

N. Africa next for anti-U.S. outrages?

by Thierry Lalevée

From Mauritania to Egypt, all of northern Africa is set to explode. *EIR* warned in our Feb. 7 issue that continued U.S. support for the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would “hand the entire region over to the Soviets and their satraps.” Now, after a brief respite following the food riots in Tunisia and Morocco in January, our prediction is coming true.

A confidential report circulating in the U.S. National Security Council sounds the alarm about the situation of the Maghreb countries: “At a time when the United States has not yet recovered from its failure in Lebanon, it may be soon faced with another major crisis on the other side of the Mediterranean, affecting America’s old and new friends, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.” The report details the foreign and domestic pressures on each of these countries, but stops short of proposing any way to prevent the crisis from happening. Most important, the report ignores the fact that it was Washington’s backing for the genocidal policies of the IMF which led to the January riots in the first place.

Under direction from Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, a regrouping is now underway of the numerous Islamic fundamentalist sects which seized the leadership of the January unrest. With a few of their leaders arrested, others have disappeared underground either in the Maghreb directly or in more hospitable countries like Spain, France, and Italy. Observers watching the situation carefully have warned that a new explosion may be in the making for mid-May or early June, affecting all three countries.

Tunisian authorities recently discovered that their own Interior Minister Driss Guiga had been a prime mover in a Libyan-inspired plot aimed at overthrowing the governments of all three countries in the wake of the Tunisian riots. Guiga had found a luxurious exile in the Florida home of Saudi prince Sheikh Fassi before his arrest. Revelations have started to come out on the endless list of his acquaintances and accomplices, including such personalities as former Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky (a personal friend of Qaddafi and a leader of the Socialist International) and Robert McNamara

the former U.S. defense secretary and World Bank head! The ideological link between McNamara, Kreisky, and Qaddafi can be found in their shared commitments to prevent the emergence of independent and developed countries in the Third World, a process which would jeopardize their “New Yalta” deals with Moscow.

Qaddafi is reported to be singling out Algeria, the only country not directly affected by January’s destabilization. He has arranged over the past weeks for military training of French-based Algerian fundamentalists at the Libyan bases of Zuwarah and Zawiyah. As the government of Algerian President Chadli, a staunch enemy of Islamic fundamentalism, cannot be overthrown in the coming period, Tripoli plans to launch guerrilla-style military actions in the south of the country, using its trainees as well as the Touareg nomad tribe which travels along the so-called Qaddafi Path from Libya up to the Western Sahara, across Algeria and Mali. In March, a Libyan plane flying toward southern Algeria was diverted to the Algiers airport where it was found filled with weapons—not for the Libyan-backed Polisario group but for Algerian rebels.

From Europe, former Algerian president Ahmed Ben Bella, the joint asset of Qaddafi and the Nazi International, is coordinating the campaign together with the Trotskyist Fourth International of Michel Raptis aka Pablo, an intelligence adviser to Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu. Raptis was Ben Bella’s minister of planning and was recently in Geneva and Paris to sponsor the creation of “Support Committees for the Liberation of Political Prisoners in Algeria,” which have held meetings and demonstrations in Paris, Madrid, Lisbon, Rome, Geneva, and Athens. This operation feeds into similar actions against Morocco by Islamic fundamentalist groups based in the Spanish cities of Cordoba, Grenada, and Malaga, as we shall detail in future articles.

Pressures from the IMF

What gives Qaddafi’s destabilization plans the chance to succeed are the foreign economic pressures upon these countries, generally considered the strongest of the under-developed African continent. Only the last-minute decision of the governments of Tunisia and Morocco in January to cancel the austerity measures which the IMF had demanded prevented the nationwide food riots from exploding into full-fledged “Islamic” revolutions of the Iranian kind.

These countries, as well as more prosperous Algeria, have since been walking a tight-rope between satisfying the needs of their populations and giving in to Washington-inspired international pressures. Morocco, for example, is no longer able to pay its civil servants, and Tunisia is in no better position. Mauritania has a per capita debt ratio higher than Brazil, and Algeria has recently experienced a series of economic setbacks as countries that import its natural gas have suddenly pulled out of scheduled deals.