mitterrand government has not been short on self-congratulation, witness the incessant flow of statements, many contradictory, issuing from the Elysee Palace, the National Assembly, sundry ministries and party circles. They serve to rationalize the government's politics and reflect the tug and pull within the administration as rival factions jockey for position to influence the decisions of the government and the French president. The heterogeneous and incipiently chaotic process of Socialist party policy making has been gradually disciplined by the governmental and presidential system of the Fifth Republic and leavened by the omnipresent bureaucracy which strives to harness and channel Socialist energies to serve its own ends.

A Thermidor without a Revolution

The Mitterrand government's policies might be summarized in the formula $M=1/C^3$. M stands for the actual distance travelled by the Mitterrand government from past policies and practices. C^3 symbolizes the three characteristics of those policies: *conservation* of France's security and foreign policy position; *consensus* on major Gaullist-inspired instruments of policy and *compromise* with the international economic order. These denominators of French foreign policy suggest much motion but little forward movement. An analysis along these lines leads one to the conclusion that a Socialist France remains as dependent as its predecessors on a capitalist America and Europe for the protection of its vital security, the promotion of its welfare goals and the preservation of its exterior interests, primarily in the Mediterranean and francophone West Africa. It also suggests

SOCIALIST FRANCE FACES THE WORLD

Edward A. Kolodziej
University of Illinois

Introduction

Albert Einstein's theory of relativity ushered in a scientific revolution whose full repercussions have yet to be felt. His simple formula $E=mc^2$ opened the way for an entirely new understanding of time and space. If one were to have predicted what the consequences of a Leftist victory in France would be on the strength of Socialist and Communist party rhetoric, one might well have concluded that a similar political revolution was in the offing.

After almost three years of Socialist rule in France, there is little evidence of a new order. The Einstein formula, with some inevitable distortion, might well be turned on its head and its reciprocal taken as the measure of distance that the Socialist Communist coalition has departed from the foreign and security policies traced by its predecessors on the Right.

Caveats

Some caveats might be kept in mind. First, distance travelled in policy innovation should not be confused with dramatic governmental displays. The Cancun Conference may have pleased the developing states and sensibilities of domestic supporters, but it did not add much to the solution of North-South differences. The glittering convocation at Versailles of western heads of state may have impressed the Americans, but it did not change the Reagan administration's economic priorities or policies so adverse to French expectations. The Paris assembly of literary luminaries from around the world to deplore poverty at

that Paris is accommodating itself however reluctantly to these international constraints. The Mitterrand regime dutifully condemns bloc politics but there are few signs that it is prepared to take any bold steps inhibited by serious economic setbacks over the last two years to reform fundamentally the international system within which it is confined and which it finds so wanting. Indeed it has been more preoccupied with restoring what appears from the perspective of the Socialist regime to be crumbling segments of the western security structure than with transforming the security structure that it inherited. In accepting these limits Mitterrand's France is a solid if not always reliable member of the western camp. If the western alliance unravels as some argue has already occurred one will have to look beyond Socialist France to find the primary sources of dissolution.

1 Conservation

The security and foreign policy of the Mitterrand government has focused on restoring two critical military balances—the global strategic nuclear balance between the superpowers and the European theatre balance between the Atlantic and Warsaw alliances. It has attempted to reinforce the western military position without provoking either a destabilizing superpower arms race or a further deterioration of what remains of détente between East and West primarily marked by economic and cultural cooperation and limited political exchange.

At both levels global and theatre the Soviet Union is identified as the primary disruptive force largely as a consequence of its growing nuclear and conventional power. Socialist France has been in the forefront of efforts to balance Soviet might. President Mitterrand summarized his concerns in a television interview in December 1981:

When I was elected President of the Republic I considered that my first concern was to preserve the balance of forces between East and West this balance being the condition of peace. I observed that on a conventional level the Soviet Union disposes in Europe an enormous advantage and on the level of tactical nuclear arms it disposes a real advantage. On the level of

strategic nuclear forces it will benefit from a certain supremacy from 1985 1986. From that I thought it was necessary to preserve or to reestablish the balance. This is what made me approve certain American [defense] proposals.¹

It was in the context of this assessment of the Soviet military challenge that France approved the Reagan administration's nuclear modernization program. It also explains France's support for the NATO two-track decision on intermediate nuclear weapons. The ironic implication of the Franco-American alignment on global and theatre nuclear weapons is to lend support however unwittingly to the bloc system that successive Fifth Republics have railed against.

