

# International mafia gangs up with the Soviet Union against Morocco

by Thierry Lalevée

Weeks after Tunisia was torn by riots against increased food prices, Morocco has been faced since Jan. 9 with nationwide riots organized in opposition to the increase of basic commodity prices. Implemented at the beginning of the year, these measures were part of the austerity package that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the consortium of international banks controlling Morocco's foreign debts had ordered before it would consider agreeing to reschedule the debts and extend new loans. Only the decision of King Hassan on Jan. 22 to rescind these measures has allowed the restoration of law and order.

Coming so close after riots in Tunisia, the riots in Morocco have raised many questions. Foremost is the economic issue which confronts not only the North African states but the entire continent—whose agriculture, depleted by the lending policies of the World Bank and IMF (see Special Report), has been hit in recent years by a severe drought which has killed thousands of cattle and provoked mass famine in many areas.

In that context, the role of the IMF is to be called into question. For whom is the IMF really working?

Cutting basic commodity subsidies and raising the prices of such basic products as bread was guaranteed to provoke mass anger, and only a decisive break with IMF conditionalities by the Tunisian and Moroccan governments prevented these countries from falling into sheer chaos.

What is still not understood in the West is that continued support for the IMF by the U.S. administration will hand the entire developing sector over to the Soviets and their satraps. Indeed, the destabilization of the northern African states of Tunisia, Morocco, and—next—Algeria would open the entire continent for destabilization. Egypt, Sudan, Nigeria and many other countries would follow in a matter of months.

## The mafia at work

The Soviets took preliminary advantage of the opening provided to them by the IMF.

Though the Moroccan population's rage against austerity was genuine, there is evidence that the violence was organized by networks outside Morocco, under Soviet control.

The situation has been particularly acute in northern Morocco in the Rif region, where intelligence sources report that

a para-military separatist and Islamic-fundamentalist group has been formed.

According to the same sources, members of such groups were sent to Lebanon in November and December 1983 for military training by the Iranian controlled Shi'ite organization, Al Amal. From Beirut and its base in Paris, Al Amal has been directing the operations of these groups inside Morocco over the last few weeks. In the field, agents from Libya and Iran have been seen in operation.

These movements have been on the receiving end of a continuous flow of arms, smuggled into Morocco via the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Mellila, known for years as key international centers of drug smuggling. Morocco's northern region, the Rif, has been for decades if not centuries the center of production of the local black hashish called *kif*. Associated with such production over decades has been the buildup of separatist tendencies mobilized by the international drug mafia.

King Hassan of Morocco recently decided to sign an agreement with the American government to eradicate the production of *kif*, and transform the region into an agricultural area. Moroccan intelligence says it has proof that the Islamic-fundamentalist networks have been heavily financed by this international mafia, which wanted to get back at Hassan.

That mafia is joining hands with Islamic fundamentalist networks deployed by the Soviets from Teheran and Tripoli. And it is reported that former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella, a key figure in the resurgent Nazi International run out of Switzerland by banker François Genoud, has been coordinating the Northern African deployment of the Iranians and the Libyans, following a late-December 1983 visit to Tripoli, where he received some \$6 million from Muammar Qaddafi.

To intervene into the Moroccan situation, Ben Bella is using networks based in the southern Spanish region of Andalusia, especially the cities of Cordoba and Grenada. Over the past year an "Association for the Return of Islam" to Spain was created in the region. It advocates an independent "Islamic Republic of Andalusia."

Financed by the Libyans, as well as Saudi-based fanatics such as Ali Kittani of the "Islamic Solidarity Fund," the association has been protected by the mayor of Cordoba,

Anguitar, a Central Committee member of the Spanish Communist Party who was acclaimed at the last party congress as the "Red Caliph." In 1982, Anguitar decided to transform Cordoba's cathedral Santa Clara into a mosque at the request of Ali Kittani—a decision cancelled after much protest by the Roman Catholic population. More important has been Anguitar's sponsorship of the association in repeated trips to Moscow to attend "peace conferences" organized by Russian Orthodox Church's Patriarch Pimen.

