

# Giscard in Retreat, Barre Steps Forward to Lead France

A combined offensive by Gaullists and Arab forces over the past ten days, culminating in the successful effort to bring about the release of the illegally arrested Palestinian leader Abu Daoud, has brought about a French national consensus rallying to the foreign policy conceptions of the Gaullists. French Prime Minister Raymond Barre (also Minister of Economy and Finance) has been pushed forward to act as its spokesman and President Giscard d'Estaing has been forced to posture as a defender of De Gaulle's foreign policy.

Giscard's own party, the Independent Republicans (RI), has successfully bucked attempts by Interior Minister Poniatoski to consolidate dictatorial control over its leadership, and on Jan. 13 issued a communique which called on European countries to reach "a common attitude with respect to the United States" on the issues of disarmament, raw materials and European construction. The communique warned of the "growing capacities of annihilation" represented by the arms race and called for a successful conclusion of the North-South talks between developed and underdeveloped sectors. Most significantly, the imposition of a Trilateral Commission dictatorship over Europe under the aegis of the Carter administration was decisively rejected by the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Pierre-Christian Taittinger, in a speech prepared by the Center for Analysis and Forecasting (created by former minister Michel Jobert) which he delivered Jan. 7.

These general themes were reported by Yves Guena, the General Secretary of the Gaullist Party (TPT) in *Le Quotidien de Paris* Jan. 18, where he stressed that "detente on our continent necessitates a powerful Western Europe, but excludes a Europe aligned on the positions of the United States." Communications between East and West Europe "remains a goal within human sight," he said.

With this tremendous pressure being brought to bear on him, it is not surprising that at his press conference on Jan. 17 Giscard "chose" to assert De Gaulle's "independent policy" for France and blast U.S. intervention into domestic political affairs.

Premier Barre has now stepped forward to act as the government spokesman for Gaullist political leaders, industrialists and assorted politicians from other parties. In an interview granted early this week to the economic journal *La Vie Française*, Barre emphasized the Gaullist theme that gold remains "a living international monetary asset" to be counterposed to the role of the IMF's fictitious Special Drawing Rights. Selective interventions will be made into the economy "to encourage the development of sectors which must participate in the re-establishment of our (trade) balances." Barre added, indicating that such interventions would not be financed through domestic looting measures like a national loan. Oil specialist circles have indicated that Saudi Arabia is considering a \$5 billion loan to France, the only plausible source of financing these "interventions" and others planned.

The Congress of the French Employers' Association

(CNPF) this week backed up the Gaullists' thrust. Finance Commission head Michel Caplain called for ten-year, low-interest, state-backed credit to be issued to industry for productive investment—specifically not to refinance industry's debt. Last weekend's issue of *Le Monde* reported that the French stock market rallies whenever Barre's economic policies are given a prominent position in the French press.

## 'Report on the Broad Orientations of France's Foreign Policy'

*Below are excerpts of a speech given by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Pierre-Christian Taittinger on Jan. 7, on the basis of a report prepared for him by the Gaullist Center for Analysis and Forecasting. The excerpts are taken from the section on "Particular relations with the Great Powers":*

\*\*\*United States: An equilibrium had been reached with the Ford Administration... which had accepted our specific role....The problem is now posed in different terms with the Carter Administration....There are risks of disequilibrium in four areas:

—Non-proliferation: We mean to maintain our capacity to determine our policy in an autonomous way.... Nuclear energy does represent a credible and competitive energy alternative....

—Search for a concerted limitation of conventional armament transfers, notably in the Middle East;

—Will for a Western approach harmonized on the economic level vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and the European socialist countries;

—An exclusively "trilateral" conception of relations between allies and industrialized partners would threaten to lead in fact to a re-launching of the "globalization" dispute....

\*\*\*Soviet Union: The instability of Western tactics (towards the East bloc) contrasts with the perseverance of Soviet designs....French diplomacy (is) to maintain its own conceptions....French relations with Moscow must not be a function of the ups and downs of American-Soviet relations....Moscow is expected to understand the particular role of France in the European balance and her role in the world....

\*\*\*Middle East: Although we are not directly associated with the work of the Geneva conference, we are not deprived of means of influence in favor of a global settlement in the Middle East....