Whatever the regime in control in France may be two persistent French concerns qualify support for American arms expansion that the Americans will either overreact precipitating an arms race or a crisis or will ride roughshod over European security interests in striking a compromise with the Soviet Union to which Europe will not be a party. Mitterrand's government has had little to say directly about the first problem. Its reservations have been diverted to the latter concern. It worries about Washington's management of *détente* and what is perceived as eroding American strategic capabilities and their availability to serve European and French security objectives. These anxieties precede the Reagan administration and lie at the core of the suspicion and doubts harbored in France toward the United States. The Carter administration's handling of SALT negotiations heightened such feelings. It is against this background that much of the explanation for Socialist support of the Reagan administration's defense policies may be found. The expansion of American strategic nuclear power is viewed as a bolstering of the American position in the START talks and as a contribution to American resolve in the INF negotiations to strengthen the link between U.S. and European security interests.

For Mitterrand's France the current strategic problem is to keep American power competitive with the Soviet Union's especially in nuclear weapons and to ensure that U.S. influence remains in the service of European and specifically French security interests. Any U.S. agreement with the Soviet Union over the heads of its European allies that might isolate the

European theatre is resisted. Although the Giscard d'Estaing government officially supported the Carter administration's position on SALT, it shared European qualms about the failure of the proposed treaty to address satisfactorily the SS-20 and Backfire bomber problem and about the proscriptions however limited on cruise missile technology transfers to West Europe. Having withdrawn from NATO and having itself pursued nuclear policies that purported to make France a sanctuary—even an enlarged sanctuary as Giscard d'Estaing's military chief of staff proposed²—Paris was hardly in a position to criticize American nuclear policy for falling victim to the same temptation. The Carter administration's mismanagement of the neutron bomb episode deepened French doubts about American nuclear commitment. The Reagan administration's rearmament proposals and its firm embrace of the NATO two-track decision were welcomed in Paris. The global superpower imbalance appeared to be on the way to being righted. Within that larger balance the United States also seemed prepared again to throw its enhanced nuclear weight on the scales to maintain the European security theatre balance between the two blocs. It was one thing for France to talk about sanctuarization; it was quite another to let the Americans drift into such thinking.

To emphasize alliance solidarity President Mitterrand invited Atlantic Alliance heads of government to visit Paris. Before the German Bundestag he set the matter straight about mutual American-European security guarantees and their importance for France and its European allies, notably Germany. Whoever would bet on the decoupling of the European continent and the American continent would put into question the maintenance of equilibrium and thus the maintenance of peace. I think and I say it: this decoupling is in itself dangerous and I hope ardently that the Geneva negotiations will help to avert a danger that weighs *singularly* on the European partners that do not have nuclear weapons.³

The INF problem was hardly a singular German problem. If it were why did the French President take the extraordinary step of lecturing his German auditors before their own parliament to accept NATO nuclear arms in the event that an arms control accord with the Soviet Union could not be reached? Whichever track NATO chose—deployment or arms limitations—

there were serious implications for French security of sufficient weight to counterbalance partisan loyalties. A Socialist French government felt sufficiently pressed by the INF issue implicitly to support the opponents of its Socialist colleagues in the February 1983 elections for the Bundestag which returned the Christian Democrats to power. *Raisons d'état* again prevailed over party loyalties as they had sixty years earlier.

The reasons for the embarrassing posture are both easy and difficult to discern. The Soviet military threat is perceived as a real problem. The problem is not one of fear that the Soviet Union will launch an attack on western Europe. Debates over warring strategies which fascinate American analysts receive little attention in France as a viable option. What is important for France is retention of the link between the U.S. deterrent and European defense. Socialist France also wants to avoid any concessions of a *droit de regard* being accorded the Soviet Union over the armament policies of the western democracies. The NATO two-track decision provides an admittedly clumsy but serviceable mechanism of serving both aims while opening the door to arms limitations negotiations and accords to which the European states (and indirectly France) will be party.

The less visible and I would argue more troubling concern for Mitterrand's France is German vacillation over the INF issue. What France fears most is a Germany untied to either bloc whether professedly neutralist and armed or pacific and unlaterally disarmed. Mitterrand's Bundestag speech made it abundantly clear as had de Gaulle's appearance before the same body a score of years earlier that Germany was not free to make its own security policy without France's consent and allied approval. Implicitly then there were limits to the democratic process in Germany. The defeat of the neutral-leaning Socialists avoided the problem of testing those limits. But the Mitterrand government's attack on neutralist and pacifist thinking inside France and in Europe can only be explained satisfactorily in terms of the surface (and genuine) concern over expanding Soviet military power especially in Europe and the less visible but more profound sense of anxiety that Germany might be slipping from its west European moorings. Unravelled would be the fabric of security ties that had been gradually stitched together: a divided Germany no longer capable of upsetting European

peace a western security system built on U S military presence in Europe as the pledge of American nuclear guarantee and an armed Germany in the service of western (and French) security yet under the control of its western allies (in silent league with the major opponent the Soviet Union)

