

Anglo-Americans set North Africa ablaze

by Joseph Brewda

The assassination of Algerian President Mohammed Boudiaf on June 29, under still-unexplained circumstances, conforms to the gameplan of the British and U.S. governments to throw North Africa and the Mideast into chaos. The assassination follows by one month the nearly successful attempted murder of Sudanese Islamic leader Dr. Hasan Turabi, whom some have considered the real leader of that state. On June 30, the head of Yasser Arafat's faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon, Lt. Col. Anwar Madi of Fatah, was the victim of a car ambush in the southern town of Sidon. In an incident which could be related, Daniele Mitterrand, the wife of the President of France, was nearly killed by a car bomb in U.N.-occupied northern Iraq on July 6.

According to initial reports, President Boudiaf was killed by a member of his own security detail while giving a speech in the town of Annaba. The assailant was on the podium with Boudiaf, and placed a hand grenade under Boudiaf's chair, or, according to another account, shot him. The assailant, still unidentified by authorities, was then killed. Later, murky accounts say that the assailant was not actually a member of Boudiaf's security, and that another assailant had been captured.

The Algerian and international media have charged, but without providing documentation, that the assassination was the work of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which was banned last year prior to the second round of elections which would have probably brought it to power. The leader of the FIS, Sheik Abasi Madani, had been set to go on trial on June 27 on charges of treason. The case was then postponed to mid-July. If found guilty, Madani would be executed. Tensions were already running high because of the trial.

The Iranian government applauded the killing, and said that Boudiaf's successor would also be killed.

The attempted assassination of Turabi on May 26, by a former world karate champion, occurred in the highly secure Ottawa, Canada airport following a speech that Turabi gave there earlier that day. The assailant, affiliated with the British-run Sudanese People's Liberation Front, had participated in a demonstration against Turabi that day, and was well known to authorities. It is noteworthy that the Anglo-American and Egyptian press have frequently accused Turabi of being the controller of the Algerian FIS.

Meanwhile, Libya, which borders Algeria on its west, and Sudan and Egypt on its east, continues to be a main

Anglo-American target. Within Egypt, security forces have used the early June killing of a prominent anti-Islamicist author, Faraq Foda, and simultaneous riots against Christians in the south, as a pretext to organize a crackdown. Some Egyptian media blame these incidents on al-Jihad, the group that assassinated President Anwar Sadat in 1981 and which they claim is now based in Sudan.

Rumors are circulating that one of the promises made by U.S. President George Bush and British Prime Minister John Major to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in order to induce Egypt to join their war against Iraq, was Egyptian domination over oil-rich Libya and Sudan, which had formerly been ruled by the British out of Cairo.

What should be added to this pattern is the unusually provocative measures recently taken by the Anglo-American puppet state of Saudi Arabia. These include the shipment of a large cargo of arms to the SPLA rebels in southern Sudan which, following being captured by the Sudanese, has led to a press war between the two states. Simultaneously, Saudi Arabia has stepped up its pressure against Yemen over border disputes, while a series of probably Saudi-run assassinations continues there.

The economic angle

Although the Anglo-Americans continue to claim that their objective in the region is stability, which, they say, requires the crushing of "fundamentalists" led by Madani and Turabi, it hardly appears that stability is what London, Washington, or Paris are after. According to some reports, what the Anglo-Americans and French want is the imposition of "free trade" agreements which turn North Africa's population into virtual slave labor for European and American industry. To do so first requires civil strife, even civil war, to break any institutions that might resist such neo-colonial policies.

One week prior to the Boudiaf killing, the International Monetary Fund forced the Algerian military regime to remove subsidies on a score of commodities, leaving only bread, milk, and semolina supported, but even these staples registered sharp price increases. Twenty percent of the country is unemployed; 14 million of its 25 million people live below the official poverty line. Algeria currently pays 70% of its \$11.5 billion foreign exchange earnings to international creditors to pay off its debt, probably the worst such ratio in the world.

Yet simultaneous with this provocative increase in already murderous austerity, the military regime put on trial the leadership of the party that it had crushed through a western-supported coup. It was clear that the policy of the IMF was destabilization even prior to the Boudiaf slaying, which is now being blamed on the FIS. Immediately following the killing, Interior Minister Khaled Nezzar promised "implacable war" against the FIS until it is "completely eradicated."