

STATEMENT BY JACQUES CHEMINADE

## To the Tunisian People, After the Fall of Ben Ali

*Jacques Cheminade, a longtime associate of Lyndon LaRouche, and the leader of the French political party Solidarity and Progress, is a candidate for the 2012 French Presidential elections. He issued this statement from Paris, on the crisis in Tunisia, on Jan. 17.*

The fall of [Tunisian President Zine El Abidine] Ben Ali represents the awakening of a people, and of an army, that couldn't bear any longer to live under the oppression of a mafioso clan. My heart is with those who have freed themselves, but the verbal expression of solidarity is insufficient. France has a duty toward them, as much by reason of our common history, as by our recent intolerable complacency.

The attitude of our Minister of Foreign Affairs Michèle Alliot-Marie, who, on Jan. 11, proposed to aid the Tunisian regime in maintaining order, merely reflects the historic compromise of our entire political class, from [former President] François Mitterrand to [President] Nicolas Sarkozy, and [former President] Jacques Chirac as well. Under the pretext of eradicating the growth in Islamicism, our governments have protected and supported a system which has sys-



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*Jacques Cheminade, Presidential candidate of the Solidarity and Progress party of France, has challenged the French nation to "decolonize our minds," and come to the aid of the Tunisian people.*

tematically looted the country, first under the President's brother, Habib Ben Ali, and then, under the Trabelsi family, who carried out financial thievery on a grand scale.

For its part, beginning in the 2000s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) pushed Tunisia to undertake a vast program of privatization, which turned into a giant hold-up, with the ruling family grabbing the entire economy, thanks to the credits they obtained.

This is what must be eliminated once and for all. The Tunisian governments will never be able to achieve this by themselves, and that is why we ought to help them. To this end, at last, we must finally decolonize our minds.

What caused the barrel of gunpowder to explode was the rise in prices for basic food products in a state whose leaders were stuffing themselves, while young college graduates were unable to find work. Thus, the violence by the Presidential Guard (secret service) and a part of the police force, led to the general revolt. However, even though Ben Ali and his family mafia are now set aside, the system remains, and the price of food staples, determined by international

decisions that put the survival of a financial system above the lives of people, has not gone down.

## **Measures To Be Taken Immediately**

Also, our policy must be to aid Tunisia in particular, above all in the face of the present deadly dynamic throughout the world, and even more severe in the poor countries that import food staples, for which food often comprises 60-80% of the household budget.

Therefore, I propose the following measures:

- Immediately, send cargoes of wheat, cooking oil and sugar, to deal with the emergency.

- The assistance of our financial intelligence to those who captured clan boss Belhassen Trabelsi and Gen. Ali Serati, former intelligence boss of the Presidential Guard, and apparently, head of the counterinsurgency militias who terrorized the population of Tunis.

France should offer Tunisia cooperation, and share financial intelligence on the now arrested Trabelsi, and also, on Serati. We must, with their testimony, follow the trail of their accomplices.

- More fundamentally, a plan for agricultural production and development on a world scale, giving absolute priority to food-producing crops and stopping all biofuel production.

- Separation of investment banks and deposit banks, in order to, by breaking the power of the monetarist oligarchy, redirect credit to the necessary projects for the African people and the Tunisians in particular.

- In this context, to launch a “Blue Revolution” for Tunisia and the Maghreb, using modern means to restart the plan of François-Elie Roudaire to supply water to the chotts, or brackish marshes, in southern Tunisia, and thereby make it a granary and center of agro-industry.

To aid the Tunisian people is to free them from the imperial financier system that oppresses them, and to re-establish the principle of development of the physical economy, and saying “never again” to a predatory system based on outsourcing, real-estate, and tourism.

Ben Ali has been driven out. The system that produced him must now be eliminated, and Tunisia must become a symbol of reconstruction at the heart of a world economy like that which [Franklin] Roosevelt, de Gaulles, and also Bourguiba and Mendés-France, would have wished for in their time. To those who think this is a utopia, we reply that the alternative in today’s financial globalization, will engender something a great deal worse than even the Ben Ali clan.