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JPRS L/8476

23 May 1979

TRANSLATIONS ON WESTERN EUROPE
(FOUO 30/79)



WEST

EUROPE



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COUNTRY SECTION

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

JAPANESE REPORTER REVIEWS OTRAG PROGRAM

Tokyo UCHU JIDAI in Japanese Vol 3, No 1, Spring 1979 pp 44-46

[Article by Susumu Abe, National Space Development Agency: "OTRAG Low-Cost Space Rocket Under Development"]

[Text] Why Develop OTRAG?

A rocket which looked like four electric poles bound together was launched on 17 May 1977 from Zaire in Africa. This is a disposable rocket which is being developed by a West German private corporation called OTRAG (Orbital Firing Rocket Company), and it is projected to be in practical use by 1981. If the rocket is utilized, it is said that various satellites can be launched from it at half the launching cost of existing rockets.

In developing the rocket, a process designated as a compiling system is employed. In this system, an ultimate large-size rocket will be realized by binding multiple principal modules which will consist of comparatively small-sized tanks and engines. The rocket launched in May 1977 was a minimum flight-worthy module with four tanks and four engines. The tanks were approximately 30 cm in diameter and approximately 6.4 in length.

To develop this module into a large-size rocket, the length of the tanks is to be elongated while their diameter will remain the same. Furthermore, a multiple number of these tanks will be bound together. At this time, it seems feasible to bind them either in a circular or in a hexagonal shape, but OTRAG has decided to bind them in a cube. In addition, the OTRAG rocket is going to be multistaged. The modules bound in several layers will start combusting from the outer side. Completely burnt out modules will be separated from the rocket unit by unit, and then the next exposed out layer will be ignited. As this procedure is repeated one after another, only very few modules will remain in the center by the time a satellite is put into orbit. This rocket may be considered rather out of the ordinary by this feature alone, but there are many other unique features, which may be epochal or fanciful, and are different from the features of the existing rockets. The tank is made of a stainless steel which is cold worked for high tensile strength. Nitric acid and kerosene

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are used as fuels because of their availability and manageability, and furthermore, their low cost. There are highly efficient fuels which have been almost exclusively utilized as rocket fuels, but they were not selected because of their high cost and poor manageability. Rocket fuels are usually forced into the engines by a pump system or by a high pressure gas pressure system. The pump method was not adopted however, due to the complex mechanism and comparatively high cost, and the gas forced method was chosen. Under this circumstance, the upper one-third of the tank is filled with compressed air, whereas the lower two-thirds is filled with fuel. The attitude control system commonly used for a liquid engine is called a gimbal system, which controls the attitude with the goose-neck engines. Nevertheless, this system was also not adopted, to avoid its intricate mechanism.

Well, then, what kind of measures were taken to substitute the popular system? The new system is rather strange. With plenty of engines provided for the OTRAG rocket as described before, the attitude is going to be maintained by regulating fuel supplies to the engines.

Specifically, fuel supply to the engines in the direction into which the rocket should face will be reduced so that the attitude will be controlled by the intentionally created unbalance of the thrust.

For this purpose, each engine is attached with a spherical valve which regulates the fuel supply. Three-stage regulation of full-open, half-open and shut phases is available. Incidentally, it is very surprising to know that the valves used for the engines are commercial valves which are used in the chemical industry, and the motors that move the valves are the motors used for automobile wipers. Evading complexity and the high cost, the abrasive system with asbestos and phenol plastic resin coatings is also used for the structure of the combustion chamber instead of the recycled cooling system which requires a pipe structure.

Why OTRAG Costs Less

As you may have already noticed by reading the introduction up to this moment, the principal idea in developing the OTRAG rocket is to hold the cost low by the maximum simplification of the mechanism and the adoption of as many commercial products as possible. OTRAG contends that under this low cost policy, satellites can be launched approximately at half the cost of existing rockets and also at a cost fully comparable with reusable space shuttles which will emerge as the main rockets of the U.S.A. in the 1980's. For instance, they say, rockets which are equivalent to the Delta, Atlas Centaur and Titan 3C of the U.S.A. can be offered at approximately 7 million dollars, 12 million dollars and 15 million dollars respectively.

However, on-lookers remain quite cool in contrast to the determination and enthusiasm exhibited by OTRAG. There is some criticism from the specialists who point out that with a system such as this, the capability will

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not increase proportionately to the increase in size, and that the combination of nitric acid and kerosene will not obtain stable combustion. Also, many question the financial affairs of OTRAG.

In response to these criticisms and questions, OTRAG willingly recognizes that there is an explicit disadvantage in the structural efficiency, and that the OTRAG rocket weighs almost twice as much as a U.S. rocket of an equivalent capability. Also, they admit the need to overload the fuel much more than if other specialized fuels were used due to the poor fuel efficiency. Nevertheless, they dispute and contend that they achieved successful results in reducing the cost compared to others and in obtaining stable combustion by the use of nitric acid and kerosene. As for their financial affairs, they say that there is absolutely no need to worry since their expenses are covered with capital subscribed by approximately 600 private investors and they are confident that the number of investors will increase in the future as the project progresses.

However, as is commonly known, it is expensive to engage in space development, and it seems impossible that the project can be supported solely by the private sector. In fact, some reports disclose that the project is subsidized by the National Defense Department of West Germany, or that it is under the auspices of NATO, although these reports are not authenticated.

Regardless of these matters, following the first test, OTRAG succeeded in a second test on 20 May 1978, where the rocket reached an altitude of 30 km. On the first test, approximately 10 km in altitude was reached because the fuel tanks were only half filled at that time. The second test was conducted with full tanks. Incidentally, a principal module with four engines and four tanks was used in the second test just as in the first test. However, in the third test held on 5 June 1978, the rocket made a large arc and crashed into the ground because one of the four engines failed to work, although the test was conducted using the same principal module as used in test two.

According to the story told by an OTRAG engineer in regard to this failure, if a similar engine failure should occur in a large rocket there is no need to worry, since other engines can take over for the failed engine even with the same control system used at this time, because the number of engines used increases more with a larger rocket. Then, there remains the question that failures may increase with the increase in the number of engines. Since the incident, OTRAG is proposing to conduct a fourth test with the same principal module at the end of 1978, and to hold the first orbiting test using a rocket with approximately 80 engines and 80 tanks in March 1979.

Is OTRAG Really Going To Be A Space Rocket?

OTRAG plans to put the rocket into practical use by the year 1981, and they say they have already received several applications for use of the rocket. Two of the applications were for the use of the OTRAG 260, which

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is equivalent to the U.S. scout rocket class. This rocket is about 20 meters long and 1.5 meters wide, and can put a small satellite into a long elliptical orbit. The other four applications were for the use of a rocket named OTRAG G 2,500 which is equivalent to the U.S. Delta rocket class. This rocket measures 20 meters long and 4 meters wide, and it is planned to use the rocket to thrust a satellite into orbit at an altitude of 300-500 km in 1981. Incidentally, OTRAG refuses to disclose the names of the users who applied for the use of the rockets, which aroused various speculations together with the proposals to launch communications satellites, weather satellites and others including reconnaissance satellites, satellites which are too dangerous to be launched from space shuttles, and politically sensitive satellites.

In addition, OTRAG is planning to develop the OTRAG 10,000, approximately 8 meters wide and 30-35 meters long, which is equivalent to the U.S. Atlas Centaur and is capable of launching a stationary satellite of approximately 2 tons, and also to develop a large rocket which is equivalent to the Titan 3C. What one must note here is the great width of the rockets.

The width of the OTRAG 2,500, which is equivalent to Delta measures 4 meters, 1.5 times wider than Delta. OTRAG considers this great width as one of the merits of the rocket. Precisely, with ample width allowance, the size should not become too much of a concern when a satellite is being designed. As described previously, the sectional surface of the OTRAG rockets is cubical, but the part which houses the satellite is circular just as in ordinary rockets. The launching program of OTRAG schedules a yearly average of 10 units from 1981 to 1990. OTRAG forecasts that the majority will be large-sized rockets, although various sizes from small to large may be included in the scheduled launching tests.

In the above, OTRAG gas has been introduced briefly. Now, lastly, let me refer to why the OTRAG's launching facility was built in Zaire. According to OTRAG, suitable sites were not found in West Germany or on the coastlines of the Mediterranean. Thereupon, launching sites were searched in the vicinity of the equator which is advantageous for launching rockets. Although the request for the site was also submitted to the governments of Indonesia and Brazil, President Mobutu of Zaire was the first to respond. It is said that he hopes to see Zaire turn into a "Cape Canaveral."

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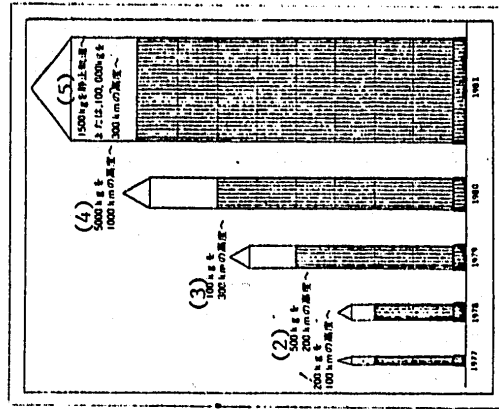
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2. Minimum Flight-worthy Module Ground Combustion Test

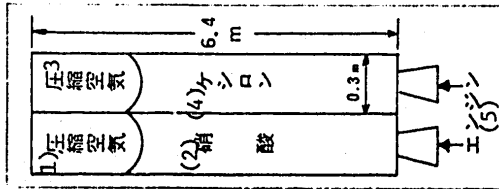
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4. Rocket Development Project of OTRAG
As seen in the graph, the rocket will be developed in phases from a minimum module to a large-sized rocket.

- Key:
1. Lift 200 kg to altitude 100 km
 2. Lift 500 kg to altitude 200 km
 3. Lift 100 kg to altitude 300 km
 4. Lift 500 kg to altitude 1,000 km
 5. Put 1,500 kg into a stationary orbit or lift 100,000 kg to altitude 300 kg

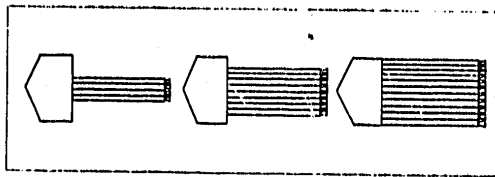


3. The Minimum Flight-worthy Module consisting of two principal modules, as seen above, is the one used in the first, second and third tests. The engines generate 3 tons of thrust each.

