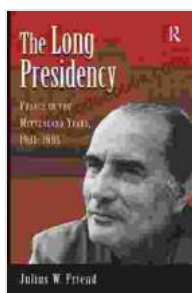


# The Long Presidency France In The Mitterrand Years 1981 1995: A Retrospective

Francois Mitterrand's 14-year presidency (1981-1995) was one of the most consequential in French history. A charismatic and enigmatic figure, Mitterrand left an enduring mark on French politics, economy, and society.

## A Socialist Experiment

Mitterrand came to power in 1981 as the leader of the Socialist Party, which had been out of power for over two decades. His election marked a significant shift in French politics, as it was the first time that a Socialist had been elected president of the Fifth Republic.



## The Long Presidency: France In The Mitterrand Years, 1981-1995 by Philip H. Francis

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2769 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 323 pages



Mitterrand's election sparked a wave of optimism among the left. He promised to usher in a new era of social and economic justice. His government nationalized several key industries, increased social spending, and expanded workers' rights.

However, Mitterrand's socialist experiment proved to be short-lived. The global economic crisis of the early 1980s forced Mitterrand to abandon many of his ambitious plans. In 1983, he was forced to impose austerity measures, which led to widespread protests and strikes.

## **A Pragmatic Turn**

Mitterrand's pragmatism was also evident in his foreign policy. He maintained close ties with the United States and other Western allies, but he also sought to improve relations with the Soviet Union and China.

Mitterrand played a key role in the construction of the European Union. He signed the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, which paved the way for the creation of the euro currency.

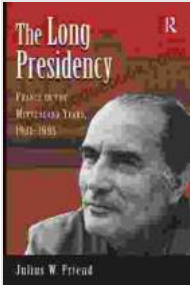
## **A Legacy of Change**

Mitterrand's legacy is complex and contested. He was a charismatic and popular leader who left a lasting mark on French politics. However, his socialist experiment was ultimately unsuccessful, and his economic policies proved to be unpopular with many voters.

Despite these criticisms, Mitterrand remains a significant figure in French history. He was a man of vision and ambition, and he helped to shape France's role in the world.

## **Additional Resources**

- [Official website of the President of the French Republic](#)
- [Francois Mitterrand biography from Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [New York Times obituary of Francois Mitterrand](#)



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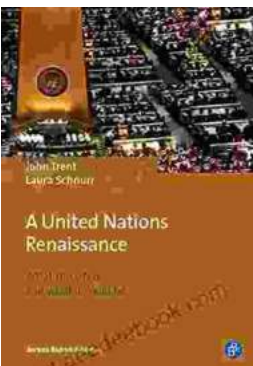
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