In response to both threats a resurgent Soviet Union and a drifting Germany the French Socialist government has attempted at considerable expense during hard times to increase real defense spending. As in the past except for a brief period under Giscard d'Estaing emphasis has been given to modernizing nuclear arms. A limited number of Mirage IV aircraft will be kept in operation after 1985 a seventh nuclear submarine has been ordered (although it will not be delivered until the 1990s) the M-4 missiles equipped with six multiple warheads are scheduled to be fitted to all but one of France's nuclear submarines and work has been approved for the development of Hades tactical nuclear weapons a neutron bomb cruise missile technology and a new mobile intermediate range ballistic missile. The Mitterrand government over the objections of leading army officers also forced a reorganization of France's ground forces trying them more tightly than ever to the French nuclear deterrent. High priority has been given to the realization of a rapid deployment force capable of being engaged quickly in the forward defense of the alliance if the President should decide to intervene. Meanwhile Paris insists that the *force de dissuasion* is not negotiable either within START or the INF talks. Toward the United States and NATO the Socialist government retains the calculated ambiguity of its predecessors. It holds open the option of participating with its allies in operations against a Soviet or Warsaw pact assault of taking independent action through its own deterrent maneuvers in which its conventional and tactical nuclear forces will participate or of remaining aloof from alliance operations by assuming nonbelligerent status under the protection of its own nuclear weapons.⁴ Toward the Soviet Union Socialist France defines pressures to incorporate French nuclear forces within an accord governing European theatre forces and asserts the French government's renewed determination to practice its own version of the Gaullist strategy of proportional deterrence to keep the Russian bear at bay. Toward Germany French military superiority based on nuclear weapons is reaffirmed but in a manner

ironically that urges highly vulnerable Pershing II missiles on Germany threatening to European stability

The tough French stand on nuclear weapons and theatre nuclear forces has not precluded French pursuit of détente with the Soviet Union. Despite condemnation of Moscow's pressures on Poland and occupation of Afghanistan the Mitterrand administration opposes restrictions on East West trade or on contacts between the peoples of a divided Europe while continuing to condemn the military occupation of Afghanistan while alert against thoughtless activities in Poland. observed President Mitterrand. I intend to maintain a degree of relations between our peoples between our economies. I intend to preserve in Europe every chance to achieve a collective security guaranteed by the Soviet Union and by France.⁵

More than cooperation in security is at stake for France in pressing the case for increased economic ties to eastern Europe. France's trade with the eastern bloc is twice that of the United States. Its more than \$5 billion in trade with eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1980 represented slightly more than four percent of its trade while only about one percent for the United States. It is not oblivious to the problem of transferring sensitive technologies to the eastern bloc but the Socialist regime also faces major balance of payments deficits. I am hostile to any form of economic blockade of Russia. President Mitterrand said in a newspaper interview and France will not break off trade with that country. But I would add that a lasting and excessive balance of trade deficits would very quickly take on regrettable political significance. Nobody doubts that I will be faithful to the pledges made with our allies on strategic products. But I do not want us to insidiously reach the point of calling the sale of butter or chickpeas to Russia strategic.⁶

France's dependence on foreign energy sources and its stake in increased trade with the east also explains much of its resistance to Washington pressures that the Europeans restrict transfer of credits and technology to Moscow. French computers and color TVs enjoy markets in eastern Europe. Moreover there have been major advantages to the natural gas contract signed with the Soviet Union in January 1982. Under the contract France will receive eight billion cubic meters of gas each

year over twenty five years. French firms will also furnish the Soviet Union about one billion dollars in pipeline equipment partly financed with French credits to pay for the gas. When the Reagan administration ordered American firms in France not to fill orders and forbade the use of American licenses by European companies to meet the terms of these contracts the Mitterrand government obliged French firms and American subsidiaries based in France to ignore Washington's edict.

European solidarity as much as French intransigence finally forced Washington's hand. The Germans had even more to gain than France. Like the French, they were not keen on jeopardizing their lucrative trade with the east—twice as large as France's—nor of rendering further the threadbare remains of East West détente. The pipeline stance keeps faith with the legacy of Gaul and Giscardian governments. It also provides an occasion for the venting of Socialist criticism of the Reagan administration's management of détente and of its economic policies that are still perceived as damaging to European and French economic interests.

When pressed the Mitterrand government is also reluctant to budge very far from Mediterranean and African policies of the Gaullist years. In the Middle East Paris is still rhetorically tilted toward the Arab cause. Because of its weak position in the region and its vulnerability to threats of oil cutoffs and price rises the success of its policy objectives is hostage to American power and indirectly to Israeli influence on Washington's policy. President Mitterrand's well publicized visit to Israel after the election campaign helped heal old wounds. It was also designed to strengthen Socialist ties with Israeli partisans in France without unduly straining relations with the Arab states particularly those that currently comprise the moderate wing of Arab thinking. The Camp David accords are cited as a significant step forward.⁷ The delicately balanced statement of French Middle East policy reveals the internal tensions underlying French pronouncements. There's something for everyone in the region: the right of Israel to existence and to borders recognized by regional states; the right of Palestinians to home rule and the right of Lebanon to be unified and independent. Aside from the small French contingent sent to Lebanon as part of the international peacekeeping force, the Socialist government has essentially

foresworn any forceful attempts or vigorous diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict. Gone are pretensions like those of de Gaulle to regulate the Middle East conflict by denying arms to Israel and nations on the field of battle. France notes a French embassy circular is neither a referee nor a mediator in the Middle East conflict.⁸ Then who is? The outcome is left to the United States and regional forces primarily to Israel and Soviet backed Syrian region quarreling elements of Lebanon's religious factions and sundry Arab states depending on circumstances. France remains a *demandeur* in the region, not a part of any ruling directorate.