- Key:
1. compressed air
 2. nitric acid
 3. compressed air
 4. kerosene
 5. engine

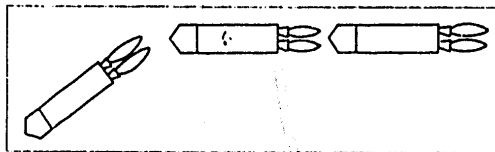
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6. OTRAG Rocket Separation Process

As seen in the graph, it is separated off gradually from the outer to the inner side.



5. OTRAG Rocket Altitude Control System

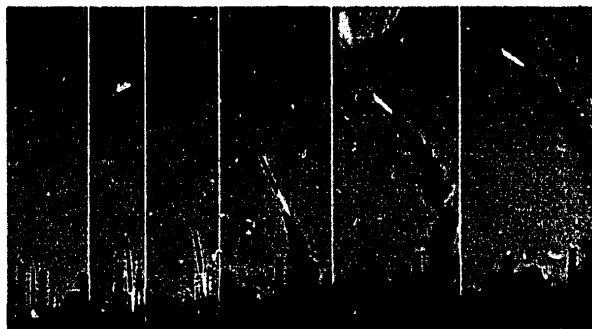
As seen in the graph, if a left engine is stopped, a left-hand turning effort is generated and this can change the attitude.

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7. View of the OTRAG Launching Site



8. Look of the Third Launching Test

One of the four engines did not work, which resulted in an unbalanced thrust. The rocket made a large arc and crashed to the ground.

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COUNTRY SECTION

FRANCE

OVERSEAS INTERVENTION CAPABILITY APPRAISED

Paris ARMEES D'AUJOURD'HUI in French Mar 79 pp 44-45

[Article by Div Gen Victor Loizillon, DCS/OPS, Armed Forces General Staff: "Foreign Operations"]

[Text] Div Gen Victor Loizillon entered Saint-Cyr in 1940. In 1942 he was a second lieutenant with the 4th Assault Battalion during the Liberation Campaign and in Germany. Subsequently assigned to the 5th Moroccan Spahi Regiment and to the Saharan Group in Southern Tunisia, he became an instructor at the Military Academy in Strasbourg in 1954; he served with the 27th Dragoon Battalion in Algeria between 1956 and 1958 and, after returning again to Strasbourg, which he left in 1960, he attended the 74th class at the War College. After serving as CO of the 1st Cuirassier Regiment at Saint-Wendel from 1956 [sic] until 1968, Colonel Loizillon became chief of staff of the 8th Division at Compiègne for 2 years; after that he became head of the "general staff" and "general studies" bureau of DPMAT [Military-Technical Assistance Directorate], before becoming chief of "logistics organization" at the EMA [Army General Staff]. France's armed forces have for several years been committed to "foreign operations" to the benefit of countries that requested French aid and in an effort to resolve crises that were capable of threatening their security and that of French nationals living on their territory. These operations, which involved various types and variable periods of time, involved limited manpower and equipment. They were carried out in Africa and the Middle East. The media proved to be very attentive to this type of activity which literature itself sometimes picked up as subject matter without delay or reluctance. This ability to grasp current affairs in terms of real time and under all circumstances however does not rule out certain gaps in

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the information process because one cannot always know and keep up with such undertakings from the planning stage onward.

In the armed forces, these operations were not necessarily interpreted in the proper context, except of course outside a small group of their protagonists. Other operations--less talked about because they were less spectacular--remain relatively unknown.

It was therefore desirable for the magazine ARMEES D'AUJOURD'HUI to devote one of its reports to the most heavily covered military operations which however had not been completely reported on.

Carrying Out Government Decisions in the Field

In order properly to understand the ultimate purpose of France's foreign operations and the general context within which they were conducted, we must refer to the preamble of the law approving the military program for 1977-1982. This law spells out the essential missions assigned to the armed forces and the capabilities deriving from that.

Let us cite two extracts:

"Outside Europe, the armed forces must be capable of contributing to the security of countries to which France is tied by accords or by de facto solidarity, either economic or cultural";

"They must be capable of carrying out foreign operations in various forms, regardless of whether this involves participating in show-the-flag missions upon the request of international organizations or on request of countries involved, or whether this involves giving military and technical assistance to threatened states."

Foreign operations therefore must be considered within the general context of France's foreign policy. The role of the armed forces is to support and to carry out the decisions of the government in protecting French nationals or defending national interests, as well as with regard to the prevention and settlement of crises in which France might find itself involved, either directly, or by way of implementation of agreements signed with friendly countries.

Speed and Discretion--Absolute Requirements

These operations are arranged in two categories, depending upon their ultimate purposes.

Direct support operations are conducted by forces assembled upon request in order to respond to a crisis situation.

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Indirect support operations are carried out by sending small teams of operational or technical advisors or by furnishing equipment and rendering services.

But both of these two categories reveal common features:

They are most often urgent and they are launched suddenly;

They have an accentuated political-military character;

They demand great discretion in their execution;

And, finally, they are limited-objective operations.

Launching a foreign operation is almost always the result of a crisis situation. The important thing is to respond to the urgent demand of a friendly country that is threatened or to meet an immediate need. For example, we only had a few days to assemble and dispatch the peace-keeping detachment to Lebanon. And the time frame for launching the Kolwezi operation involved only a matter of hours.

Nobody can fail to note the political-military character of these operations. The impact on public opinion and the international resentment which can be triggered by an incident, even on a modest level, are often way out of proportion to the ultimate purpose of the operation or the volume of resources involved. Under these conditions, especially in the case of direct support, decisions must generally be passed to the highest government authority, both with regard to the dispatch of units and with respect to their initial commitment and the conquest of operations. In this context, the concern for effectiveness and efficiency on the part of those who will carry out the mission in the field must be constantly guided by the political effect to be produced and numerous decisions must be centralized on the armed forces general staff [joint staff] echelon.

All of this means that we must demand perfect discretion on the part of those who will carry out the operation in the field. This can be achieved only by strictly limiting the number of those initiated into the operation. This restriction is often difficult to reconcile with the command's desire to give the armed forces complete and objective information but it is indispensable to the success of diplomatic maneuvers which the commitment of forces are supposed to prepare the way for.

These operations finally are limited in nature because they involve only relatively modest manpower. The peace-keeping detachment in Lebanon never exceeded 1,300 men; the Kolwezi operation was carried out by 750 men; the total personnel strength of the French forces in Chad is on the order of 1,900. Military assistance or cooperation officer detachments rarely exceed several scores of officers or NCOs.

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Continuing Improvement

Many lessons were learned from these various types of operations. We will describe four of them here.

The first dealt with the general organization of forces and their operational availability. While France's foreign operational capability essentially rests on the existence of major units more specifically oriented toward this type of operation and kept in a state of readiness so that they may go into action rapidly, it also depends on the aptitude of the other components of the armed forces to furnish the teams necessary for their reinforcement in case of need. This is not a matter of drawing at random upon the normal potential of other formations, nor does this involve providing specialized training for all forces in this type of operation. This is simply a matter of, in advance, constituting, in the three services, certain elementary cells or detachments that have the required capabilities and availability. An effort is in progress along these lines. It should make it possible considerably to improve our capabilities.

The second one deals with the need for having very modern and particularly suitable equipment available for the units that are committed.

The third one relates to transportation. These operations as a matter of fact require sufficient transport capacity in order to move and support the strike elements. Various improvements have been envisaged. They should take shape rapidly.

The fourth lesson learned finally deals with communication. The centralized conduct of operations implies very good long-distance communications. In this field, improvements are also necessary. They will see the light of day in the near future.

This article briefly presented the major features and the principal lessons learned from foreign operations conducted over the past several years.

The successes registered bear witness to the training level and the cohesion of the units committed; but they also result from the high degree of operational availability of all of our forces and their ability to meet all imaginable situations.

Our foreign operations capabilities must be constantly improved. Everybody must be aware of that. This is the purpose of this report which, after having described a specific foreign operation in the form of the Kolwezi mission, will describe the capabilities of each of the services and of the Medical Corps in this field.

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General Victor Loizillon

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COUNTRY SECTION

FRANCE

PARATROOP DIVISION'S CAPABILITIES REVIEWED

Paris ARMEES D'AUJOURD'HUI in French Mar 79 pp 48-49

[Article by group of 11th Airborne Division officers: "The Fighting Men of the Sky--The 11th Airborne Division"]

[Text] You told me to march and to be ready for joy and suffering (excerpt from prayer by Capt Pierre Bourgin).

It has been 23 years now since the reappearance of airborne division organizational structures in the ground forces--23 years during which the idea of the major paratrooper unit has grown stronger. The 11th and 25th airborne divisions, organized in 1956, yielded to the 11th Light Strike Division in 1962. It became the 11th Division in 1963, organized in three brigades, (two parachute and one amphibious) in 1966; after that, the 11th Division became the 11th Airborne Division in 1971 and then the 11th Airborne Division and the 44th Military Territorial Division in 1977. The constant development of its organizational structure turned this major unit into a tool that was ever better adapted to the fluctuating requirements of national defense. Recent events last year specifically brought out the aptitude of the 11th DP [Airborne Division] to respond "all present and accounted for" when it came to displaying the twin capability of a major unit in solving territorial and operational problems.

The 11th DP in 1979 retained undeniable specificity, rendering exemplary multipurpose service thanks to an original setup, in coping with real situations out in the field.

Undeniable Specificity

It rests above all on the utilization of the third dimension.

The 11th DP is designed to operate through the third dimension. Its units as a matter of fact have a special aptitude for using helicopters but above all aircraft permitting paradrops, as well as air transport and, in particular, assault air transport.

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This attitude is the result of specific technical training, unique and permanent cooperation with the Air Force and ALAT [Light Ground Forces Aviation], down to the lowest level. The division's equipment gives it rapid and tremendous strike capabilities with great range in support of operations whose initial phase implies the element of surprise.

But the specificity of the 11th DP also involves the following.

Nature of Its Recruitment

Made up of volunteer draftees and regular personnel, its units are made up of motivated personnel, diverse in terms of their geographic origin due to nationwide recruiting but nevertheless welded together by the practice of parachuting.

The young paratrooper of 1979 gladly listens to his elders and in the units finds everyday brotherhood through teamwork and in return contributes remarkable readiness.

Its Structures

This major unit is unique in its kind by virtue of its volume and the existence of command organizations capable of interconnecting the means of reconnaissance for support and assistance, normally found within organic divisional elements.

The essential originality of the 11th DP is tied to the fact that it managed to place this undeniable specificity in the service of the kind of multipurpose capability desired by the High Command.

