

GISCARD'S CABINET: MIDWIFE TO FASCISM

May 31 (IPS) — With the announcement of his cabinet this week, newly elected French president Valery Giscard d'Estaing signalled his intentions *and* his incapacity to be more than the *midwife* of Rockefeller's fascist program for Europe. The cabinet is not only filled with non-entities and "reformers" but key ministries went to bank and business hacks. The only notable appointments are ex-Gaullist Chirac and Prince Poniatski, appointed as Prime Minister and Interior Minister, respectively.

Beset by a shattered political machinery, a current 30 billion franc deficit, and an impending mass strike outbreak, Giscard's government cannot hope to be able to mobilize the popular support necessary for implementing its austerity program. The upcoming collaboration between Giscard and West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt will be the method which Giscard will use to try to save himself from political and economic death.

Zero Growth

The key indicator to what the new French government would like to do is Prince Poniatski, who was designated as a "minister of state" and has already been addressed by the French press as the "Vice-President." Poniatski, a longtime Giscard associate, details his vision of social reform in literary excrescences: "Man will be outdated in the very function he thought to own the privilege of — creativity."

Poniatski has worked out his dehumanization program as follows. The cornerstone is establishing the cult of the nuclear family. With this goes massive decentralization and regionalization, achieved by shipping large sections of "surplus" population to the countryside for labor-intensive jobs. Then cybernetics — in the sense of fascist finger-tip control over the population — could be implemented.

Poniatski's plan is not his idiosyncrasy. Its essential Zero Growth genocidal character was also expressed by Andre Wormser, Governor of the French Central Bank, in an interview to the French daily *Le Figaro* (May 26). Wormser declared: "Inflation can be defeated only at the expense of total halt of growth... As long as the balance of trade is in deficit, it will be impossible to pursue in a substantial way the improvement of wage-earners' buying power, and on the whole, that of the French people."

Giscard's intentions on foreign policy are predictable, given his history of pro-NATO and pro-Rockefeller

activity. They will be implemented by Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean Sauvagnargues, previously the zealous pro-NATO French ambassador to Bonn. Higher up Prime Minister Chirac, former head of the Gaullist Party (UDR), will be in charge — under the strict control of the powerful presidency.

Internal Chaos

Chirac's appointment itself illustrates one major difficulty Giscard will have in governing. By failing to reappoint the popular anti-Rockefeller Jobert, Giscard is alienating many of the Gaullist voters who dubiously gave him victory. The Gaullists have responded to Chirac's appointment by removing him from the leadership of the UDR. In office Chirac will play a key role in destroying the Gaullist Party, extending the wrecker role he played in sabotaging the Chaban-Delmas UDR candidacy in favor of Republican candidate Giscard.

The Gaullists could potentially deadlock the Parliament, seizing on the issues of French national interest vis-a-vis the rest of Europe and the U.S. But in the event of working-class upsurge in response to Giscard's austerity program, the Gaullists have no place to go except with Giscard.

There is little doubt that such an upsurge will occur. The economic chaos unleashed by the current liquidity squeeze will raise to the boiling-point working-class rage. This rage was previously misdirected into the futile "united left" electoral campaign of Mitterrand. The question remaining is what the character of these strikes will be.

Already the CIA-controlled trade-union confederation the CFDT has threatened massive strike action. If the CFDT leads the strikes, they will be directed into the issue of fascist autogestion (co-participation). To bait trap, Giscard has added a new ministry to his cabinet entitled "Quality of Life."

ELC: "Now More Than Ever"

The only direction from which positive strike leadership could come is the Communist Party (PCF) controlled trade-union federation the CGT. While the union has kept a low profile since the elections, the CGT and the PCF are constantly exposed to and confronted by the possibilities being presented by the European Labour Committees (ELC) and their programmatic Europeanwide fighting perspective. The PCF already showed its understanding of the anti-Rockefeller fight in its February left turn. The ELC leaflet on the French elections being circulated throughout Europe entitled "Now More Than Ever" demands PCF participation in building an international workers' united front against Rockefeller's moves to decimate Europe.