In those instances where France has attempted to exercise its influence its impact has been limited and not always calculated to advance French interests. France's efforts to assist the beleaguered Hussein regime in Iraq illustrates the hazards of untimely and ineffectual intervention. France is tied to Iraq's fate in the Iraq-Iran war by oil and arms. Paris has tried to use its arms exports to aid Iraq in its war with Iran. So far the effort has not succeeded. French arms have not tilted the fighting in Iraq's favor although they have helped the Hussein government hang on if only by a thread. Iraq appears to be more hurt by the war of attrition than Iran. The recent decision to lend five Super Etendard fighters to Iraq to increase Iraq's bargaining leverage has failed to produce the desired conciliatory response from Iran. Indeed, Iran has threatened to close the Straits of Hormuz if the Exocet equipped Super Etendards are used against Iranian oil installations. France thus risks shooting itself in the foot with its own weapons. Iraq's imprudent use of French arms may provoke a further enlargement of the Gulf war, a disruption of oil supplies injurious to Europe and France, and a reinforcement of Iran's determination to overthrow the Hussein regime and establish its control of the region. Meanwhile Syria's blockage of the Iraqi pipeline seriously threatens Iraq's solvency and its ability to pay for arms sold or lent by France.

If conflict management in the Middle East has been largely left to other states, the same cannot be said for France's position in North and West Africa. Traditional interests and the expectations of client states have precluded French withdrawal from the area.⁹ The failure of the Organization for African Unity to stem Libya's extension of a *de facto* sphere of control over northern

Chad has forced the hand of the Mitterrand government. Previous Socialist condemnation of France's role as the gendarme in Africa has been forgotten as more than 3 000 French troops have reportedly been deployed to stop the Libyan backed rebel forces of Oueddi Goukouni from regaining control of Chad. France risked losing much of its influence and standing among its francophone clients if it failed to act. Nigeria the largest state in the region could not be relied upon to check the Libyan advance. The United States preoccupied in Central America and with little record of involvement in Chad was neither willing nor able to fill the void. As in the Iraqi case Mitterrand's France guards a western redoubt.

Nor has the Mitterrand government been able to disengage France from the western Sahara and the Polisario rebellion against Morocco. It is still Morocco's major arms supplier after the United States. Early into the administration of President Mitterrand the French government did nothing to stop a military takeover of the ruling government of the Central African Republic where some of the French forces now in Chad are normally stationed. President Mitterrand as a justice minister under the Fourth Republic supported the Algerian war to keep *Algérie française*. His administration appears equally determined to cling to the remnants of France's imperial hold in francophone Africa.

II *Consensus on Policy Instruments*

The Mitterrand government has not only striven to conserve the legacy that it inherited but it has also—Socialist and Communist rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding—legitimated the principal institutional and policy instruments fashioned by the Gaullist government to project French power abroad. Three stand out: affirmation of Fifth Republic political institutions and the primacy of the president in foreign and security policy; the centrality of the *force de dissuasion* and the continuation of an open door arms transfers and military technology policy; par-

ticularly toward states in the developing world.

The first has been extensively commented upon. The Left has participated actively in every presidential campaign since the inception of the Fifth Republic. President Mitterrand has been actively engaged in all of them. President Mitterrand's dissolution of parliament upon his election in 1981 ran the risk that an assembly might be formed that would stand opposed to the Socialist president. The Socialist victory however never joined the issue of a prime minister with a majority in the National Assembly at odds with the president who appointed him. There is no question that Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy represents the President's views in the National Assembly. While ministers have been multiplied by the Socialist government—43 members at the start—and while they have been given wider berth to participate in policy formation than their predecessors it would be too much to argue that either the Fifth Republic had been transformed into the Fourth (or the Third) or that the president had to share power with his ministers. This is not to say that interest group politics has not grown in France. The government has on more than one occasion contradicted itself in attempting to appease rival factions: those for and against nuclear energy or for more or less expansion of public spending including defense. Key ministers have also been repeatedly caught in their own crossfire. Jean Pierre Cot, Claude Cheysson and the president's foreign policy adviser Guy Penne have jockeyed for access to President Mitterrand while Jacques Delors, Michel Rocard and Jean Pierre Chevènement have sparred over economic policy. The Socialist party in publishing its own reports on foreign and domestic issues has at times appeared as much a presidential vehicle for explaining governmental policy and mobilizing support as an independent actor in the process bent on impressing its views on the government.¹⁰