Exemplary Multipurpose Capability

The 11th DP is a multipurpose unit by virtue of the diversity of its forms of commitment which range from action by just a few men, in missions requiring the use of special techniques, all the way to the commitment of a regiment, a brigade, or even the entire division, in an AT operation, for example.

Regarding foreign operations, the 11th DP is capable of:

Either furnishing elements which, for a variable period of time, will boost the forces normally stationed overseas or provide for their periodic relief in case of need;

Or operating with all or a portion of its resources in all territories under French sovereignty, in foreign countries tied to France by defense agreements or in any other foreign theater of operations. In this connection, the 11th DP operates within the framework of interservice foreign operations forces.

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In the European theater, the airborne division is in reserve and at the disposal of CEMA/CEMGA [Army Chief of Staff/Armed Forces Chief of Staff] who can completely or by element place it under the order:

Either of a territorial command (defense zone level),

Or a major operational command already existing or created as a function of the need.

In the first assumption, it is intended to participate in operations aimed at opposing (on national territory) any attempts at enemy penetration of maritime or land frontier or by air.

In the second assumption, its commitment may be visualized in the vicinity of or beyond the borders against an armored or mechanized adversary who might have a nuclear and chemical warfare capability.

In this context, the airborne division can be called upon to perform the following types of action:

Decentralized, in a particular zone, especially against rear areas,

AT action against enemy armored thrust;

"Commando" type action.

Regardless of the employment context, the commitment of this major unit is characterized by its instantaneousness. This capability for instantaneous commitment is carefully maintained by an alert system and is guaranteed by very great flexibility in the elementary structures. The fast expansion or regrouping of organic cells within structures adapted to meet the requirements of the moment gives the 11th DP the ability to master the most diverse situations.

Increased flexibility, in order to develop an even greater multipurpose capability, demands diversified and original training.

Original Training

This training effort is always attractive and is governed by the idea of diversity of geographic environment in which training preparatory of combat is given. Moving on, with a minimum of advance notice, from the familiar environment of the military post or camp, to ever new horizons overseas, the men are confronted with real-life situations such as they are unexpectedly encountered in the field and where the spirit of decision and innovation is the rule.

Certain standard situations are always revitalized and, without any break in continuity, they call for the application of such diversified techniques

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as AT combat, seizing keypoints or the abrupt destruction of entrenched enemy units. It is not rare for the young paratrooper, in the course of just one quarter, within very short time intervals to be moved from winter time cold at Munsingen to the stifling heat of an island in the Indian Ocean.

Next we look at the equipment involved. Concerning the use of aircraft, the major objective remains to drop paratroopers, within the assault echelon, under conditions of total darkness, on terrain that may present obstacles, and without the use of any marking equipment or guidance devices on the ground. But this may also involve putting assault elements down as close together as possible in terms of time and space. Then there is always the possibility of partial or total motorization by means of diversified and often unexpected resources. This furthermore involves the use of new, both known and unknown armaments, either issued or picked up along the way.

We also have certain support functions here which may involve organic aspects or reinforcements coming from support regiments for the brigade echelon. Under any assumption, air support remains an always possible eventuality in response to known requirements.

The techniques include the following:

Air drops from high altitudes without visibility;

Orientation and marking for the benefit of ALAT;

Getting across dry or wet terrain features;

Destruction of battlefield targets;

Search and acquisition as well as communication of intelligence information.

The original nature of this type of training, the pace and the diversity of activities create an environment and a lifestyle which guarantees high-quality military service.

The 11th DP is a specific, multipurpose, and well-trained outfit but nevertheless remains a group of human individuals in close harmony with their habitual way of life, although in keeping with regional realities.

Division in Contact With Territorial Realities

Stationed in the Southwest, the 11th DP wanted to be successful in blending the operational and territorial aspects.

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The privileged relations maintained with the local population in the Southwest were greatly facilitated by the hospitality of the inhabitants who warmly met the firmly established local military territorial organizations.

Warm Meeting

There are three passions which the troops share with the local population and which enabled the division to establish strong and lasting bonds of friendship.

The love of team sports, especially the "oval ball," managed to get the people from Pau, from Castre, and from Toulouse together with the paratroopers.

The inhabitants of the Southwest know that they can count on the division in case of any "bad trouble" and, in exchange, division personnel appreciate the quality of life offered by this part of the country.

By tradition passionately involved in everything dealing with aeronautics, the people of the Southwest are also looking with a sympathetic eye to those who are likewise called "the fighting men of the sky."

And then, why not finally mention this same joy of living, this same taste for exploit which is so often embellished and always told over and over again.

These points of agreement explain many of the harmonious contacts established with the university (and especially with the Political Studies Institute of Toulouse which runs the CERSA [Army Studies and Research Center]), as well as sporting circles and townships.

In this respect, on the occasion of its merger with the 44th Military Territorial Division, the 11th DP benefitted from the earlier gains made by the military territorial organizations.

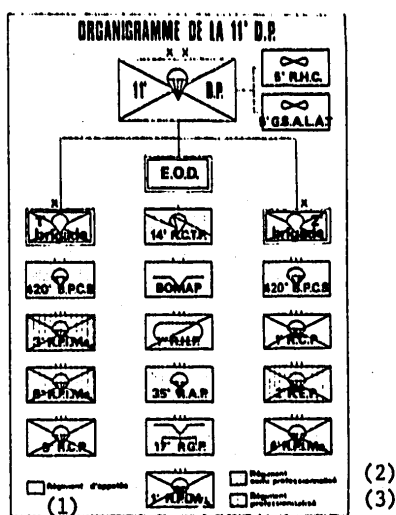
Reserve cadres, guided by those at the mobilization centers, naturally headed for the regiments and the establishment of the 11th Division will, as of 1980, concretely express the reality of the new mobilization plan.

The 11th/44th henceforth has a new face. Aware of becoming better adapted to requirements with each passing day, it knows that it is far from being the last man in line, in an outdated technique, and it also knows that it is a reserve element in the hands of the command which combinations of parachuting and air transport techniques make it possible to commit and shuttle back and forth under conditions of distance and speed offered neither by the truck nor by the helicopter.

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In that connection, it knows that it is irreplaceable and it tends to make itself known and appreciated, without any reluctance or false modesty, in the image of the man of action who feels good on his own soil.

FIGURE APPENDIX



11th DP Organizational Chart. Key: DP--airborne division; EOD--division operations staff [?]; RHC--assault helicopter regiment; GSALAT--light ground forces aviation group; BPCS--Colonial Parachute Battalion; RPlMa--Marine Parachute Regiment; RCP--Colonial Parachute Regiment; RAP--Airborne Artillery Regiment; REP--Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment; RGP--Airborne Engineer Regiment; 1--draftee regiment; 2--semi-regular regiment; 3--regular regiment; [other expansions unknown].

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COUNTRY SECTION

FRANCE

MARINE DIVISION'S CAPABILITIES OUTLINED

Paris ARMEES D'AUJOURD'HUI in French Mar 79 pp 50-51

[Article by Col Jean-Claude Laboria: "The 9th Marine Infantry Division-- A Division 'On Which the Sun Never Sets'"]

[Text] The features and deployment of the 9th DIMa [Marine Infantry Division] confirm its capability for foreign operations. As if it were necessary to point out that this is the reason for its existence! After all, were not the Marines designed, created, and maintained for this purpose! The 9th DIMa, by virtue of the origin of its men, drawn from all navy units, (with the exception of the 41st RI [Infantry Regiment], an equipment unit, and an Engineer company), by virtue of the motivation that inspires it, is a truly homogeneous major unit. (Col Jean-Claude Laboria, who graduated from Saint-Cyr in the "General Leclerc" class, served in Tonking, in Senegal, in Algeria, and in Cambodia. Assigned to the War College, he was chief of staff of the TFAI [French Territory of Afars and Issas] (Djibouti) from 1972 until 1974; he was a professor at the War College and then CO of the 3rd Marine Artillery Regiment (1975-1977). His current assignment has been chief of staff of the 9th DIMa since August 1977.)

Rich by virtue of the value of its men, it derives its capabilities from that to a great extent:

Cohesion resulting from the identity of aspiration of the personnel; duty divided between the home country and overseas;

Knowledge of the geographic and human environment of foreign territories and tactical lessons learned there;

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Ability to adjust to widely diverse, often confused situations, always upsetting for neophytes.

History and Record

Organized on 1 January 1976 as part of the ground forces reorganization program, the 9th DIMa is the only major unit in the army that was initially made up only of Marines.

A marine infantry division appeared, as such, for the first time in the French army in 1870. This was the legendary Blue Division which distinguished itself at Bazeilles. The three regiments of marine infantry in the present-day 9th DIMa belonged to the Blue Division. The name "Bazeilles" is now inscribed on the flags of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd RIMa [Marine Infantry Regiments].

During the 1914-1918 war, these three regiments, which at the beginning of the conflict were part of the 3rd Colonial Division, were often separated but were always in the thick of the fighting: on the Marne, in the Champagne, on the Somme, the Aisne, Verdun, and even Dobropolje, in Serbia. The RICM [Colonial Marine Infantry Regiment], the most-decorated regiment in France, distinguished itself from the Marne to the Argonne and captured Fort Douaumont. The 11th RAC [Colonial Artillery Regiment], now the 11th RAMa [Marine Artillery Regiment], participated in the battles of the Champagne and the Somme where it added two new battle honors to its standard.

In 1944 and 1945, the 9th DIC [Colonial Infantry Division], whose mantle the 9th DIMa inherited, participated in the Liberation and Germany campaigns. It included the RICM in its ranks.

On 1 January 1976, the 9th DIMa was created from the personnel of the 9th Brigade: 1st RIMa, 2nd RIMa, 3rd RIMa, RICM, 11th RAMa, 409th BCS [Command and Support Battalion], to which was added the 41st RI [Infantry Regiment], a regiment with a Breton tradition which distinguished itself during numerous campaigns in Europe and overseas and especially in North Africa, in the Crimea, and in France during the two world wars.

On 1 July 1977, the 59th Engineer Company joined the 9th DIMa. Finally, on 1 August of that year, the 409th BCS became the 9th RCS [Command and Support Regiment].

