

Poniatowski's Terror

August 23 (IPS) — Since Michel Poniatowski, former General Secretary of President Giscard d'Estaing's Independent Republican party, was appointed Interior Minister of France, three months ago, an unprecedented wave of terrorism has gripped that country.

Beginning in July, when the explosion of eleven plastic bombs in Corsica took place over the two day period July 10-12 and had the major French daily *Le Figaro* commenting that "we're dealing with a group which enjoys complicities," the role played by Poniatowski in nurturing the terrorism became increasingly clear.

Within a matter of days a group calling itself the GARI ("Groupes d'Action Revolutionaire Internationalistes") blew up several automobiles at the Tour de France bicycle race and a dozen tourist buses in Lourdes. Weeks later major riots broke out throughout France, followed by a general walk-out of prison guards over the increasingly unsafe conditions.

Now, in an interview in the regional daily *Nice-Matin* of August 18 Poniatowski declares that the fight against inflation must succeed at all costs, and if it doesn't "the

responsibility will weigh on those groups and grouplets whose essential doctrine is of disorder."

No sooner had this statement been made than a group calling itself the "Committee for the Repression of Abuses," allegedly composed of shop-keepers protesting against the government's credit restriction policies, went into action sending letter-bombs to nationalized banks, seriously injuring one courier and threatening public sector workers. They later warned that "our struggle may cost a few human lives...."

The purpose of these groups, whose activities have been either *directly provoked or protected* by the Giscard-Poniatowski government (who have failed to make arrests despite massive search and seal operations as in the case of Bastia, Corsica) is to draw the working class' attention away from the growing economic collapse. This will provide the needed pretext of "disorder" to allow Poniatowski to pursue his Brigadier Kitson-style police operations with the aim of terrorizing the working class into accepting the "anti-inflation," i.e., austerity plan.