The spring reorganization of the French cabinet the third since the formation of the first Mauroy government suggests a gradual return to the long established French preference for hierarchically determined policy. The number of full ministerial portfolios has been reduced from 25 to 15 divided among 12 Socialists, 2 Communists and one representative of the Leftist Radical Movement (MRG). Over opposition within the Socialist party Jacques Delors on the right wing of the Socialist party was

appointed to a super ministerial position joining financial economic and budgetary policy.¹¹ The institution of austerity measures and the armed intervention in Chad suggest a stronger Mitterrand hand on governmental policy than before. The power of the presidential office and public expectations attaching to it the exigencies of foreign policy and the current economic crises would appear to have more influence on shaping President Mitterrand's conception of his presidential role than professed beliefs in consensus building participatory democracy and broad access to the president's office. In announcing the cuts in cabinet portfolios the Elysee announced that the minister delegates and secretaries of state that would be appointed would participate in cabinet meetings only when invited.¹²

Of no less significance is the embrace by the Socialist government including its Communist ministers of the *force de dissuasion* as the core of France's independent minded defense policy. Nuclear deterrence has been cited by the French president high ranking governmental officials and responsible military officers as the central elements of France's security posture.¹³ A previous proposal advanced by Mitterrand before he became president for a public referendum on the *force de dissuasion* has been quietly dropped. Instead nuclear force has again been given priority over conventional forces. Any body who tells me that he prefers an additional division of soldiers to a nuclear missile launching submarine observed Defense Minister Charles Hernu is living in the wrong age. France is the only country which has dared to draw all the necessary conclusions from its nuclear power status. It is to that priority—the nuclear arms programs—that we have sacrificed secondary matters.¹⁴ General Jeannou Lacaze armed forces chief of staff reiterated the commitment on the strategic level the concept of deterrence remains the *epine dorsale* of the French defense system by permitting decisional autonomy which is the protector of our free space.¹⁵

There is also the statement of President Mitterrand acknowledging his debt to President de Gaulle for having created the French nuclear force and to the Fourth Republic for having laid the groundwork for the nuclear program. France intends to conserve the autonomy of its choices and its decisions in military matters this ultimate recourse of external relations. The means

of the autonomy of decision is nuclear deterrence. If General de Gaulle was able to lead an independent military policy which led to France's exit from the integrated military organization of the North Atlantic treaty it is because he chose to give the country nuclear arms. It is true that research in this area had been undertaken well before the arrival of the General to power.¹⁶

Now everyone is Gaullist. The significance of Mitterrand's affirmation of nuclear deterrence and of decisions to modernize the nuclear force is as much symbolic as strategic. The *force de frappe* has been excised from French politics as an issue.¹⁷ The entire spectrum of French politics from the Communist party on the Left to die hard Gaullists on the Right are agreed on maintaining—even on strengthening—the force. Debate is now over the size and modalities of nuclear arms not whether France should have them. There is also basic accord or in the case of the Communist party acquiescence with respect to the doctrine of proportional deterrence an anti city posture and to the target at which the force is directed viz the Soviet Union. No serious objections were raised to Chief of the Armed Forces Jeannou Lacaze's explanation of France's military policy as had been a half decade earlier when his predecessor General Guy Mery had flirted with heresy in accenting conventional arms.¹⁸ President Mitterrand succinctly stated his government's position. The French strategy remains therefore that of the deterrence of weak to strong [proportional deterrence] that is to say a strategy that can only be anti city.¹⁹

Keeping France in an ascendant continental position within the western bloc particularly relative to Germany appears tightly woven into the French political fabric. Nuclear arms including modernized tactical nuclear forces are the counter weight to West Germany's conventional superiority. Abandoned is the proposal of the Giscard d'Estaing government to draw to a level of equality with Germany in nonnuclear forces. The costs in domestic welfare and regime support are judged too high and the strategic benefits are given little weight despite a generation of American pressures and remonstrances that a flexible response strategy be implemented in Europe.

The preferred French course despite its risks is to empha

size nuclear deterrence. This stance explains the cool French reception of NATO Commander General Roger's suggestion that there be a pause in fighting should NATO and Warsaw forces clash.