Cadre and Men

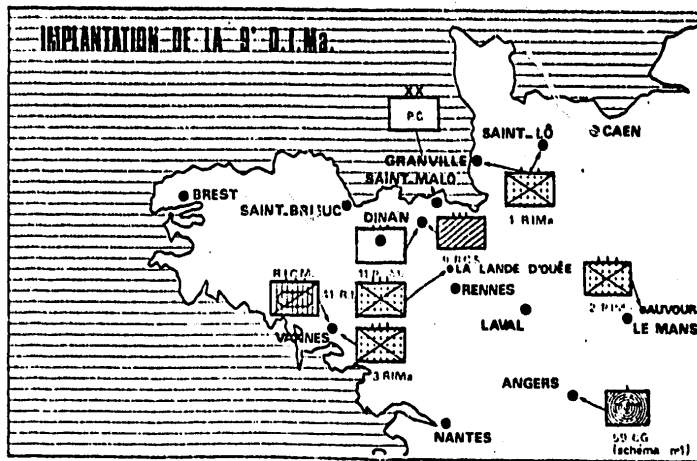
In personnel terms, the 9th DIMa has two main features:

Professionalism,

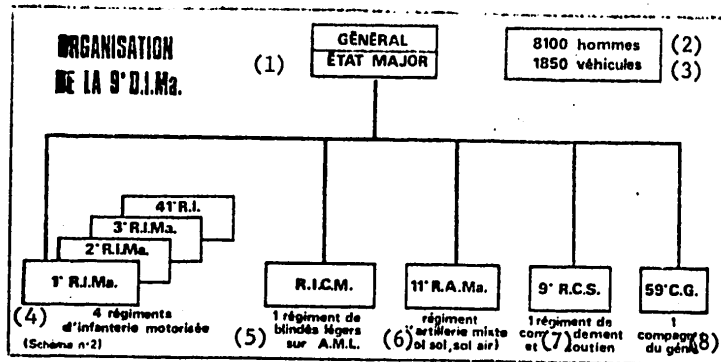
Overseas mission.

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Presently, two of its seven regiments are completely regular: the 3rd RIMA and the RICM; a third one will become so before the end of the year, that is, the 11th RAMa; the 9th RCS and the 2nd RIMA will, respectively, get 75 percent and 35 percent regulars. This means that, while a little more than half of the 6,500 lower-ranking NCOs and EM of the division are still draftees, extended-service personnel will be in the majority by the end of 1979. Those extended-service personnel signed up for an average of 3 years; they come from all parts of France. Their main motivation is to serve overseas.



9th DIMa Deployment. Key: PC--CP.



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9th DIMa Organizational Chart. Key: 1--general staff; 2--men; 3--vehicles; 4--four regiments of motorized infantry; 5--one regiment of AML light tanks; 6--mixed artillery regiment (ground-to-ground, ground-to-air); 7--one command and support regiment; 8--one Engineer company.

The desire for overseas service is really the common denominator for all personnel of the 9th DIMa, both cadre and EM. This is what motivates the choice of the young officer or the young NCO upon graduation from school when he requests duty with the Marines. Slots are hard to get there and recruitment is very good.

This desire for service is certainly related to the remarkable availability which we encounter among cadre personnel and extended-service personnel.

One might even say that in the 9th DIMa, this desire for service or at least this attraction for overseas duty can be found not only among the draftees but also among the "continentals" of the 41st RI who for the most part are volunteers who have signed up for overseas duty tours.

Perhaps the fact that more than 50 percent of the draftees are Bretons is in keeping with this desire for adventure and this quest for new horizons.

Characteristics

The deployment of the 9th DIMa in Brittany makes it possible to maintain close liaison and cohesion with Navy units, thus facilitating training in combined operations (diagram no 1).

Its organization (diagram no 2) is very conventional, apart from the mixed artillery regiment whose organization permits direct support for our regiments and AA defense, especially on landing beaches.

Missions

As in the case of any major unit, the defense of national territory is one of the missions of the 9th DIM. On that assumption, it would go into action only within the framework of a defense zone against any enemy forces that may have landed by sea, that may have parachuted or infiltrated (for example, in the case of a threat to the strategic sites in Brittany), or within the framework of a major operational command existing beforehand or established in line with circumstances.

But it is the foreign operations missions which give the 9th DIMa its specific nature and which require sometimes special and permanent attention.

Training

The diversity of action forms and possibly the isolation of units, the relatively slender support and logistics involved, as well as the hostility of the environment require particularly varied and sustained training.

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Preparation for these missions involves three aspects:

The kind of training given in any military formation;

Specific training for foreign operations;

And a knowledge of the environment.

The first one involves the following:

Physical aptitude,

Utilization of equipment,

Tactics connected with the particular arm,

Interservice cooperation,

Unit cohesion.

It is supplemented by the specific training aimed at foreign operations:

Assault embarkations and landings with their extensions on land;

Heliborne operations using the Puma helicopters of ALAT [light ground forces aviation], or helicopters of the Naval Air Arm (conducted from land or from shipboard);

Utilization of air support up to the elementary unit echelon;

Mastery of corresponding interservice procedures.

The sturdy nature and simplicity of equipment issued to the units give them good tactical capabilities in any theater. Along with modern, high-performance equipment (MILAN-LRAC, 89-mm FRF-1 rifles, SIG [expansion unknown] assault rifles, 20-mm AA guns, third-generation radio sets), we have older equipment in service although it is still effective and tough, such as the AML 60 and 90, the 105-MM2 howitzers, the 40 [mm] Bofors guns, and the 120 and 81 [mm] mortars.

Here are the common features of all of these equipment items: Simplicity of use, reliability under all kinds of climatic conditions, relative standardization of logistic support (essential qualities in operations conducted far from support bases).

Strategic mobility results from the capability of the units, men, and equipment, to be air-transported by military aircraft or long-range civilian airplanes. Besides, the proximity of French Navy bases makes it possibly considerably to reduce the embarkation times assuming that the units are to be moved by sea.

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Tactical mobility results, on the one hand, from the complete motorization of units and, on the other hand, from frequent training exercises involving heliborne, air-transport, and assault landing practice.

Finally, the knowledge of the physical, climatic, and human environment to a great extent determines the immediate operational yield to be gained from units which most often are thrown into battle the moment they arrive in the theater of operations.

Thanks to the lessons learned during their overseas duty tours, the cadre personnel of the Marines were familiarized with the environment, the places, and the difficulties encountered in the course of troop movements, ways to guard against climatic, food, parasite, and infectious disease dangers, as well as the psychology of the local inhabitants and the awkward mistakes to be avoided.

The wealth of this experience is maintained by the following:

Increase in the number of 2-3-week duty tours (Marchand tours) reserves for squad or platoon leaders (especially young officers coming out of the academy) in the departments, territories, and independent overseas countries;

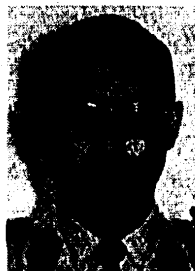
A four-six-month stay in Gabon and in New Caledonia for constituted units, so-called rotation companies;

Maneuvers involving sequences of movement by air or sea, where the operation is of a major nature as in Senegal, in Ivory Coast, in Gabon, in the Antilles, on la Reunion (Gallieni and Gala^xie) exercises).

The foreign operations in which the 9th DIMa has already participated (Djibouti in 1967, Chad in 1970, Lebanon and Chad in 1978) proved the capacity of this major unit to accomplish its missions with a very short adaptation time, with tactical readiness on the part of units and with high personnel morale, as well as a high unit training level; on top of that we have the moral and tactical cohesion and the adaptability of these units to widely different situations.

The very remarkable way in which the young cadres and the EM behaved "under fire" in 1978 are a credit to an intensive training program, displaying exemplary cohesion and a very high spirit, these being the main characteristics of this division. On the whole, the 9th DIMa appears as a major unit proud of its past record and its present, reliable and credible.

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Colonel Jean-Claude Laboria

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COUNTRY SECTION

FRANCE

CURRENT POLITICAL SCENE VIEWED, ANALYZED

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 20 Apr 79 pp 40, 42

[Article by Michel Gonod and Liliane Gallifet: "Mitterrand is Betting on New Elections"]

[Text] Do you know why Francois Mitterrand continues to be vague when he is asked about his possible candidacy of the presidential elections of 1981 and why he deems that this question is untimely? It is not because of a matter of tactics but simply because he believes that the next electoral date will not be that one. Indeed, he is convinced that Jacques Chirac will upset the government long before 1981 and that legislative elections will be held. It is therefore those elections that Mitterrand is viewing, feeling that he should get ready for them since they could occur within a few months, perhaps even this summer, after the European [parliamentary] elections. Furthermore Mitterrand believes--not without reason--that this time the left could win them. At Metz, at the PSF [French Socialist Party] congress, this was the only topic which hung in the air even though there was barely any mention of it in the speeches.

"Francois Mitterrand is well aware of it. He will wage the next presidential campaign on the basis of my positions," said Michel Rocard in an irritated voice. He was balancing himself nervously with one foot on the other. His necktie was inside out. One always has the impression that Rocard has just emerged from a rugby tackle. He did not come out on top at Metz but neither did he lose. He is the one who generated the only moment of excitement at that 3-day congress which was especially rich with oblique insinuations. That moment occurred when, turning toward the fearless first secretary [Mitterrand], Rocard told him from the rostrum:

"Dear Francois Mitterrand, I have said and reiterated and repeat here that you will be the first among us who will have to make the personal decision of whether or not you will be a candidate at the next presidential elections. If you will be, I shall not oppose you." The ovation which greeted this promise shows that Rocard had aimed right. Now he is moving from inside the party to promote his ideas, his terminology. It is clear to

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Rocard that Mitterrand cannot do anything but approve his economic positions little by little. The synthesis which could not be reached at Metz has every chance of being realized by 1981. The lyrics are those of Michel Rocard while the music is by Francois Mitterrand. The other highlight of the PSF congress occurred in the wings when, on the second day, feeling that he would not chalk up an absolute majority, Mitterrand went into a huddle with Pierre Mauroy in a small room behind the rostrum. Mitterrand wished one final time to convince the mayor of Lille to join him and to leave Rocard alone in the minority, that is, in the opposition. But it was too late. While Mitterrand had gone to eat sweetbreads in a neighboring inn Mauroy and Rocard had reached an agreement: Everyone or no one. As a follower of Rocard explained it, "Mitterrand was wrong in considering Mauroy to be a fool. Mauroy is merely a person who cannot make up his mind but once he has made a decision he sticks by it." Mitterrand's representation was thus fruitless. Mauroy prefers to be someone in the minority than nobody at all in the new smaller majority controlled by Mitterrand. CERES (Center for (Socialist) Studies, Research, and Education) will perhaps make an agreement with Mitterrand after the European elections, but that is unimportant. Jean-Pierre Chevenement (head of CERES) had negotiated his adherence, but he was too demanding. Chevenement asked that the red carpet be unrolled under his feet whereas Mitterrand had only opened the back door to Chevenement. For the first secretary of the PSF, even if he did not dominate the party congress as he had anticipated, even if he had to suffer some booing, even if his authority proved to be blemished, still continues to behave as a noble lord granting his favors and distributing his criticisms. Around him "his court" was being renovated. Some stars faded while others are shining with a new sparkle. The likes of Mermaz, Fillioud, Hernu, who used to be listened to previously, have now been replaced by men like Quiles, Fabius, and Jospin. But it is still the end of an era, that of Francois Mitterrand who ruled the roost and was sure of himself. On the eve of the PSF congress Pierre Mauroy predicted: "If we fail to achieve a synthesis, Mitterrand will not be a candidate in 1981." The synthesis did not occur, but this half setback does not seem to have shaken the Socialist Party leader. Like everyone else, Mitterrand will see things more clearly following the European elections of June 1979.

