

Editorial

The honor of France

It is ironic that it may well be future generations of French men and women, who have more reason to thank the Committee to Save the Children in Iraq, than the Iraqis. It would appear that French resistance is growing to that nation's participation in genocidal sanctions intended to decimate the population of Iraq. This is especially welcome because of the pivotal role which France can and should play—with Germany—as a block to Anglo-American imperialist designs to recolonize the world. Without such a resistance, then the disgrace of the French nation will exceed even their capitulation to Adolf Hitler.

It now seems that the agitation by the Committee has created a climate in which moral Frenchmen are beginning to speak out condemning François Mitterrand's role in the Gulf holocaust. Criticisms of the French President are growing, and even calls for his resignation, and this appears to be coming from all parts of the political spectrum.

Thus on July 25, a feature by French Gen. Pierre Gallois appeared in the latest edition of the liberal-socialist weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*. Gallois generally associates with left-leaning circles. The fact that he would write an article complementing that of the conservative economist Maurice Allais and Green Party-linked agronomist René Dumont, indicates that an "across-factions" revolt against the Gulf war and the Mitterrand regime's actions in it is now erupting in France. Gallois charges that the main thrust of the Gulf war was, in fact to "return to a pre-industrial state the country which was the most developed in the Middle East after Israel."

France, of course, under President Charles de Gaulle, would have been at the forefront of defending Iraq, just as de Gaulle forced a just peace in Algeria, against the ambitions of French colonialists.

In his article, Gallois recalls to us the France of de Gaulle when he passionately describes the pre-war achievements of Iraq. Gallois writes: "In the course of the last 15 years, the Baghdad government had succeeded in creating the infrastructure indispensable to

the transformation of the country into a nascent industrial power."

This was destroyed in a matter of five weeks, as 90,000 tons of bombs dropped on Iraq annihilated not only the Iraqi Army occupying Kuwait, but also "nearly the totality of the industrialization" of Iraq: the arms factories and their research and experimental establishments; the nuclear reactors; grain silos; food warehouses; and, everywhere, houses, hospitals, schools, with tens of thousands of victims.

He writes that the way the war is seen in the Arab world in general, is summed up by the Tunisian intellectual Abdelwahib Medded: "The war in the Gulf was a preventive war. The West showed that misfortunes and destruction will be the fate of anyone who attacks its privileges. . . . The greatest military force in history has methodically applied itself to destroy a small, ambitious country, which had only just reached the threshold of the industrial era without quite having left the agrarian era."

Then there is accusation by French agronomist René Dumont that continued sanctions which prevent Iraq from purchasing food or medicines is a "massacre." Dumont, in the July 24 issue of the newspaper *Le Monde*, has accused President Mitterrand of dishonoring the French nation "by associating us with this massacre." On July 23, a similar condemnation of French policy appeared in *Le Figaro Magazine*, by Nobel laureate economist Maurice Allais. He correctly traced the Gulf crisis to Anglo-American policies following upon the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

These moves in France are occurring none too soon, as famine and plague stalk Iraq. Clearly also in the United States the pressure is mounting to stop the genocide—witness George Bush's whining complaints that he does not want to hear any more about suffering women and children. Yet if we do not wish to turn Iraq into a concentration camp more horrible than Auschwitz, then the call of the Committee to Save the Children in Iraq must be acted upon, and quickly. All sanctions on Iraq should be lifted immediately.