For the French the Russian advantage in Europe must be negotiated away. However the French have no intention of making any concessions since they believe their nuclear and conventional forces are already at minimal levels for security. The superpowers being perceived as overarmed are expected to make concessions first. Any decrease in bloc forces would presumably decrease German forces too and France's relative military standing within the alliance would then be enhanced. The formula of more nuclear weapons, small conventional forces and the use of diplomacy to bargain away Soviet superiority—and indirectly German conventional strength—is determined by the domestic constraints placed on defense spending. Increases in defense expenditures initiated by the Socialist government do not appreciably depart from the trends set by its predecessors. French defense spending is not likely to be much more than 4 percent of the GNP, a level threatened by a rate of inflation that is among the highest in the western world, owing partly to the now defunct expansionist economic policy initially applied by the Mitterrand government.²⁰

The third major act of confirmation by the Mitterrand government has been in the area of the transfer of arms and military technology. The Socialists sharply criticized previous regimes for having pursued an arms sales policy *à tous azimuts*. It was especially critical of sales to so-called oppressive governments like Chile and Argentina. On entry into office Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy reiterated the Socialist call for the *moralisation* of arms traffic, contrasting the approach of the Socialist government to the attitude of *banalisation* characterizing previous French behavior. On the other hand, in an interview with the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, Mauroy underlined the point that the Socialist regime would honor arms contracts already signed. Our country will try worldwide to curtail and moralize arms exports. But the government has said that the signature of France is binding and that all earlier contracts will be filled. The change in our policy will be gradual.²¹ Very gradual indeed. First arms orders remain high. Orders for arms were estimated

at \$8.8 billion in 1980 and \$6.2 billion in 1981. Orders for the first half of 1982 had already reached 80 percent of the entire 1981 level.²² Combined with slightly higher domestic spending for military procurement, the French arms industry will extend the production levels of the 1970s well into the 1980s.

Approximately 90 percent of France's arms and military technology exports go to the developing world. Most go to the Middle East. In 1982, 83.5 percent of all arms orders came from Arab states. In 1980, 78.8 percent of arms deliveries or approximately \$4.55 billion went to the Middle East and North Africa. Principal recipients were Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Egypt. The Socialist government continues to depend on Middle East orders. In 1982, France signed major contracts with Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The Iraqi contract valued roughly at \$1 billion was for ground equipment including 155mm cannons. This equipment was atop other shipments including Mirage F1 fighters and Exocet missiles. The Saudi contract was three times as large. France will now supply much of the needs of the Saudi Navy over the next decade.²³

There is no mystery to the shift in Socialist behavior if not professed beliefs about arms sales. They are too important for France's strategic policy and economy. The arms industry employs 300,000 personnel, many in highly skilled jobs. Forty percent or about 120,000 are engaged in exports, principally in the aerospace and electronics industries as well as in the nation's arsenal system. Currently, five percent of French trade is in arms offsetting, record-breaking deficits. Arms also pay for military research and development that cannot otherwise be funded from the defense budget. Maintaining large series runs and design teams to hold down per unit cost of weapons and provide barter for oil. It is no accident that the largest arms contracts under the Socialist regime have been with Iraq and Saudi Arabia, which supply more than half of France's oil needs. Shortly after taking office, President Mitterrand sent his brother Jacques, head of Aerospatiale, the nation's largest aircraft firm, to assure Riyadh that its contracts for arms would be honored.²⁴ To these orders Nigeria, France's third largest oil supplier, added a contract valued at about \$200 million for Roland ground-to-air missile systems. Deliveries to other developing countries which have difficulty meeting a democratic test like Brazil and Chile have con-

tinued either as the consequence of the execution of contracts signed by the Giscard d'Estaing government or of initiatives taken by the Mitterrand regime to find new arms outlets

III *Compromise with the International Economic Order*

The preceding review of Socialist foreign policy may have presented a distorted picture of the priorities of the Mitterrand government. Domestic social reform, economic growth and full employment were its primary goals. The Socialist party projected a vision of a new economic policy and a reformed international structure as keys to growth and full employment. A party publication proclaimed: to pull out of the economic crisis we must pull out of capitalism in crisis. We will not pull out of the economic crisis which has tended to make France a subsidiary of the USA unless we radically reverse the present trends.²⁵ Change at home was viewed as part of a process of needed change globally. At the UN Conference on Least Developed Countries in September 1981, President Mitterrand presented the international face of the Socialist design. France's present effort to achieve more justice and dignity does not stop at our borders. It would be a strange kind of solidarity that turned into indifference once one passed the customs house.²⁶ The Cancun conference provided another opportunity to dramatize the French call for major changes in the international economic system. We in France believe, Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson told a meeting of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, we can escape from the present restraints only within the framework of a planetary new deal.²⁷

The Socialist government moved quickly to act on its program. Following Keynesian principles of stimulating consumption and investment, including the creation of new posts in the public sector, the Mitterrand government instituted a number of pump priming measures and social reforms. The minimum wage was raised 10 percent, family and housing assistance was increased 25 percent, over 50 000 new jobs were created, over four billion francs were earmarked for job creation and export subsidies to develop more job openings, a fifth week of vacation and a 39 hour week at 40 hours of wages was mandated to share available work to cut unemployment a 34 plus billion franc

package was assembled of loans and assistance to business to recapture lost segments of the domestic market and to strengthen international competitiveness. Also undertaken was the nationalization of most of France's banks and nine key industrial sectors.²⁸