At these elections three heads of state are "presidential" material (Jacques Chirac, Georges Marchais, and Francois Mitterrand) and all three will have the same goal: To get ahead of the UDF (French Democratic Union), for how can one imagine that the one who may be defeated by Simone Veil can beat Valery Giscard d'Estaing?

According to the President, the Prime Minister, and the UDF, "Chirac Is Bluffing"

"Jacques Chirac is an impostor." It is an RPR (Rally for the Republic) minister who said this. He wished to be anonymous. He feels indeed that

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he does not have the right to make a splash. He deplores it but concedes it in order not to envenom the climate which holds sway among the majority and not to embarrass [Prime Minister] Raymond Barre. "It is hard," he admitted, "having to take blows without being able to return them." Like some of his 10 [sic] colleagues in the Cabinet who are members of the RPR (Boulin, Bourges, Peyrefitte, Galley, Papon, Le Theule, Mourrot, Plantier, Limouzy, Becam and Legendre), this minister is also fretting. He is aware of the fact that Chirac is playing with their nerves. "He exercises permanent blackmail on political life. He hopes that a certain number of individuals will lose their head, that is, will retort to his criticisms."

The RPR ministers participated at several meetings last week at the home of Jacques Chaban-Delmas. There were four meetings in 48 hours. Olivier Guichard and Robert Poujade attended as did Roger Frey, chairman of the Constitutional Council. The agenda of these meetings was simple: How to check the "worst case policy" practiced by Chirac and how to bring out the fact that the mayor of Paris [Chirac] is usurping the Gaullist affiliation. Synthesis of the opinions expressed was difficult to realize. Their unanimity bore only on a single point: Chirac is lying, Chirac is bluffing. "He is lying," one of the 11 interested persons said, "when he asserts that one Gaullist voter out of four or five is definitively lost to Giscard d'Estaing. Chirac says that because he wants it to happen. But he is not sure of it. In truth, 20 percent of the RPR voters are ready to follow Chirac all the way to hell, but these do not deserve the description of Gaullists since they are Chirac followers." The RPR ministers and the bosses of Gaullism detached from the RPR are also convinced that Chirac will be unable to wait till 1981 to change the situation. He will thus continue to prepare the ground so that the French may turn away from Valery Giscard d'Estaing and the government. "Every day," said a minister, "we are on the eve of a motion of censure." That is what Robert Boulin calls the policy of "brinkmanship." In the course of its long asides, the RPR Council of Ministers mentioned the possibility of a Gaullist slate at the European elections made up of genuine "colleagues" minus decorations. They proposed the designation of some "Companions of the Liberation." But this plan aimed at going and hunting on Chirac's electoral terrain was abandoned. It was not realistic. In addition, as one of those who had thought about it said, "Barre would have looked silly if 11 members of his government had decided to support a slate other than the one which he will defend himself...."

Finally, the Gaullist ministers agreed to sign a joint declaration in which they took care not to have the appearance of provoking Chirac. Robert Galley epitomized this declaration by mentioning the film of the young moviemaker Patrick Schulmann whose advertisement depicts a couple in a bed. Making a parody of its title the Minister of Cooperation explained: "What we wished to say is simply: 'And France, what a mess!'"

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At the Elysee [presidential] Palace it is also thought that Jacques Chirac is bluffing. "He won't move before 1981," the President's advisers maintain. To be sure, Chirac's tactic consists in weakening Giscard d'Estaing so that he may no longer be in a position to be re-elected president, but Chirac does not have the means of his ambitions." According to this analysis which the head of state endorses, Chirac does not control the 43 deputies who are indispensable to pass a motion of censure or not to approve a vote of confidence for the government if the latter should so request. Accordingly, his threats are only dares, fantasies slated to dramatize the situation. There is such a strong conviction of this at the Elysee and at Matignon [Prime Minister's office] that after the appearance of Chirac at "Cartes sur table" on 2 April 1979 the possibility of requesting the National Assembly for a vote of confidence in the government was seriously discussed. In favor of it: Chirac is reportedly against the wall. He would have to give in since he has just repeated publicly that he does not wish to provoke a crisis. That would keep him quiet for some time. Against it: The President should not give the impression that he is joining Chirac's game. Now, the question of confidence would signify that he accepts the challenge. The initiative would assume the appearance of a provocation. Raymond Barre, on ascending the speaker's rostrum in the National Assembly, would only have one word to say on looking at the RPR benches: "Show me!"

At the UDR, Michel Pinton, Andre Diligent, and Jean Lecanuet do not doubt for a second that Chirac will be a candidate in the next presidential elections. But they do not think that Chirac has the ability to beat the outgoing President in the first round of the balloting. There remains the runoff: Would Chirac calmly give Giscard d'Estaing the cold shoulder, proving the correctness of his projections and giving himself the means to impose himself as head of the [new] opposition? Jean Lecanuet, who is highly familiar with the Gaullists since he ran against them in 1965, explained: "Gaullism has always been determinant when it occupied the presidency and a challenger at all cost when it was deprived of the presidency." Lecanuet envisioned the scenario even further: "If we, the men of the center left, tried to soften the policy of the Socialists in office and to separate them from the communists, even to rebuild a majority with the PSF, Chirac would long for a return of the Fourth Republic. He would then be condemned to behave like Gen Georges Boulanger." The UDF's conclusion is that it is necessary to nip in the bud this plan which can ruin France. Should the European elections give 8 to 10 points more to the UDF than to the RPR, that is, about 3 million votes, this would be an outcome susceptible to discourage Chirac and especially to detach from him a certain number of Gaullist deputies still sensitive to the spirit of camaraderie. As for 1981, it would be easy to sustain that Valery Giscard d'Estaing would alone be capable of checking the victory of a temporarily reconciled left. Chirac would then have to choose his side and his future.

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COUNTRY SECTION

FRANCE

POLITICAL SITUATION SEEN CONFUSED, HAZARDOUS

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 20 Apr 79 pp 41-42

[Article by Arthur Conte: "And What If the President Were Stronger Than 'They' Think?"]

[Text] Rarely in history will the French political landscape have offered such an indestructible hodge-podge as it does today: A real abstract painting with colors and lines running in all directions.

Rarely will each party in itself have even enhanced such confusion and such contradictions. The games of political parties under the Third and Fourth Republics were themselves trivial compared to the bewildering spectacle which they offer us at present. Gen Charles de Gaulle must be chuckling heartily if he is contemplating them from his perch in eternity.

As anticipated, incidentally, the grand scene of the PSF [French Socialist Party] congress in Metz will have changed nothing in this long play of the absurd. It is too much to be feared that Francois Mitterrand, as in these very last few years, will continue to isolate himself in a dead-end tactic which dooms him to turn perpetually in circles around himself, even with dizzying virtuosity.

Yet the Socialist Party leader is one of the rare protagonists who could open up the system and clarify the episodes. New elements of analysis have even been able to contribute to this hope. Indeed, on one hand the Socialist Party has now all the less right to shun the most onerous governmental responsibilities as the international situation is getting constantly worse: France, with the whole of free Europe, is very specifically besieged, directly threatened in its active endeavors. The day is unquestionably coming when the Socialists will be unable to refuse a very first place in the rally of national energies and in a grandiose policy of public welfare. Furthermore, in his latest grand interview granted to L'HUMANITE, Georges Marchais did not conceal the fact that the Socialists should not always count on the automatic support of the communist voters in the run-off: To whoever knows how to read a Marxist-Leninist dialectician, this was tantamount to announcing that the Socialist Party would probably not

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have the benefit of the communist votes in the runoff at the presidential elections of 1981. This naturally changes completely all prospects and projections. For it is too obvious that without the communist votes Francois Mitterrand's chances would be nil in the face of Valery Giscard d'Estaing even if the latter should lose a few regiments to the Gaullists. Accordingly, from both the most mediocre electoral viewpoint and that of the highest historical analysis, a certain hope, even weak, could lately be evident on seeing the first secretary of the PSF proceed with an extensive revamping of his strategy. After all, on the other side of the Rhine, did the German Social Democrats not provide him with the clearest of examples by becoming allied in succession with the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party in order to rule?

But it is necessary to find that it is the reverse hypothesis that must be made, at least in the next few months: Mitterrand will continue to bet on a government crisis and a general dramatization of national life which, in his mind, must finally point to him as the only savior. So much the worse if it is necessary to continue to bet at the same time on a communist alliance whose sincerity can be gauged. Distinctly, Mitterrand must think that the government crisis will be so violent that the eddies will even crack the dikes which the PCF [French Communist Party] is systematically raising against social democracy.

Obviously, Jacques Chirac is proving a great comfort to Mitterrand in such calculations. The leader of the RPR [Rally for the Republic], to better serve his own chances of one day being the great rallier of national forces, had himself essentially the choice between two alternatives: That of patience and that of challenge. The first alternative consisted in avoiding all disruptions, in wisely placing himself in reserve for the country, in imposing himself as an exemplary mayor of Paris, in continuing to be a devoted deputy from Correze, and in loyally helping the government to control all jolts that could dangerously threaten France.

The second alternative was the strategy of a battering ram constantly dealing out accelerated and more onerous counterblows: To maintain the Socialists in their ghetto; to check the government of Valery Giscard d'Estaing on all subjects to the nth degree; to strive to weaken it so as to render it less than credible; to assert Gaullism as the only way to public welfare; to voluntarily and articulately increase the most violent attacks to better clear the slate with the ultimate goal of getting himself recognized at the end of a long road of despair as the only possible savior. Obviously Jacques Chirac, little given to Buddhist abnegations incidentally, chose the alternative of challenge. From that point, Francois Mitterrand already fatally figures out the odds that a government crisis with the dissolution of the National Assembly and a direct blow at the French President could occur very soon, perhaps even before

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1981. Mitterrand can also figure, at the risk of being ingenuous once more, that in the runoff at the presidential elections the communists would vote for him against Giscard d'Estaing, even despite Georges Marchais. Mitterrand can even go to the point of figuring that Giscard d'Estaing would be unable for long to retain his position with too disjointed a majority. At any rate, it will not be the first time that Mitterrand has made a mistake about an adversary or a regime. Accordingly, just as obviously, he is more tempted himself in turn to resort to forcing against the President. The forcing of Chirac automatically involves the forcing of Mitterrand. Ineluctably, as should have been anticipated at RPR headquarters, Chirac is providing an un hoped-for opportunity to Mitterrand to retrieve faith in his own national destiny against Giscard.