## Giscard: 'French Foreign Policy Not Made in Newsrooms'

*The following is excerpted from French President Giscard d'Estaing's Jan. 17 press conference:*

"There are some countries that do not accept the independent policy of France as it is being conducted. Well, I would like to say to you just as General de Gaulle used

to say, I think, in this very room, that French policy is not made at the stock exchange. Well, I myself tell you that France's foreign policy is not made in the newsrooms of a few international news media, nor will it ever be. French foreign policy is the business of the President of

the Republic, the government and the French Parliament. Neither France, her people nor her laws have any lessons to learn from anyone and I suggest that those who desire to be her friends refrain from trying to teach us their lessons.

## The French Side of the Abu Daoud Affair

One could say with a bit of irony that there has been as great an outcry in France against Interior Minister Poniatoski for ordering the arrest of Palestinian leader Abu Daoud, as invective against France for releasing him in the U.S. press.

The Interior Minister has been charged with acting in such a way as to "sabotage France's foreign policy" by carrying out Interpol-Israeli Secret Service orders to arrest the Palestinian leader while he was visiting Paris as a member of an official Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) delegation. Such accusations, brought by the French daily *Le Monde* and a slew of political figures, would have been enough to force the resignation of any Minister were it not for the close friendship Poniatoski maintains with President Giscard D'Estaing. Giscard, after all, owes to his minister his rise to power.

The result of Poniatoski's recent behavior, however has led to Giscard's near total political isolation and the defeat of the Atlanticist policies he has always stood for. The communique issued by Giscard's Independent Republican National Federation on Jan. 13, stressed the necessity for a European alliance based on advanced technological cooperation and peace and disarmament treaties with the Soviets. Poniatoski's step-by-step effort to take over since 1968 the predominantly Pompidolian RI party have been cancelled out within the span of a few weeks.

Giscard's Jan. 17 press conference included a warning to the United States to stop its campaign of "insults," and showed him to be breaking ranks with Poniatoski to seek a truce with his Gaullist opposition. What Poniatoski had failed to understand is that by upsetting the delicate balance between the Gaullist networks in the intelligence and military community and the U.S. interests which stand behind Giscard he was creating a strong boomerang effect.

It was Poniatoski's clumsy mishandling of three key "affairs" which combined to produce his unenviable position:

—The Daoud Affair: Poniatoski tried to protect himself by pretending that the DST (French FBI) carried out the arrest without his prior knowledge. For this he was exposed as a liar by former DST director Wybot, who pointed out that such a break in the chain of command was impossible—Poniatoski had had to have

given the order for the arrest. Wybot, who was ousted from his former position by then President General de Gaulle, could hardly be suspected of partisan judgement against the Atlanticist minister.

—The De Broglie Affair: Contributing to this environment of hostility to Poniatoski was his investigation into the Christmas eve murder of Jean de Broglie, a primary spokesman and negotiator for Euro-Arab dialogue. The speed with which Poniatoski concluded the investigation and dispatched himself in front of the media to announce that De Broglie had been murdered for a mere 4 million francs debt to an associate, raised severe doubts as to Poniatoski's commitment to investigate the murder. As the evidence for a "crime of interest" collapsed, the appraisal of the murder as some political affair in the press — including *Le Figaro*, known for its sympathies to Poniatoski — produced a swelling scandal.

—The Saleh Affair: While the De Broglie scandal was in process, the unexplained murder of Palestinian leader Saleh in Paris, one among many such murders of Arabs and their allies in the past months, prompted Gaullist organizers to go on the offensive. Vincent Monteil, Gaullist professor of Arabic studies, and formerly of the Gaullist left intelligence networks during the Algerian war, gave a press conference to demand that Poniatoski investigate the activities of the Israeli Secret Services on French soil. Monteil blamed the Israelis for several murders on which, he stated, he had given a full dossier of evidence to the Interior Ministry. Monteil added that should the Ministry fail to clean out the Mossad-Interpol dirty tricks and assassination networks in France, he would open a public debate on the question.

Since then the efforts at mopping up the network which constitutes the backbone of anti-Gaullist subversive activities in France have grown to include outside allies like the Algerian paper *El Moudjahid*, the East German paper *Neues Deutschland*, and the Danish paper *Politiken*, all of which analyzed different aspects of this network. Meanwhile a mysterious harassment campaign against individuals and defendants in the De Broglie affair (theft, armed attacks, break-ins and car sabotage), notably the near fatal car of a journalist, Hubert Lacier, who has been investigating these matters, has certainly not helped quiet the climate of suspicion surrounding the Interior Ministry.