Consumption was stimulated, increasing about one percent. The GNP also inched upward. These healthy economic signs, however, have been among the few that the Socialist government has seen since it took office. Unemployment has not been appreciably decreased. Young people and women have been hardest hit, although special attention has been given to their needs. Inflation went over 14 percent in 1981 and 1982. Governmental deficits have risen sharply. France's balance of payments position already delicate with deficits of over 50 billion francs in 1980, reached approximately the same level in 1981 and almost doubled in 1982, reaching 93.3 billion francs (\$13.3 billion).²⁹ Capital reserves plummeted from a little more than \$30 billion in 1981 to half that amount a year later. France's foreign debt exceeded \$50 billion in September 1983, making France one of the most heavily indebted nations in the world alongside Brazil and Mexico. The value of the franc accompanied the fall in these economic indicators. The franc, which stood at 4.2 to the dollar in 1980, slid rapidly, aided by three devaluations, to over 8.0 in the fall of 1983. Investment also fell as the confidence of French businesses and international investors in the French economy declined. The volume of investment fell 10 percent in 1981 and was expected to fall by another seven percent in 1982.³⁰

As early as October 1981 and then more seriously in spring 1982 and thereafter, the Mitterrand government has progressively instituted a number of austerity measures to check the public deficit and inflation and to balance its foreign accounts. These measures have had to come at the expense of the economic and reformist goals that had been the hallmarks of the Socialist mes sage for over a decade. High interest rates in the United States provided a useful (and by no means irrelevant) explanation for some of the Socialist plight. Criticism of American policy was no substitute, however, for taking remedial steps to stem the crisis. The more conservative views of Jacques Delors and Michel Rocard were given precedence over those of the left wing of the party led by Jean Pierre Chevenement. In March 1983, Delors

was given extensive power over the economy. Shortly thereafter a tough ten point program to cut the national debt restore trade balances and shore up the franc was announced by the government. Measures included cutbacks in welfare spending a special tax to offset reductions in the price of crude oil a one percent levy on taxable income to raise new revenues additional taxes on tobacco and alcohol efforts to decrease the deficits of nationalized industries governmentally induced incentives to encourage savings and tight restrictions on the amount of currency allowed French travellers.³¹ Whether these classical conservative measures will restore the health of the French economy is not clear. Investors remain wary and the government must now deal with its sullen and frustrated supporters whose expectations of better days have been dealt a severe blow. What is clearer is that a Socialist France which tried to break the mold of domestic stagnation and encourage changes in the international economic order within which it operates now finds itself more than ever dependent on that order and specifically on the United States and its European allies a predicament partly brought about by its own misguided if high minded policies.

Conclusions

Conservation consensus compromise—hardly revolutionary rhetoric. These labels summarize the first two years of French foreign security and economic policy. They will be useful denominators of French external policy under the Socialist regime for some time to come.

Viewed from Paris Western defenses appear to be in disrepair and need to be shored up. A vacillating Germany must be steadied a weakened and hesitant America must be bolstered and its power and priorities rededicated to serve France's needs and an ascendant Soviet Union must be parried while placated.

The Fifth Republic's presidential office suits Gaullist and Socialist aims. President de Gaulle's *force de dissuasion* provides a measure of material power and psychological space to underwrite the plausible claim that France can act independently in a crisis although the instruments available to the French president

to avoid or to manage a crisis are meager. Nonnuclear forces are stretched thin and no plans for their joint use with NATO forces exist. France is cast in a supporting role in detente politics the protagonists being the superpowers and Germany. Its military establishment and arms industry to survive must depend increasingly on the vicissitudes of global arms demand from developing countries. It runs the risk of arming its future adversaries or those of its western allies. The Chadian tangle where French troops currently face Libyan forces in possession of French arms illustrates the first problem the Falklands Islands war which featured French Exocet missiles used by Argentinian aircraft to destroy British ships exemplifies the second hazard.

There is no easy way out of the economics crisis. Pre-Keynesian austerity measures have now become orthodoxy for Socialist planners. Many of the measures that have been taken exceed those of the Barre regime which sought to adapt the French economy to the increased competitiveness of the global economic order.

What is truly Socialist of weight and significance is difficult to discern. The style of presidential and party decision making is different. Announced goals and priorities depart from past governmental pronouncements. Official rhetoric has a new idiom and reformist cast. But there appears to be no marked departure from the policy paths of preceding Rightist regimes.

Q E D M = 1/C³

NOTES

¹ France. Ministère de la Défense. Service d'information et de Relations Publiques des Armées (SIRPA). *La Politique de défense de la France*. Dossiers d'information No 69 May 1962 p. 9.

² General Guy Mery. *Une Armée pour quoi faire et comment*. *Défense Nationale* June 1976 pp. 16-27.