The fact nevertheless also remains with similar evidence that the very personality of Francois Mitterrand is little given by nature to accommodation of such alternatives as the sharing of power. This was recently evident from the harsh manner in which he treated or caused the treatment of a powerful rival in his party. Mitterrand is as little inclined to share national power with Valery Giscard d'Estaing as Socialist Party power with Michel Rocard.

It should never be forgotten that there is much that is Gaullist in this anti-Gaullist individual. Mitterrand pursues brilliantly and almost voluptuously what is a great personal adventure. He would have too much a feeling of giving up too much of himself if one day he had to reach an agreement with Giscard d'Estaing. He has apparently established himself by character as much as by system in the rigidity of intransigence.

He is also too powerfully spellbound by what is pathetic. He likes drama for drama's sake. Not only is he one of those who never makes concessions, but he is also among those who never have fun. He always plays Wagner and never Rossini. He rejects dialog with those seeking detente because he denies the existence or abhors relaxation. In his secret and intense manner in truth Mitterrand is no less given than Chirac to the passion of extreme challenges.

With equal passion he also likes to be right and to have his way. He is constantly striving to uphold the slightest point of honor. He does not concede his logic either. Twenty years ago Mitterrand proclaimed once and for all that the welfare of the French people passed through the unity of the left and that the unity of the leftist parties had to have priority. He continues to hold that position in unruffled manner. No matter that Georges Marchais should hurl the worst abuse and worst indignities at Mitterrand, he will fanatically hang on to his line even though it may cost him his most profound dignity. We shall never hear Mitterrand admit that he could have been wrong. He sticks to his plan with the same rigor as to a dogma.

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Finally, Mitterrand keeps such faith in his destiny that he continues to persuade himself of always being the most clever. It is not a coincidence if the superbly Machiavellian history of Lawrence the Magnificent fascinates Mitterrand. Oh, how exhilarating to know how to serve oneself deliciously while serving the government and the people with no holds barred. He distinctly lives this exhilaration of being the greatest virtuoso. However, he cannot demonstrate such skill, after too many setbacks, unless, at the conclusion of his struggles, he should triumph over every one at the same time, supreme joy--over Giscard d'Estaing and the Gaullists and the communists and over his own doubts which torture him. One should not only recognize that this great implacable and mysterious stag has no equivalent in the history of the five French republics: perhaps, at the moment of the greatest revolution, a Louis de Saint-Just was simultaneously as troubled and as dogmatic as Mitterrand. It is also necessary to note that Mitterrand knows this. He is extremely lucid about his personality. His greatest anger would be not to be able to reward his immense talent with immense success. A true Machiavelli, vis-a-vis himself, does not have the right either to contradict himself, or to seem to be making a mistake, or to lose. Mitterrand is unquestionably so.

On the whole, then, for our projections about the next few years, we do not have after the PSF congress of Metz a Mitterrand different from the one before the congress. The climate has not changed because of it.

If the man would have shown himself to be pro-synthesis at the congress, miraculously playing the role of Socialist peacemaker, and if he had concluded an alliance with the Michel Rocard-Pierre Mauroy twosome and brought under his direct authority the near-totality of the Socialist Party, perhaps then we could have envisioned that, with such a large number of followers available, he could more effectively at the said hour frankly move in a new direction and free himself from communist sponsorship.

The fact that Mitterrand turned down any agreement with his "inferior" rivals is sufficient to indicate that he is indeed resolved to continue to be intransigent. After all, Michel Rocard did not emerge the loser from the contest. Far from it.

It was known for a long time that Rocard was stronger outside than inside the party. The PSF changed nothing as regards his significance. The deputy from Yvelines continues to be remarkably available for "the candidacy for the big job."

Besides, far from weakening him for the future, Rocard's pledge not to be a candidate against Mitterrand contrariwise strengthens the former. The reason, very simply, is that he thereby locks Mitterrand in his full and unique responsibility: After 5 significant setbacks in 1965, 1968, 1973,

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1974, and 1978, will Mitterrand be able to personally commit the party in a new disaster under his flag? After two defeats at the presidential elections in 1965 and 1974, can Mitterrand really expose himself and the party to a new serious setback? Mitterrand will have to give up on his own. By making such a pledge Rocard has not in any way disarmed himself.

Very honorably thwarted when the votes were counted and having proven that the first secretary of the PSF can no longer do everything that he wishes, Rocard asserted his personality and his assets even better. In the last analysis Rocard has even won a lot in not allowing himself to be intimidated by the thunderbolts of Jupiter. No matter that he plays too hard at being a sparkling figure, here he was, even more clearly than formerly, propelled to the forefront of the future, this frail fellow with the rapid ability to think, his face luminous, his eye quick and who, in addition, has an enormous human presence on small television screens. Undeniably, such personality is made for executive and even creative roles. He either charms or exasperates. And he does not have his equal in the party to find formulas which click when they do not shock. We shall undoubtedly hear more speeches from this sparkling sprite.

This means that Mitterrand has not won completely either on that score: He now has to deal at least with Rocard as between equals.

This can obviously not occur without complicating the general confusion of the French political landscape even more.

And, after as before the PSF congress of Metz, which will literally have been a congress for nearly nothing, we have in truth no more than two factors which, besides problems, are constants: The communist party and the presidency.

The French Communist Party not in the slightest way modified its iron strategy. It has declared a war to the end on the Socialist Party. The entire apparatus is involved in it without respite. It matters little whether the Socialist Party gets broken more slowly than is anticipated. The buddies of Georges Marchais will not give up soon against the social democrats. There will be no truce before he reconquers the leading spot on the left for the PCF. All means will be good to that end. The Socialists have no illusions on that score.

As for the presidency, thanks to the Constitution, it maintains very strong authority no matter what one may say here or there. The presidential palace continues to represent, thank God, an incomparable element of stability. The institution is hanging on remarkably well. The waves of the furies and maledictions are vainly attacking the wall. The wall continues to be invincibly solid. The French presidents are not from this point of view done with giving big thanks to Charles de Gaulle. But

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it happens that the very personality of Valery Giscard d'Estaing also contributes to it, at least for four reasons. The first is that deep down he is a man of resolve: His adversaries who consider him as a lightweight and as undecided are greatly mistaken. The second reason is that Giscard d'Estaing possesses to an obvious degree that indispensable quality of any statesman: Cool-headedness. The third reason is that he is too obviously right when he says and repeats that, especially in dramatic international circumstances, it would be too dangerous to keep the Socialists outside of their responsibilities of office for too long. In this respect Giscard d'Estaing is the only one to assert himself as the greatest rallier whom nothing discourages. The fourth reason is provided by his adversaries themselves: The more they challenge the President, the more they force him, in order to better impose his authority in the short term to demand a second term. The more they discuss his deep-seated legitimacy or soundness, the more he feels the obligation of remaining energetically at his post. If Valery Giscard d'Estaing had not yet envisioned running in 1981, it is now, under the blows that are being dealt to him, that he may make that decision. Far from dispiriting him or harming him, precisely because he is not a weakling, the blows leveled at him cannot help but harden his armor. And that is exactly what is happening.

No, for the time being the French political scene is not brilliant in general. There are too many reasons for being turned off. Clearer discussions would be desirable, more sincere commitments, more apparent strategies. Too much fog is hanging over all the horizons. But at least the presidency manages to hang on. After all, that is where the head is to be found. In passing, incidentally, one wonders even more how the error could be made of shortening the term of the head of state. The fact that it runs for 7 years is one of the major elements in the power of the presidency and the entire French balance. Let us hope that one will not allow such a fundamental question to be treated with too much romanticism and unconstraint. Is it not too obvious that, in the present state of France and the world, nothing but nothing should be done that can weaken the French presidency in any respect as such?

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COUNTRY SECTION

FRANCE

ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF NORMANDY EPIZOOTY VIEWED

Paris LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR in French 23 Apr 79 pp 74-75

[Article by Fabien Gruhier]

[Text] In the good old days, "the fever" was never a tragedy. It was endemic anyway, and raged all the time. People were used to it. Every peasant knew its symptoms -- the dull, glittering eyes, the lassitude, the refusal to graze. They forced the animal to eat mistletoe. They washed the stable with potassium chloride. They put a goat in the stable, which helped, it seemed, to ward off evil spells and dissipate the foot-and-mouth miasmas -- the diabolical disease that strikes cloven-hoofed animals specifically. Diabolical, but not fatal: "If you leave it alone, the animal most often recovers," confirms a veterinarian, "although it remains a terrible source of virus for years."

Formerly, they put up with sick cows, whose weight stopped growing and which gave no more milk. "We got along," says a retired farmer. "Now, it's output. They are pushing. Everything is calculated very closely. With the loans to repay and the acrobatic margins, the slightest deficit becomes fatal. On top of that, there are the health regulations for export. A sick animal can no longer be tolerated. And then, the cattle selected for output are much more vulnerable, less resistant to disease. Finally, in stables with 200 head, epidemics propagate very fast. I had eight cows."

That is why the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic that burst upon Lower Normandy at the end of March is reaching the dimensions of an economic catastrophe for all of Bessin. That is why draconian measures have been decreed: slaughtering of all the cloven-hoofed animals on any farm where a single case has been detected, and prohibition of fairs, markets, sports events, balls, and gatherings of all kinds. "Except for Mass: they didn't dare," observes the cafe owner in Saint Germain du Pert, the starting point of the epidemic -- "or rather the epizooty, as they say since they have been studying the language."

"There is no alternative," an expert from the Ministry of Agriculture asserts. "The foot-and-mouth disease virus is terribly contagious." A total of 2,000 cattle -- most of them healthy -- and nearly 1,000 pigs, sheep or goats have gone this way. Still nothing in comparison with the 1974 epizooty in Brittany, where 6,000 cattle were slaughtered and Mass was prohibited. But, by sacrificing

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some cattle quickly and vaccinating with all their might, they wanted precisely to avoid the repetition of such a tragedy. They have almost succeeded in containing the disaster: everything leads them to believe that the scourge has been jugulated, and that the principal restrictions will be lifted by the end of the month in the forbidden triangle -- Saint Lo, Bayeux, and Isigny.

