

Algeria has the right to nuclear power and to science

by Jacques Cheminade

The author, president of the Schiller Institute in France, has recently traveled to Algeria as the Institute's representative, speaking at conferences and to the press on issues of human rights and economic development. He has published several books in French, including one co-authored with Lyndon LaRouche, La France après de Gaulle.

The recent offensive against Algeria and China launched by American and British intelligence agencies tells a lot about the “new world order” touted by George Bush. Under this “order,” any country that resists must be punished; no country in the South has the right to modern scientific and technological discoveries; and Third World countries—deprived of scientific and technological achievements, strangled by foreign debt, unable to build infrastructure because of International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionalities—are no longer able to ensure population growth.

Indeed, American and British policy—pursued now by France as well—aims at imposing “population reduction” on Third World countries by preventing their development or, if all else fails, as in Iraq’s case, by destroying their means of development. Without this analysis, it is impossible to understand the reason why the *Washington Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *London Sunday Times*, have suddenly “revealed” that Algeria and China have launched a secret program to build the first Arab atomic bomb.

First of all, an international media campaign is orchestrated to create a certain “climate”—and however unlikely the charges may be, they will have some effect. Then, the brutal move can be made. Remember some recent cases; such and such a country “finances world terrorism,” another one “is poisoning the world with drugs,” a third “is producing chemical bombs and has the fourth strongest army in the world,” etc.

At that point, the United States—which has, of course, never had recourse to terrorism, never used chemical or nuclear weapons, and certainly never allowed its banks to launder drug money—receives from Heaven, or perhaps from the United Nations, the “moral mandate” to intervene against

Qaddafi, Saddam Hussein, Noriega, and the civilian populations of their countries.

Given past experience, the Algerians can hardly be accused of “paranoia” when they feel their country is in the “cross hairs” (*L’Observateur* of April 17) or they “feel targeted” (*Alger Républicain* and *El Moujahid*). This is definitely a campaign run by intelligence agencies on behalf of their governments.

U.S. press start nuclear scare

It began in the *Washington Times*, a newspaper closely linked to U.S. intelligence whose specialty is destabilization and disinformation operations. The article indicated that the Algerian government, with help from the Chinese, was developing a nuclear weapons program, and then revealed that the “CIA had informed a special congressional committee of its concern about the building of a plant in a strictly guarded militarized zone some 220 kilometers south of Algiers, near Ain Oussera.”

The story was then taken up by the *Washington Post*, which is known as an unofficial outlet of the U.S. State Department.

Finally, the *Sunday Times* of Britain wrapped up the offensive by publishing an article illustrated with maps showing the construction site of the plant. To make things sound even more menacing—including for the French—the paper added that “Algeria has already bought Soviet Scud B missiles which according to some experts can be fitted with nuclear warheads which Algeria could produce.” This is supposed to make people in Marseilles and Toulon on the French Mediterranean quake in their boots, especially since Algeria would be extending the range of the Scuds so that they could reach targets 800-900 kilometers away.

The unfolding of the campaign is noteworthy. The article in the *Washington Times* was published on April 11, the day after the expulsion of the British military attaché in Algiers, Capt. William Cross, who had been caught photographing the construction site at Ain Oussera. The operation was therefore launched by the British and carried further by the CIA

press outlets. Finally, we come full circle with the article in the *Sunday Times* which was not signed. This is generally accepted as meaning that it comes from the security services. This affair offers a blatant example of what *EIR* has consistently charged, that the British and American governments are working hand in hand, the former often inspiring the work of the latter.

As for the truthfulness of the charges, if they are not pure fantasy, they are very close to it.

Algeria in fact does not have—unfortunately, we might add—the means to build a vast civilian nuclear program nor a military one.

It does have a small experimental nuclear reactor of less than 1 megawatt, produced and sold in Argentina and installed in Draria, 20 kilometers away from Algiers. That is the only working Algerian reactor!

As for the rest, Ain Oussera is allegedly the core of a “center of energy research development” built around a reactor of some 14 megawatts. The Chinese, after the Algerians, clearly stated that the “program is strictly civilian” and that international control has been formally accepted.

Algeria in the cross hairs

In any case, it is obvious that for lack of hard currency, Algeria cannot obtain a nuclear program—civil or military—worthy of the name, especially under the financial conditions defined by Bush’s new world order.

An Algerian scientist clearly told us: “We missed the chance. In the early 1970s, it was easier. Now, both the financial means and the international conjuncture go against speeding up this kind of thing.”

The conclusion is therefore clear: Intelligence services have concocted an operation against Algeria and China. The question is, why?

The Algerians are right to point out that George Bush and British Prime Minister John Major want to punish Algeria for its attitude during the Gulf war, and are paving the way for the punishment.

Indeed, enormous demonstrations of support for the Iraqi people took place in Algeria, as well as the organizing of competent medical and food aid. But it was especially the humanitarian position of Foreign Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali which embarrassed the anti-Iraq coalition partners. By stating loud and clear that his country “would never accept the destruction or the starvation of the Iraqi people,” he was denouncing those effects of Anglo-American policy which the Western media were striving to cover up.

Moreover, Algeria’s fight within OPEC for a reference oil price of more than \$23 a barrel, as well as its efforts to set up a democratic system in order to guarantee development and sovereignty, cannot help but annoy those Western intelligence services who fear the emergence of leadership in the Third World like the devil himself.

However, to understand the danger facing an independent

democratic Algeria, we must look further into the significance of this country. First of all, Algeria is one of the countries that best understands the meaning of Bush’s new world order and that has denounced it the most courageously.

