

---

## NATO REORGANIZATION

---

# France revives the 'Spirit of Suez'

by Mark Burdman from Wiesbaden

An "Entente Cordiale" has recently been consolidated between the Tory government of Britain and the Socialist government of France. Harkening back to the colonialist Middle East adventure of 1956, Europeans are commenting on the renewed "spirit of Suez." As President François Mitterrand slavishly supports Britain's piracy in the South Atlantic, the partnership and its Israeli allies have their eyes set on two other strategic zones: the oil- and mineral-rich continent of Africa and the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf theatre.

In Africa, Mitterrand, for all his "Third Worldist" rhetoric, is carving up the continent with British, Israeli, and U.S. interests, to secure raw materials and trade routes; indigenous populations are to be sacrificed if need be in fratricidal wars to secure these aims. Some 15,000 French troops have been readied by the Socialist regime for this strategy.

For the Indian Ocean/Gulf theatre, the French have 4,000 men and 20 warships in the East African country of Djibouti. Six thousand troops are on the French Island of Reunion east of Madagascar for contingency actions in tandem with those British frigates left after deployments to the South Atlantic, and with American capabilities at the British-owned base on the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, as well as base facilities in Mombasa, Kenya and Berbera, Somalia.

French Prime Minister Mauroy made a lightning visit to Lebanon May 26, ment that France is sending 2,000 more troops to Lebanon, supposedly for the U.N. peacekeeping force there.

To underscore its commitment to NATO's out-of-area deployments, France has agreed to act as host for the NATO summit in 1983. While France is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, this marks a reversal of President de Gaulle's strategy of pulling the country out of NATO's military command, in the interests of French sovereignty. Last month the French, for the first time in years, also led a high-powered multinational naval exercise in the Mediterranean.

That Franco-British relations have reverted to the pre-World War I Entente Cordiale was openly discussed in the pages of France's pro-Socialist *Le Monde* during

the week of May 17, in light of the fact that Mitterrand has been the most intense backer within the European Community of sanctions against Argentina.

As one of France's leading commentators stated in a private discussion on May 21, "There is no contradiction at all between the farm-price issue and complete French-British agreement on North-South issues," i.e., on neo-colonialism. Four days later, French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson himself told French radio broadcasters that ties between the two countries were "never so close and so good" as they are now, a judgment confirmed from the British side by arch-Tory parliamentarian Julian Amery to *EIR* on May 21. Simon May, a senior aide to Tory Edward Heath, under whose premiership in the early 1970s Franco-British antagonisms were in large part reversed, said, "There is a major shift from the Giscard era. There is a genuine entente. There are similar outlooks on the world."

And the same judgment was voiced to *EIR* on May 25 by Britain's Sir Philip Zulueta, who incorporates the Anglo-French-Israeli axis, as a top man in the British-based Rio Tinto Zinc raw-materials-plundering conglomerate and a director of two drug-revenue clearing-houses, the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank and the Leumi Bank of Israel. He also presides, from the British side, over the Franco-British Council, which held its latest meeting in mid-May in Edinburgh, Scotland.

The council was established in 1972, following the precedent-making visit of Queen Elizabeth to France, at a time when French President Georges Pompidou was operating under the illusion that a "British card" would be useful, to his regret in later years. At this point, the council is an obscene mélange of oligarchs and Socialist functionaries. Zulueta's counterpart on the French side is Robert Pontillon, a Socialist Senator with extensive connections to the British Foreign Office and the British-controlled U.S. State Department. In London, the prime movers of the council include Lord Duncan-Sandys, the early-1970s architect of the "East of Suez" strategy for multinational Rapid Deployment Forces to supplant departing British units in the Persian Gulf; Lord Thomson, head of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, an intelligence branch; Lord Polwarch, Chairman of the Bank of Scotland; and Lord Strabolgi, whose name is the Scottish equivalent of "Lord of the Bogey."

### Re-colonialization strategies

The Entente Cordiale now has its eyes set on intervention into the "hotspots" erupting around the world, as planned by the British Foreign Office. In the explosive Persian Gulf region, the British are playing a two-vector game of blackmail, with the connivance of France, the Israeli Defense Ministry, and the U.S. State Department.