³New York Times January 23 1983 (Emphasis added)

⁴For a careful and meticulous dissection of French security policy in Europe see David S Yost *France and European Security* (mss forthcoming) The renewed accent on deterrence is highlighted in official French pronouncements on military policy See for example Ministère de la Défense SIRPA *La Politique de défense de la France*

⁵*Ibid* p 9

⁶Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) *Western Europe* November 30 1982 p K2 There was reportedly considerable discussion within the Mitterrand administration about the advisability of technology transfers These reservations were largely overruled once the government decided to sign the pipeline contract See FBIS *Western Europe* November 5 1982 p K4 and International Monetary Fund *Direction of Trade* (Washington D C 1981) *passim* for trade statistics

⁷French Embassy Press and Information Service *France* January February 1983 p 4

⁸*Ibid* p 5 Note also the remarks of Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson during his visit to Israel in December 1981 He is reported to have rejected the view that Europe had a right to present peace proposals for the Middle East France would not agree to friendly countries like Israel The Ivory Coast or the United States telling her what to do and Israel's friends cannot tell her what to do *New York Times* December 9 1981 p 8 See also Dominique Moisi *La France de Mitterrand et le conflit du Proche Orient comment concilier émotion et politique? Politique Etrangère* XLVII No 2 (June 1982) 395 402

⁹A probing discussion of recent French policy in Chad is found in David S Yost *French Policy in Chad and the Libyan Challenge Orbis* Winter 1983 pp 965 997

¹⁰For an interesting review of party positions see Parti Socialiste *Le Projet socialiste pour la France des années 80* (Paris Club Socialiste du Livre 1981)

¹¹France Press and Information Service of the French Embassy *News and Comments from France* March 24 1983 pp 1 2

¹²*Ibid* Dominique Moisi (n 8 p 395) supports the view of strong presidential leadership French policy in the Near East constitutes one of the best demonstrations [of the argument] that France is a presidential regime and that its exterior policy made essentially at the Elysee translates the will of the Prince

¹³Besides those cited elsewhere (nos 1 2 4 15) see also the following from the pages of the semi official *Défense Nationale* Pierre Mauroy *Vers un nouveau modèle d'armée* November 1982 pp 9 28 Charles Hernu *Face à la logique des blocs une France indépendante et solidaire*

December 1982 pp 7 22 Jacques Huntzinger *L'Esprit de défense en France* December 1982 pp 37 44 Philippe Forget *La Politique de défense française à travers les déclarations de François Mitterrand* December 1982 pp 125 144 General Lacaze *Politique de défense et stratégie militaire de la France* June 1983 pp 11 30

¹⁴FBIS *Western Europe* October 12 1982 p K3

¹⁵General Jeannou Lacaze *La Politique militaire Défense Nationale* November 1981 p 11

¹⁶SIRPA *La Politique de défense de la France* p 14

¹⁷This is a major conclusion of Michael M Harrison's *The Reluctant Ally France and Atlantic Security* (Baltimore Johns Hopkins University Press 1981) which anticipates the Socialist embrace of the *force de dissuasion*

¹⁸See Lacaze especially p 11 →

¹⁹David Yost suggests that current French targeting is more subtly conceived targeting has been extended beyond cities to include the economic and military infrastructure of the Soviet Union As the number yield and accuracy of French missiles increase with the introduction of the M 4 missile and other improvements one can expect additional implementation of a modified anti city strategy but certainly well short of any notion of a war fighting posture like that of the Soviet Union or the United States

²⁰French military expenditures are reviewed in the author's *French Arms Trade The Economic Determinants in Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) World Armaments and Disarmament Yearbook 1983* (New York Taylor and Francis 1983) pp 371 390 especially page 374

²¹FBIS *Western Europe* June 23 1981 p K3

²²France Assemblée Nationale Commission de la Défense Nationale et des Forces Armées (1981) *Avis sur le projet de loi des finances pour 1982* No 473 *Défense politique de défense de la France* p 120 and *idem* (1982) No 1168 1982 p 61

²³Pierre Dussauge and Christian Schmidt *L'Industrie française d'armement* (Paris 1982) (*Mimeo*)

²⁴Interviews Paris June 1982

²⁵Quoted in Janice McCormick *Thorns Among the Roses A Year of the Socialist Experiment in France* *West European Politics* VI No 1 (January 1983) 44 McCormick's article provides a very useful and insightful review of Socialist economic policy and I am pleased to acknowledge my debt to her

²⁶France Press and Information Service of the French Embassy *Position Papers from France* PP/82/3 p 1

²⁷ *Ibid*

²⁸ These changes are detailed in McCormick no 25

²⁹ *Ibid* and France Press and Information Service of the French Embassy *News and Comments from France* March 31 1983 p 1

³⁰ McCormick p 56

³¹ *France News and Comments from France* March 31 1983 p 1

