

## Report from Paris by Christine Schier

### Unholy alliance against steel revival

*The French Communist Party is fighting for the Mellons and European oligarchs in a steel-town election.*

In the steel region of Lorraine, the French Communist Party has dropped its "pro-heavy-industry" profile to openly ally with the European oligarchs and U.S. "robber barons" in a municipal election.

On May 10, the French European Labor Party (Parti Ouvrier Européen—POE) officially filed a slate of 43 candidates for the May 20 municipal elections in the city of Thionville. The POE decided to enter the elections in order to bring its campaign for revitalizing the steel industry and opposing post-industrial "dismantling" schemes into the heart of the devastated steel region of France.

The 1984 Steel Plan, announced by President François Mitterrand upon his return from the United States at the end of March, condemns more than 25,000 steel workers to unemployment, of which 16,000 are in the Lorraine area. The POE immediately took up arms against this project, heavily denouncing the Pittsburgh Model, known in France as "telematique" and inspired by sundry oligarchs including the American Mellon family, the Eurocrat Viscount Étienne Davignon and the German economic minister, Count von Lambsdorff. The program of the POE, closely linked to *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche's movement in the United States, insists on modernizing and expanding present steel-production capacities, both for defense and Third World development purposes.

The strongest opposition to the POE's campaign came from the French Communist Party (PCF). The Communists immediately launched an in-

tense campaign of harassment and intimidation against the 43 candidates of the POE slate, indicating how well they had learned the lessons of coercion from their big brothers in Moscow. The mayor of Thionville, Communist Paul Souffrin, and his political machine systematically attempted to pressure candidates into resigning from the list, using such democratic means as goons sent to candidates' homes, "group discussions" with POE sympathizers in the factories, phone calls at odd hours, and "concerned neighbors' friendly advice."

An attempt to physically harass POE organizers was made by Dr. Souffrin and his deputy, who is no stranger to thuggery; he had been convicted during the same week of assault against an official of the RPR, France's leading opposition party. Having succeeded in scaring one candidate into resigning and filing an official complaint in court, the PCF proceeded to demand the cancellation of the municipal elections on these grounds alone. The elections had been called in the first place due to irregularities committed by the Communist Party machine in the last balloting.

As the POE immediately pointed out in press releases and other election material, it is perfectly natural that Moscow's puppets in France should attempt by all means to silence the pro-growth, pro-industry campaign of the POE, led by Jacques Cheminade. Who would profit more from the dismantling of the West's vital industries than Moscow? While the Russians stock their steel on East-West borders

in the form of tanks and float it on the seas to intimidate European governments into appeasement, their allies in the West rave about the wonders of the technetronic society.

Although the French Communist Party expressed vocal opposition to President Mitterrand's Steel Plan, it voted full confidence in the government shortly thereafter. The PCF continues to pay lip service to industrial growth and opposition to layoffs, but merely in order to lure the workers, particularly of the Communist-controlled trade union, the CGT, into hopeless strikes and social conflicts.

But they may very well have overexposed themselves in the Thionville area by aligning so clearly with the Davignon clique against the POE. In interviews published by the press, the POE pointed out that the mayor of Thionville is working with the Carnegie-Mellon Institute of Pittsburgh and its co-thinkers in France, including most emphatically the Research and Industry Minister Laurent Fabius, Finance Minister Jacques Delors, and the Centre Mondial de l'Informatique (CMDI) of Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, in attempting to dismantle Lorraine industries in favor of the "Pittsburgh model." (See *EIR*, May 20.) The government plan was partially based on a "reconversion plan" for the Lorraine recently worked out by the Carnegie-Mellon Institute and the CMDI. The American Institute also concocted a plan for converting the Marseille region from heavy industry into a "telematique paradise."

It is therefore not surprising that French Interior Minister Gaston Defferre, the decades-long "boss" of Marseille who visited the Carnegie-Mellon Institute last summer, ordered police inquiries into all candidates on the POE list, in a move obviously coordinated with Communist harassment.