On the one hand, the British are telling the rest of the EC that the mounting Khomeini threat to Saudi Arabia and its neighbors following the Iraqi debacle at Khorramshar signifies that continental Europe must drop objections to a NATO move into the Gulf, in order to secure oil supplies; and in the face of this blackmail, terrified European governments are increasingly responsive to the out-of-area push. On the other hand, the British are telling the Saudis and their Gulf neighbors that a British (or Anglo-French) protectorate is the only thing that can save their skins, a magnanimous offer is known in Foreign Office parlance as re-colonization.

Washington think tankers like to fantasize about the "projection of American power" in the Gulf. But the United States is so discredited in the region that this is hardly the real game. It is the Entente Cordiale that has the inside track, and will only invite the United States into the Gulf as the crisis peaks if it is necessary to draw on the "dumb giant."

This means, however, that imminent military interventions into the area by Rapid Deployment Forces cannot be excluded. There exists a 1980 tripartite naval accord among France, Britain, and the United States which calls for joint actions in the event of a blockage of the oil flow from the Straits of Hormuz. A three-nation armada with three aircraft carriers is readying movement into the upper reaches of the Gulf at any moment. All the dynamics are in place for a NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation in that area, and there are upwards of 20 army divisions contiguous to the Gulf-Mideast region.

### **The African opening**

In Africa, the British and their allies in France also see a "window of opportunity" for re-colonization, given the continent-wide economic devastation inflicted by the collapse of raw-materials prices, rising debt-repayment burdens, and the self-feeding brutalization caused by what are euphemistically termed austerity measures.

A Paris source commented, "What is happening now in Africa is frightening. The whole continent is being carved up, with French connivance, by Israel, Britain, and the United States. The NATO extension policy is operating, and all the tensions of the Mideast and the Gulf are becoming interchangeable with Africa's, and vice versa."

A focal point for the militarized re-colonization push was the extended end-of-May visit by Mitterrand to Western Africa—Niger, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mauritania—a coastal area rich in oil and other raw minerals. According to a highly informed Belgian source, the aim of the trip was to consolidate "a French military buildup in Africa to oversee the commodity flows. It is the

French correlate of the British operation in the South Atlantic, which is a show of force to control raw materials and sea lanes."

Oligarchic circles in France label this an "Atlantic Ocean strategy": British, French, and American coordination to militarize coastal zones as the core of a grand strategy. Senegal has granted port-refueling rights to Britain's Falklands fleet; it was Senegal which most wholeheartedly welcomed Mitterrand. Another instance is the effort to incorporate the Republic of South Africa into a new "South Atlantic Treaty Organization."

Recent developments in the former Belgian Congo are part of the pattern. In mid-May, Zaire's President, Mobutu Sese Seko, at the prodding of Paris and Washington, suddenly resumed diplomatic relations with Israel, causing a break with Arab countries—which Mobutu denounced for "neo-slavery"—and thus ending a substantial flow of Arab financial assistance. Mobutu has reportedly been promised American and possibly French aid—to buy Israeli military equipment and advisory services.

Belgian sources told *EIR* that "this is the official burial of the triologue," referring to the policy of Mitterrand's predecessor, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who mooted the use of Arab petrodollars and French technology to develop Africa.

Instead, Mobutu will have a twofold policy, thanks to French, Belgian, and Israeli influence in his army, and Israeli influence in his palace guard: repression of his own population under conditions of aggravated economic pressure, and the transformation of Zaire into a geopolitical gendarme, for military actions—possibly in conjunction with South Africa—against "the communist threat" emanating allegedly out of Angola, Mozambique, and the neighboring Congo. "This will make Zaire part of SATO," one source summed up.

It is reliably reported that should Mobutu balk at any point, he will be replaced with the exiled former Foreign Minister, Karl-I-Bond, a favorite of the International Monetary Fund and the re-colonizers.

Other countries in Africa are supposed to follow Zaire's lead. According to a senior French military analyst, "French-Israeli collaboration in secret-service and other fields is very close. It extends into both francophone and anglophone Africa." Israeli sources emphasize that Defense Minister Ariel Sharon is intent on expanding Israel's "sphere of influence" throughout Africa. One likely target is the Ivory Coast, which was visited by Mitterrand as part of his assignment to expedite Israel's entrée into Africa. A second target is strongly British-linked Kenya; one leading Kenyan newspaper, *The Standard*, published an editorial in late May lauding Mobutu's action, and praising the Israeli government as "a dependable ally of Africa."