

In the absence of anyone else, I spoke to Ewen Fergusson in Paris.

The gallop exit polls suggest the result is much closer than yesterday's polls suggested:

Socialists and parties linked
275 seats

UDF and RPR
275 seats

Communists
25 - 27 seats

Le Pen
1 or 2 seats

The likely outcome is a Socialist/Communist coalition.

It is, however, possible for Mitterrand to look to left of centre of the Right, e.g., Barre or Giscard, to come into coalition, and keep the Communists at bay.

A reasonable RPR and/or UDF vote would provide a force for moderation.

It is not possible at this stage to judge the fate of Rocard. Today has probably been a bit of a disappointment for him, and rather more encouraging for the Right.

DUTY CLERK

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