

# FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND

## PRESIDENT OF

### THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

François Mitterrand was born on October 26, 1916 at Jarnac in the Charente. He studied sociology and French literature, obtained a degree in law and holds advanced degrees in public law and political science.

During World War II, Mr. Mitterrand served as a sergeant in the colonial infantry. He became a prisoner of war and was interned in central Germany, managing to escape after two unsuccessful attempts. In March 1942 (at the age of 25) he organized the main resistance effort among the prisoners of war. On August 27, 1944 General de Gaulle appointed him as a member of the first government of France to follow the Liberation, with the title of Secretary General for Prisoners of War, Displaced Persons and Refugees.

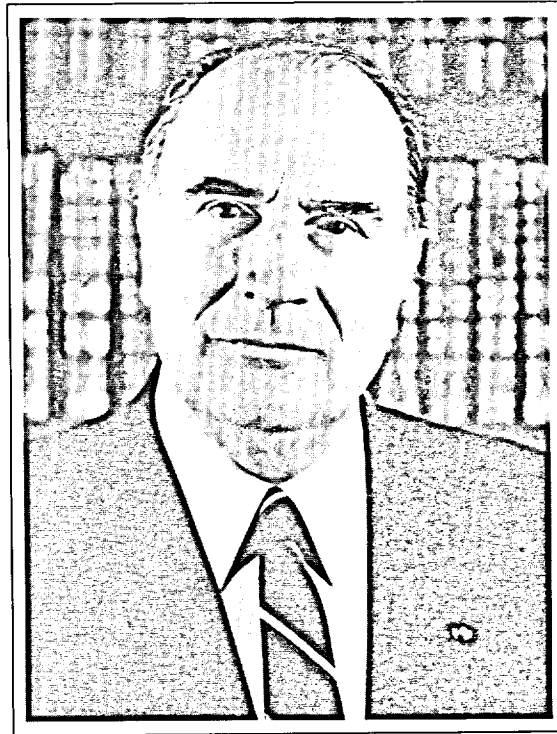
In 1946 he was elected as member of Parliament for the Nièvre. In 1947, at the age of 30, he entered the Ramadier government as Minister of Veterans' Affairs, the youngest cabinet minister in one hundred years. During the period of the Fourth Republic he was a member of eleven successive governments; his posts included those of Secretary of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Minister for France Overseas, Minister of the Interior and Minister of Justice. He was defeated in the parliamentary elections of December 1958. Shortly afterwards he won the mayoralty of Château-Chinon, and became a senator for the Nièvre in April 1959.

In November 1962 François Mitterrand regained his seat in the National Assembly and associated himself with the Rassemblement Démocratique.

In the presidential elections of 1965 he ran as sole candidate of the Left. On December 5 he placed a close second after General de Gaulle and was the General's sole opponent in the second round of voting.

In September 1965 Mr. Mitterrand became president of the Fédération de la Gauche démocrate et socialiste. In March 1967 and June 1968 Mr. Mitterrand was re-elected as Member of Parliament for the Nièvre.

Following the Congress held at Épinay-sur-Seine in June 1971 he was elected as First



Secretary of the Socialist Party. He was successively re-elected to this post in 1973, 1975, 1977 and 1979. In the 1974 presidential election he was sole candidate of the Left, securing 49.5 per cent of the vote, while his opponent was elected with 50.5 per cent.

On May 10, 1981 he was elected President of the Republic in the second round of voting, with 51.75 per cent of the vote.

François Mitterrand has published a number of books, including *La Chine au défi*, *Le coup d'état permanent*, *Ma part de vérité*, *La rose au poing*, *L'abeille et l'architecte*, and *Ici et maintenant*.

He is an Officer of the Legion of Honour (Military Division), and he has received the following decorations: Rosette de la Résistance, Médaille des Évadés and Croix de Guerre, 1939-1945, with three citations.

He is married to the former Danielle Gouze and they have two sons.