The head of the government, Mouloud Hamrouche, is perfectly aware of the motivations of the instigators of the “nuclear weapons scandal”: “This media offensive aims to prevent Algeria from obtaining science and technology while the New American Order is being prepared.”

How much more clearly can one condemn the “technological apartheid” policy which the U.S. Congress is now debating, in legislation drafted to forbid all transfers of nuclear, biological, or chemical-linked technologies to developing countries on the specious grounds that these “might” have military as well as civilian uses? The enforcement of this law, which can also target non-American exporting companies (French, German, Japanese, etc.) by virtue of the extra-territoriality principle of the United States known as the Thornburgh Doctrine, is left to the discretion of the President of the United States.

The Algerians are all the more embarrassing when they denounce the hypocrisy of this law. While the United States forbids exporting science and technology, it is promoting the sales of its weapons systems whose efficiency was demonstrated by the Gulf war. It is pointed out in Algeria that Washington is about to satisfy a first “shopping list” drawn up by the Gulf countries, including missiles, tanks, planes (46 F-16s and 700 M1 tanks just for Saudi Arabia), estimated at over \$50 billion over the next three years. The rules of “good conduct” are only for the others; Washington, of course, need not heed them since it has received a “mandate from Heaven.” And anyone who denounces the U.S. (like Algeria), is a blasphemer and a potential criminal.

On a deeper level, Algeria is targeted because of its strongly pro-natalist demographic policy. Since the very beginning of the Algerian state, the country has considered population growth to be the guarantee for its independence and its future. During the World Population Conference at Bucharest in 1974, Algeria led a group of countries including China, the Vatican, and many Latin American, black African, and East European governments which rejected the American arguments for “limiting population growth.”

Why is this not pardonable and why should it be the most fundamental political point today?

Because the choice of the Anglo-American new world order necessarily implies a depopulation of the countries South of the Tropic of Cancer. A recently declassified U.S. National Security Study Memorandum, written in 1974, encourages the American government to prevent population growth in the South. This report, published in *EIR*’s May 3 issue on page 26, recommends making food aid conditional upon a birth control policy in the country on the receiving end. This is the policy presented at the Bucharest conference, and rejected by this group of countries headed by Algeria.

Nuclear power is needed

The late Gen. Charles de Gaulle was famous for having proclaimed the right of all countries to develop the most advanced scientific discoveries and technological innovations in order to guarantee their national independence. He had specifically insisted upon France's right to civil and military uses of nuclear power, unless all the other nuclear powers agreed to give it up.

For thus challenging the hypocrisy of those countries that possess the bomb, especially the United States and Great Britain, de Gaulle was execrated in Washington and London. It is well known that the CIA did nothing in the early 1960s to stop the assassination attempts against him—precisely for this reason. And let us not forget that François Mitterrand at the time mocked the “French mini-bomb,” while fully backing Washington and London.

Today, since Mitterrand has in the meantime become President of France and supported the *force de frappe*, de Gaulle's nuclear defense system for France, one might expect all different political factions in France not only to defend Algeria's right to nuclear energy but, if necessary, to help develop it.

But in fact, Foreign Minister Roland Dumas went to Beijing to make sure that the Algerian nuclear program would be controlled, and although Finance Minister Pierre Bérégovoy promised Algerian Finance Minister Ghazi Hidouci that French banks would be asked to unblock credit for Algeria, these loans are still as costly as ever, and the Coface (government insurance on foreign operations) does not encourage companies to invest in, or export to Algeria.

A match made in Britain

At the very top, François Mitterrand is doing the opposite of defending Algeria. As the press has pointed out, the May 10 tenth anniversary of Mitterrand's presidency will mark “a long love affair with the United States whose plot has developed throughout the decade. The idyll reached a high point during the Gulf war, when François Mitterrand turned away from Germany and adopted a clearly Atlanticist line.”

From those who consider themselves the “heirs” of General Charles de Gaulle, we would have expected more. Instead, François Fillon, head of the defense caucus of the nominally Gaullist RPR party, stated in an interview on May 2 without the slightest qualms, “We must stop exporting knowledge.”

Such a statement corresponds perfectly to the American and British attitude, and is directly opposed not only to everything General de Gaulle stood and fought for, but also to the content of the latest papal encyclical.

As for the Schiller Institute, we completely support the right of Algeria to nuclear energy. We have long explained that nuclear power will produce the energy density necessary to allow Third World economies to finally “take off.”

Algeria will need massive nuclear energy for tomorrow

to green the desert, desalinate sea water and create the conditions for an in-depth economic development—both geographically and technologically. Then, if a serious integrated policy is extended to the entire Organization of the Arab Maghreb, perhaps it will be possible to finally realize the old dream of creating an inland lake in the Sahara, and, at the very least, to plant irrigated forests to push back the desert. The Algerian “population bomb” will become an immense opportunity for everybody if Algeria wins every day from the desert some new cultivatable land and becomes for us a consumer of industrial capital goods.

The question is posed now in brutal terms: Either the Third World countries acquire the most modern scientific and technological means and thereby the accumulated productivity needed to feed their populations, or else they will be denied this development and tens and hundreds of millions of people will die from hunger and disease or in fratricidal wars.

“Is it a good thing for the balance of tomorrow's world if we are headed toward a world dictatorship?” This is the question asked by Sid Ahmed Ghozali before the Political Commission of the European Parliament on April 25 in Strasbourg. We would hope that the French and German governments would not only ask themselves that question, but begin to answer it.

Overpopulation Isn't Killing the World's Forests— the Malthusians Are

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