People wonder about the origin of the virus -- an "O-type virus," which had not been seen in France for 25 years. Where did it come from? "If there is anyone who knows, he will keep his mouth shut," explodes a farmer whose cattle have all been slaughtered. "But it would be enough for a guy to go visit some farms in Morocco." After the unexplainable landing of the "O-type" virus in Saint Germain du Pert, its itinerary has been partly traced: two of the farms were infected by the Sunday visit of a relative -- who was himself a farmer affected by the fever, but not knowing it as yet -- who carried the virus on the soles of his shoes. "Don't talk too much about it! the poor man tried to commit suicide when he found out that he had brought the disease," a charitable neighbor whispers about this unfortunate man.

La Cambe. A little town very close to Saint Germain du Pert on Route 13, which was the line of the epizooty. A large farm, set aside: Charles Deprez's farm. Dead silence. Empty stalls. The 106 young bulls were slaughtered at the end of March. In the courtyard, a big pile of fodder wastes away somehow or other, at the mercy of the intermittent downpours. Still overwhelmed by this blow of fate, Charles Desprez refuses to say anything at all. As union representative of the Bessin farmers, he has already expressed his thoughts. Not to complain, but on the contrary to condemn the secret -- and strictly forbidden -- transportation of cattle across the contaminated areas. "We don't know all the hocus-pocus. Everyone has his schemes," says a resident of La Cambe. "Yes, we've seen cattle-cars said to be full of hay. Actually, there were a few bales of hay in front of the windows. With the jolts, you saw the horns and the eyes. The cops even stopped a trailer full of pigs. They had trouble opening the door: 'Camp trailer. Private home. Do you have a warrant?' Hah! But the driver couldn't prevent his pigs from grunting."

"The people who do that are dirty. In order to sell a few animals, they take the risk of messing up all of Normandy. They aren't farmers. Traffickers, cheats." In order to prevent this transportation, the farmers, who think that the police forces are not big enough, have organized themselves. In Saint Jean de Daye, for example, they patrolled the empty roads every night, examining the suspect vehicles.

Penalty Percentage

Why would one want at all costs to move cattle by night? There we hit on one of the most tragic consequences of the disease. The breeders whose animals went to the slaughterhouse will come out all right: 21 of them have already shared nearly 7 million francs as a down payment on the damages provided for by the Ministry of Agriculture. A speed record, considering the endless delays the administration is accustomed to when it has something to pay out! "Put yourself in the place of these hard-hit farmers," they say at headquarters

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in Caen. "The trauma is so great that we had to make a gesture fast." After repaying the working capital for the lost work, they are now studying indemnification for the loss of income during the reconstitution of the livestock, which will require at least 6 months. And they split hairs over the penalty percentage that should be levied on the breeders -- at least a third of the victims -- whose slaughtered animals were not at all in order, from the health point of view. "Obviously, if all the animals more than 6 months old had been vaccinated, as the law requires, there would have been no epizooty," admits a veterinary service authority. "Besides, if the disease appeared here, it was no accident: Lower Normandy is known for its laxity in health matters." "And let's not forget," adds a civil servant, "that 60,000 cattle will be slaughtered in the Channel department alone between now and 1981, in the name of the fight against tuberculosis and undulant fever. It's on the schedule. But the compensation paid for that slaughtering is much lower than what is being granted for the foot-and-mouth disease." Thus in some cases, the scourge could have taken on the appearance of manna from heaven.

But there are all the others, those on whose farms no dull, glittering eye was discovered, and who "didn't understand" why the owners of unvaccinated cattle were completely reimbursed. For they have been terribly penalized by the disease that appeared on the others' farms. It is impossible to move the animals. They have to stay where they are, in fields where there is often not a blade of grass left. What is the solution? To buy fodder at an exorbitant price. It is impossible to buy or sell a cow. Now, they were "just beginning to recover from the 1976 drought," and, at the end of March, they had just reached the time when they had to pay the rent.

Piglets for Christmas

The situation is especially difficult for the piglet producers, the breeders who sell their young animals to the fatteners. In our times, breeding is industrialized and specialized, the confluent of many commercial flows and currents that are completely disconnected by legal regulations. The milk producer is not equipped to make meat. The first breeder is not equipped to fatten the nurslings that are left on his hands. Whence the temptation to make a few secret, nocturnal round trips, to which some people have succumbed.

"The industrial breeders have not been supplied with 8-day calves. The same for the piglets which have had to be sent directly to the slaughterhouse -- in spite of the huge loss of income that that represents -- because it was forbidden to send them elsewhere. You can expect to find a surplus of frozen suckling pigs on the market at Christmas-time." It is forbidden to export local meat. The Germans and other clients will look for other suppliers. Large markets will be lost. Milk inspectors, artificial insemination experts, agricultural workers, drivers, etc. -- many professions will experience technical unemployment. To say nothing of the losses experienced by the fodder merchants, the organizers of public dances, the sports clubs, etc. Like a dog in a game of skittles, the "O-type virus" has wrecked everything in five or six counties. There is no reimbursement for all that. Besides, could you measure the damage? The Agricultural Bank has simply agreed to extend the due dates on

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certain loans. Cold comfort, and LE BESSIN LIBRE, a weekly newspaper published in Bayeux, simply fears that "the despair of the Bessin families will be as great as that of the Longwy families."

That's saying a lot, for Lower Normandy does not resemble Lorraine. Bad humor is not shown in the same way. There are no explosions, but subtle rearrangements. "A large number of local representatives fell into disrepute by demanding the end of systematic slaughtering on the contaminated farms, a form of low demagoguery showing contempt for the law," says a "well-informed" observer from Saint Lo. "And then the malcontents are in the process of creating a chapter of the FFA -- a reactionary, traditionalist, and especially rightist farmers union -- in Bessin." It is thus that by almost impenetrable logic, the "O-type virus," called foot-and-mouth disease, plays into the hands of the reactionaries.

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COUNTRY SECTION

ITALY

ENEL'S PROJECTED ELECTRICAL ENERGY DEMAND TO 1987

Milan L'EUROPEO in Italian 5 Apr 79 pp 28-31

[Article by Giuseppe Bonazzoli: "How Many Hours in the Dark"]

[Excerpts] The detailed answer to this emergency is contained in a still unpublished document which has already been approved by the [ENEL] Corporation's board of directors and forwarded for approval to CIPE (Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning) where after an exhaustive technical analysis plans are made for increasing the supply of electrical energy; this being the basic requirement for the industrial and economic development of the country. This concerns the following dossier: "ENEL [National Electric Power Agency] Programs, Electrical Energy Requirements and their Coverage: New Installations up to 1987" which consists of 195 pages and contains tables and graphs. This is a project which is undergoing unforeseen and worrisome delays in its realization.

According to the document: "In 1977, while the overall consumption of energy sagged by 1.2 percent, electrical energy consumption, even during a year of modest economic growth, rose by 6.7 percent and thus the rate of national consumption of electrical energy continued to rise going from 24.3 percent in 1973 to 27.4 percent in 1974 bringing the structure of Italian consumption closer to that of the more industrialized countries."

The ENEL document starts out with the expected requirements for the years ahead which are based on the 1977 data: 160.4 billion kilowatt hours showing an increased consumption of 6.7 percent with respect to the previous year and therefore it is expected that in 1980 the demand will be for 193 billion kilowatt hours with a set potential of 36.4 million kilowatt hours. In 1987 the demand ought to increase to 330 billion kilowatt hours with a set potential of 62.5 million kilowatt hours.

The importance of the productive development of ENEL is clearly indicated by the PEN (National Energy Program), approved by CIPE in December of 1977, on the basis of political and governmental guidelines which recommended a 4 percent increase in gross home production up to 1980 and then from 4 to 5 percent up to 1987. The ENEL program is based on the request for enormous investments

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as a direct result of these considerations: More than 23 thousand billion lire (calculated at the 1978 prices) for the construction 26 new hydro-electric power plants, 39 thermo-geoelectric and turbo-gas power plants, besides the 12 nuclear power plants, all of these to be built between 1979 and 1987. This is an outlay which would be subdivided as follows: 1,260 billions in 1979; 1,765 billions in 1980; 2,195 billions in 1981; 2,810 billions in 1982; 3,335 billions in 1983; 4,290 billions in 1984; 3,990 billions in 1985; 2,230 billions in 1986 and 930 billions in 1987.

There is already governmental and parliamentary approval for the nuclear option; however, there is considerable delay in getting the program underway due to the well-known bureaucratic and ecological polemics. Once constructed, tested and put into full operation the 12 nuclear power stations should produce 12,000 megawatts. However, in 10 years the requirement for electrical energy will be considerably higher. Hence the need for launching a "supplemental operational" program which on paper appears to be enormous--perhaps too much with respect to what is expected.

However, the ENEL dossier contains the warning: "If in the span of time covered by the program the requirement should end up being greater than the conceived estimations then it would be impossible to intervene with new installations for filling the resulting gap, because of the length of time required for bringing such installations into existence. Therefore, should this be the case, the consequences in the sector of production and civilian life of the entire country would be extremely grave." What ENEL actually says is this: If Industrial Italy should end up growing too rapidly with respect to the supply of energy the community would be forced to pay an extremely high price for the erroneous planning.

According to the calculations of the ENEL technicians what is needed by 1987 is something like 7,700 megawatts produced by nuclear type and standard installations which the document envisages in accordance with the following breakdown: 26 hydro-electric power stations, some of which will have to be built, while those already there would be readied for operation, and then 39 thermo-electric power stations. It also points to the necessity of building four thermal groups fueled by coal; however, notwithstanding the installation of costly scrubbing equipment, there is still the problem of polluting substances which the coal fueled power stations input into the atmosphere. The utilization of natural resources of energy is not being neglected. In fact one chapter of the dossier is dedicated to "integrating sources" and envisages research activities aimed at a more intensive and rational exploitation of natural steam jets, experiments and studies for the utilization of solar energy along with the announcement of the construction of a prototype solar power station at the foot of Muunt Etna in joint-ownership with the European Community. According to the ENEL technicians solar energy can contribute decisively to the heating of homes and factories; however, its maximum application for the production of electrical energy is still a far away solution. In fact, according to the document: "The average

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contribution of these integrating sources in covering the requirements is evidently very limited by economic and technical factors. Thus there is only one alternative: nuclear and/or standard thermo-electrical production."