In the same vein, Anguitar has frequently welcomed Ahmed Ben Bella and the ex-communist convert to Islam, Roger Garaudy to Cordoba. There is little doubt that Cordoba has become a key connecting center between Islamic fundamentalist networks and Soviet intelligence. Financing has also come from private Spanish businessmen.

According to Spanish sources, the Soviet aim is not merely to give the Northern African states the "Iran treatment," but to weaken NATO's southern flank by creating a crisis between Morocco and Spain. This could be done over the issue of Ceuta and Mellila, two Spanish cities within Moroccan territory which have been kept under Spanish sovereignty pending a solution to the problem of the British base of Gibraltar on Spanish soil.

Though a *modus vivendi* has since long been found between Rabat and Madrid over that issue, there is the fear that Soviet-controlled Islamic-fundamentalist or separatist groups could stage a military provocation against these towns to launch the two countries into a confrontation. The Libyans have been very active in propaganda on the issue. A confrontation would have immediate effects on the Spanish internal situation and serious consequences on NATO's southern flank at a moment of a Soviet war buildup, including in the Mediterranean.

Alongside their naval deployment in the Mediterranean off the coasts of these countries (see article, page 30), the Soviets have recently devoted interesting military and diplomatic efforts to these countries.

In Morocco, the U.S.S.R. has had the opportunity to build up its on-the-ground presence, and its economic leverage, by means of the personnel sent there to work on a \$2 billion phosphate mining, processing, and shipping project being carried out with Soviet assistance. In December 1983, a new Soviet ambassador arrived in Morocco: Malik Fazylov, originally a party figure in Soviet Kazakhstan and one of the top Soviet diplomats of Muslim origin—who are customarily posted in countries targeted for Soviet destabilization and asset-building.

A high-ranking military delegation under Chief of Staff Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov paid a visit to Algeria in December. Earlier in 1983, Rear Admiral Selivanov dropped in on the Tunisian defense minister with a party of warships. And in November, Central Committee official Karen Brutents, an old hand in Soviet liaisons with parties, grouplets and terrorists in the Middle East, attended a congress of the Moroccan Communist Party.

## Andropov tells Reagan:

by Rachel Douglas

Timed for the day of President Reagan's State of the Union message, the Moscow daily *Pravda* published a statement on Jan. 25 in the name of party chief and head of state Yuri Andropov, who has still not been seen in public since last August. Saying that the Reagan administration "bears full responsibility" for the international crisis, Andropov addressed the United States in an ultimatum-like tone. "Before it is too late," he wrote, "the United States and NATO should display readiness to return to the situation that had existed before the commencement of the deployment of the Pershing IIs and cruise missiles." Only then might the U.S.S.R. show up at the negotiating table again, since it opposes "conducting talks for the sake of talks."

The statement included a denunciation of "the arms race in outer space," Moscow's shorthand for Reagan's anti-missile defense policy of March 23, 1983, which the Kremlin is doing everything conceivable to sabotage.

This was spelled out much more explicitly in an interview given to the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* by Andropov's righthand man for U.S. affairs, Georgi Arbatov. In his professorial guise as head of Moscow's U.S.A.-Canada Institute, Central Committee member Arbatov handles many contacts with American politicians. His aim in the Jan. 25 interview was to equate Reagan's beam-weapons defense policy with the abandonment of Europe by the United States—a giant lie. The truth is that beam-weapon defenses for NATO are the organizing focus for people in Europe who are mobilizing to stop the so-called decoupling of Western Europe from NATO.

Henry Kissinger said in Brussels recently that the United States would not defend Western Europe in case of attack. Arbatov took the cue: "If you follow the European discussions, you hear that the U.S. does not intend to sacrifice itself for Europe, and to exchange Rome for Chicago." This means, according to Arbatov, that nuclear deterrence no longer works and there are two alternatives: "The first is to manifest a capacity to fight and win a war. . . . One example for such an orientation is Star Wars"—the derogatory name for the beam-weapons policy. Alluding to the picture painted by Henry Kissinger, West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, and Ambassador Arthur Burns of a "Fortress America" protected behind a shield of beam weapons, while Europe is sent to hell, Arbatov lied that "Star Wars" would mean for Europe to be the battlefield of "limited nuclear war."

The other road offered by Arbatov is collective security