

Middle East Report by Thierry Lalevée

Islamintern unleashed on North Africa

Nazi leader Ben Bella's new "Algerian Democratic Movement" will also target France for "Muslim" terrorism.

Though last January's crisis in both Tunisia and Morocco has subsided for the time being, no one in Tunis, Rabat, or even Algiers would dare to boast that the danger has gone away. The drastic economic situation, the International Monetary Fund-imposed austerity measures, and the wave of protests have not fundamentally changed. Although both the Tunisian and the Moroccan authorities have arrested scores of "Islamic" fanatics who used the demonstrations in a wider plot to overthrow the legitimate governments, the networks have not been entirely cracked. It is no secret that the Meccas of fundamentalism, Tripoli and Teheran, are still committed to have their own puppets take over the region.

The creation of the "Algerian Democratic Movement" (MDA) during the May 25 weekend in a suburb of Paris was key. Under the cover of fighting for a "restoration of democracy," the MDA, created by Ahmed Ben Bella, the protégé of Nazi banker François Genoud, aims at overthrowing the regime of Col. Chadli Benjedid to impose an Islamic dictatorship with a mixture of Libyan and Iranian input. "Democracy" was also the code word for Khomeini's takeover of Iran.

Announcing the creation of the MDA in a May 20 interview to the newspaper *La Suisse* in Lausanne, Ben Bella, who had been apparently allowed by French authorities to visit Paris on May 14 to organize the congress, said it would be the "first organization of a new Arabo-Islamic International." There was no secret as to who stood behind such an International,

as Ben Bella had just concluded a trip to Libya to handle the financial side.

To pave the way for other organizations, Ben Bella has been busy from his brand-new offices in Montreux trying to make the MDA the coordinating center for all North African opposition parties. Tunisian as well as Moroccan insurgents have been contacted and offered large sums of money to join.

Though Ben Bella announced he would soon create chapters of his new party within Algeria, this is not taken seriously. Even well-wishers commented that Ben Bella had become the "most important Algerian political leader . . . outside of Algeria," as *Liberation* put it on May 27. Ben Bella's creation of the MDA is also a recognition of his failure, some two years ago, to factionalize Algeria's ruling party, the FLN.

However, this cannot be taken too lightly, as the MDA seeks control of the large community of Algerian and North African workers in France and in Europe—a political aim made easier by the attacks unleashed against the immigrants by extreme right-wing networks in France and elsewhere, rumored to be also paid for by Libya.

The well-funded MDA may become the vanguard of a terrorist network in North Africa, attempting to create one crisis after another to radicalize the situation. With Ben Bella's extensive connections to both Libya and Iran, as well as the old Nazi network of Genoud and Swiss Nazi Ahmed Huber, this cannot be ruled out. Further help comes from the ties

Ben Bella has established with the West German Green party, which he met with in mid-May, including its radical and underground branch, which maintains ties to the Revolutionary Cells terrorist group.

Within days of the MDA's creation, envoys were sent to several parts of France and Europe to set up chapters, led by Ben Bella's secretary Said Absi, head of the Paris-based "Arab Cultural Association" and the shadowy "Union of Arab Workers" (SOA) of Beshir Issaoui. Issaoui is a fundamentalist closely tied to Khomeini's Iran under the cover of the "Islamic Grouping of France," an umbrella group with chapters in several important French cities. Inquiries also revealed a more structured network around Masoud el Hendi, a nephew of Ruhollah Khomeini who heads the Paris office of the Iranian television network and has been arrested several times by the French police for suspected involvement in terrorism. Hendi's brother Yussuf assassinated General Oveyssi last February in Paris, and has as his assistant a radical Algerian, Rashid Bin Issa, who works at Unesco and is in charge of recruiting volunteers for military training in Iran. Also involved is Baalbeck-based businessman Sharif Malik, plus other Algerian and Moroccan figures. Issa keeps the liaison with the Ben Bella network; Hendi coordinates with his boss at the Iranian embassy in Bonn, second secretary Kazem Bigdeli Soltani.

Although known, the network remains dangerous as no serious attempt has yet been made to dismantle it. More than any direct support, the strength of the MDA and its backers is drawn from the lack of unity of the Maghreb, particularly Morocco and Algeria, which have refused to drop local issues to unite against the common enemy, Libya.