That 1987 Schedule

At the conclusion of the lengthy analysis the ENEL document comes up with two hypotheses: The first of these is an optimistic one and besides the putting into operation the nuclear power stations which have already been approved it also envisages the opening of standard power stations. The other is more pessimistic and stems from the presupposition that by 1987 it will be possible to count only on standard power stations and if this is so there would be a serious energy shortage. It is for this reason that ENEL warns: "It is therefore necessary to face the possibility that in the event the economic development of the country should experience rates of growth conjectured on the basis of an auspicious development, then starting from 1984 we would be facing dangerous insufficiencies of electric power which could greatly affect this very development with easily conceivable consequences especially with regard to employment." This is an energy and economic blackout which the country cannot afford.

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COUNTRY SECTION

MALTA

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF SOVIET FLEET IN MEDITERRANEAN

Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA in Italian 31 Mar 79 p 6

[Article by Gianfranco Simone: "The Russian Fleet Expands in the Mediterranean as NATO Abandons the Bulwark of Malta."]

[Text] La Valletta--Libyan Colonel Muammar Qadhafi, heading a large delegation, arrived today at La Valletta to attend the ceremonies marking the end of military ties between Malta and the UK.

The sheer size of the Libyan delegation (totalling 800 people) reflects the growing importance of the bilateral relations. Up to now, Libya has been the only country which has promised economic and security guarantees to the extent requested [by Malta].

A historical cycle is about to be completed: after 180 years, the last contingent of British troops remaining in Malta, a company of commandos of the Royal Marines, will depart the island on Saturday. On the 26th, in fact, the 7-year treaty expired, a treaty which allowed the UK and thus NATO to lease air and naval bases on the rock upon which, in 1942, was dashed the Hitlerian dream of reaching the Nile and the Caucasus with the Afrika Korps.

When in 1973 the Maltese Prime Minister, Dom Mintoff, requested an increase of 10 percent in the annual fee (about 20 billion lire), half of which was to be shouldered by NATO (which was very much in favor of paying), London refused, fearing it would be financing its own eviction. In fact, Mintoff stated that the increase would be used to industrialize the island and thus render it independent from the necessity of renting bases to foreigners.

Perhaps it was to celebrate the event, and certainly as a warning to the Arab states following Carter's visit to Egypt, that a third of the Soviet Black Sea fleet this month has been galavanting about the Mediterranean with particular alacrity, pushing toward the Balearic Islands.

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A group consisting of the cruiser-aircraft carrier Minsk (the second specimen of the Kiev class) and two 10,000 ton missile cruisers, the Tashkent and the Petropavlosk, which are the most recent offspring of the Nikolayev (or Kara, in NATOese) class, however, have set sail for the Tyrrhenian Sea.

The other group, which steamed between Sardinia and the Balearic Islands, consisted of: the Kiev, an Isachenkov (or Kresta II) class missile cruiser, three destroyers, a Juliet class conventional submarine capable, however, of launching cruise missiles albeit only from the surface, the brand new amphibious attack ship Rogov (13,000 tons, speed 17 knots, carrying anti-aircraft missiles, cannons and machineguns, equipped with a landing platform for one or two helicopters and perhaps also a flooding basin for hovercraft type assault craft), in addition to around twenty support vessels.

Two of the destroyers were of the Kashin class, probably the improved version, displacing 4,700 tons, and the other a Krivak class unit of recent production, displacing 3,600 tons.

It appears that at least 9 other submarines, including 2 nuclear missile subs, have been picked up by sonar and by magnetic disturbance surveyors on board the 4 ships and the Brequet twin engine Atlantic which NATO has deployed near the Russian vessels.

Generally the latter exhibit such a high concentration of artillery, missiles, radar and electronic warfare apparatus that they make portions of Western navies seem like yachts, with the exception of the Italian frigates Lupo and the English Leanders, the hydrofoil Sparviero and the three French Tourville destroyer escorts.

Describing the Kiev cruiser-aircraft carriers alone: 43,000 tons fully loaded, speed at least 30 knots, 274 meters total length with an angled deck 189 meters long; the remaining 85 meters, basically the bow, is bristling with missiles: SS-N-14s, capable of delivering a couple of nuclear warheads on a submarine, if not capable of targeting it with an acoustic torpedo; SA-N-3s (Goblet) anti-aircraft missiles (range of 50 kilometers, thus capable of reaching an altitude of at least 25,000 meters), and SA-N-3s, also surface to air, but with a range of 10 kilometers, for point defense.

Still in the bow are a turret with two 76/60 cannons (range 14,000 meters, 60 rounds per minute), four 23mm machineguns in separate turrets, each with 6 rotating barrels (range: 2,500 meters, thus reaching an altitude of 1,500 meters, theoretically capable of between 4,000 and 6,000 rounds per minute), two 250mm antisubmarine rocket launchers with 12 barrels each, one for close-in defense. Aft there are twin Gaffer launchers, another 76/60 turret and 4 more 23mm machineguns; furthermore, the Kiev class vessels (soon to be three with the launching of the Komsomolek) also have two 5-tube (533mm) torpedo launchers and mine laying rails.

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The helicopter wing consists of 20 Kamov Ka-25 (Hormone), each equipped with two automatic homing torpedoes, depth charges (with nuclear option), and "fire and forget" missiles (meaning that they do not have to be guided, thus enabling the aircraft to leave immediately).

Finally, the Kiev house 12 vertical takeoff fighter-bombers (Forger) (Maximum speed 1,200 kilometers per hour, range between 370 and 550 kilometers), armed with air-to-air Atoll and air-to-surface AS-7 (Kerry) missiles, capable of delivering 90 kilos of explosive up to 10 kilometers.

The two aircraft carriers of Task Force 60 (Sixth Fleet) which count a total of 48 Phantoms and Tomcat F-14s, 72 Corsair and Intruder attack aircraft, 18 anti-submarine warfare (ASW) helicopters and aircraft plus reconnaissance aircraft, airborne radar pickets and electronic countermeasure airplanes would be sufficient to place the Soviet vessels in the Mediterranean in very grave difficulties (with Israel at its back).

Actually, one American aircraft carrier between Sardinia and the Balearic Islands and another near Cyprus would cover the whole Mediterranean and large parts of adjoining countries.

The two groups of Soviet vessels have been shadowed by the American destroyer Spruance (a new unit, but eliciting the comment: "Aren't 8,000 tons a bit much just to deploy two 127mm cannons, six torpedo launchers, 8 anti-submarine missiles and a helicopter?"), and by the Audace (which, though displacing only 4,400 tons, has two 127/54 pieces, four 76/62s, two anti-submarine helicopters, a Tartar missile launching ramp for anti-aircraft point defense, six torpedo launchers and is capable of mounting a couple of Otomat-Teseo anti-ship launchers with a range of 180 kilometers), the old Indomito and the aged Tartu which, although only a radar picket ship for air control, actually was the vessel which could have bothered the Soviets the most.

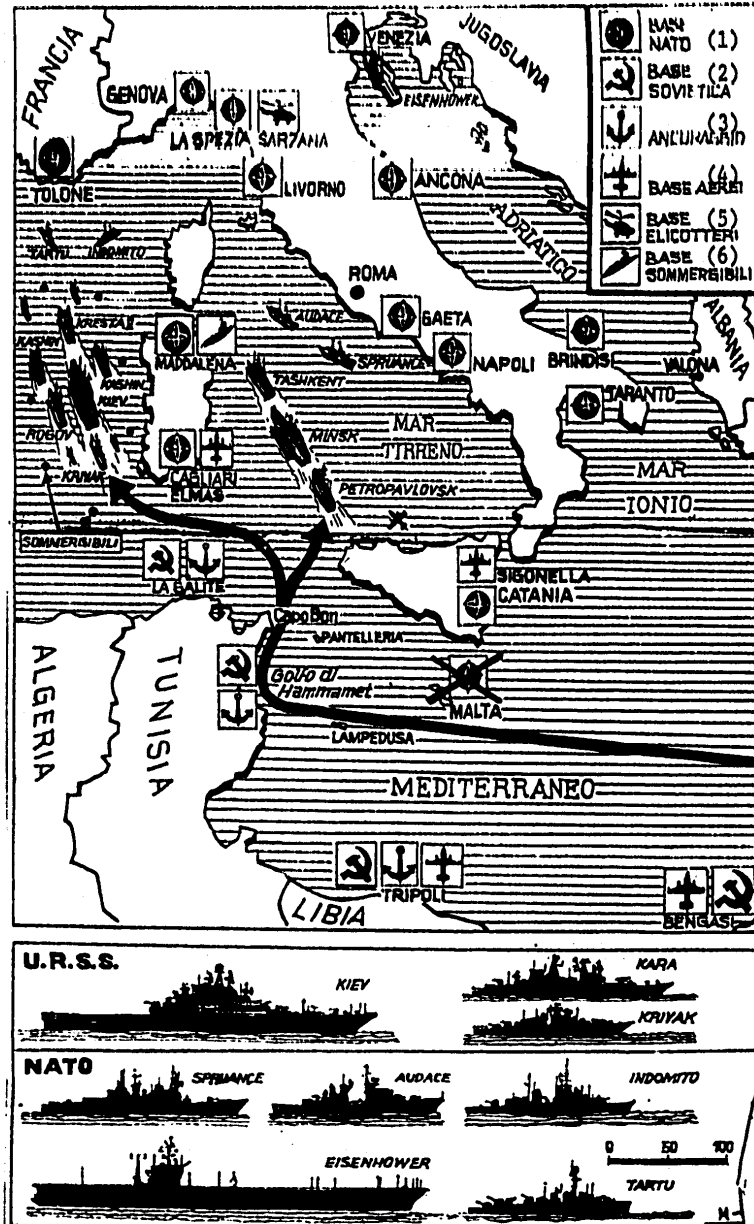
The very war that the superpowers and their allies want to wage in the Mediterranean, which has been going on for years, is that of the "black boxes," of radar interference, of radio intercepts.

Strategically, for the next few years, the situation gives rise to some worries due to the contraction of the navy of the American empire, which is spread out over two oceans and is based on maritime trade routes, in contrast to the expansion of the Soviet empire, essentially a land and continental one, able to operate using internal lines. In a conventional war, if the US were to lose the navy it would be isolated, if not strangled; the USSR would lose some forward positions such as Cuba, but would always be able to reach Mid-East energy sources via land. This leads some to fear a Mediterranean Pearl Harbor.

For this, the loss of that unsinkable aircraft carrier which is Malta is a problem for NATO; on the other hand, one cannot force 300,000 inhabitants of a sovereign country always to live on an aircraft carrier, with all the risks that entails.

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Key:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. NATO base | 4. Air base |
| 2. Soviet base | 5. Helicopter base |
| 3. Anchorage | 6. Submarine base |

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