

# Liberté, Egalité, And ‘Trash’?

by Samuel Dixon

They are against the state because the state doesn't want them. They have been treated in their own country as if they are nothing in this world. If anyone doubted that my generation, roughly aged between 18 and 25, is the “no-future generation,” take a long hard look at France today. There is no equal education system. Even if you have a degree, there's no guarantee of a job. For some 15 years there have been major outbreaks of rioting around Paris and other cities at a rate of about one a year—often sparked, as now, by rumors surrounding the deaths of local youths at the hands of the police. The yearly average of cars being burnt across the country has been 20,000, but in 2003 it went up to 28,000. Seeing the violence that began in late October, and has lasted for two weeks, as of this writing, some have called this the “dead-for-nothing movement,” but it truly is the desperation of those who have been left out, abandoned, and have nothing to live for.

The tensions, punctuated by the nighttime conflagrations of automobiles and anything else that comes into the path of the rampage, have run high in the low-rent suburbs that surround Paris, where 50% of the population is under the age of 25. The rampages that were originally focussed in the poorer suburbs around Paris, have spread since Oct. 27, for the first time, to other parts of the country, such as Dijon, Marseille, and Normandy, and inside the capital itself. The unrest is the worst the country has experienced since the student revolts in 1968.

On Nov. 8, the French government invoked a 50-year-old law dating from the start of the war in Algeria, to authorize the imposition of curfews in areas affected by the rioting. Law number 55-385 of April 3, 1955, permits the cabinet to declare a state of emergency within fixed areas, where state authorities can then ban the movement of people and vehicles at certain times.

The riots today are certainly being whipped up by political opportunists, but the real culprit is the post-war period of globalization, which is creating downtrodden areas while bringing about poverty, dumbed-down education, and joblessness. Clichy-sous-Bois, northeast of Paris, where the riots began, suffers from unemployment rates over twice the unofficial national average of 20%. The riots ostensibly were triggered by the accidental electrocution of two youths, aged 15 and 17, who had scaled an electrical relay station's walls to escape a police identity check in the street. However, tensions were created over the entire of the post-colonial period of France, when immigrant workers were brought here to rebuild

and upgrade the infrastructure. They were promised single-family homes, but were forgotten in housing-project holding-pens.

The riots exploded in the charged environment of flagrant insults by Nicolas Sarkozy de Naguy-Bosca, the Interior Minister whose Presidential ambitions are larger than himself, who declared a “war without mercy” on the suburb's populations. “I've said they have to be cleaned—we're going to make them as clean as a whistle,” he told the regional police chiefs whom he commands. And days before the riots, during a highly publicized provocation in Argenteuil, a suburb northwest of the capital, Sarkozy was pelted with stones and bottles as he outlined a new plan to “take out the trash”—meaning people—from the neighborhood. This escalation of disrespectful behavior by neo-conservative Sarkozy is directly catering to the extreme-right voters (who usually vote for the fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen out of fear), to shore his up right-wing populist base for the 2007 Presidential campaign. Sarkozy has flaunted his ties to the neo-conservatives in the United States, with his own version of the “ownership society,” free trade, and religious fundamentalism with a French twist. Rioting is an old tactic used by the extreme right wing to shore up its influence. In the city of Strasbourg, where up to 2,000 cars are burnt every year, the most in France, including 500 on Christmas Day, informed sources report that Le Pen's National Front party, part of a larger international synarchist grouping, has in the past paid individuals to do that, thereby creating the conditions to scare the population into voting for their brand of xenophobia.

Speaking on French television Nov. 3 in an attempt to hype Cheney-style anti-terror hysteria, the pint-sized Sarkozy said the violence was being orchestrated by unknown organizers. “What we have been witnessing . . . has nothing spontaneous about it. It was perfectly organized. We are trying to find out by who and how,” he said, implying connections between terrorism, Islam, and all varieties of criminal networks across the country. Rebuffing any criticism, Sarkozy rejected accusations that his insults had fuelled the rioters' anger: Ranting on national television describing suburban youth as delinquent *racaille* (trash, rabble), and saying that unemployment-ridden areas need to be “cleaned with a power-hose,” had, of course, nothing to do with the escalation of violence, he claimed.

In an interview Nov. 2, Sarkozy defended his tough policies by saying that some poor suburbs had come under “the rule of gangs, of drugs, of traffickers,” and that his measures had brought down crime by 8% per year. “The feeling of exclusion, illegal immigration, and the high level of unemployment create considerable problems,” he said, asserting that “firmness, but also justice” was needed. Social justice, however, to the Thrasymachian Nicolas is the *société des propriétaires*, the society of the privileged few who have “worked hard, by the sweat of their brow” to grab power, and who make justice “nothing other than the advantage of the stronger,” as the brutish Thrasymachus said in Plato's *Republic*.



A LaRouche Youth Movement demonstration in Paris earlier this year shows former Economics Minister Nicolas Sarkozy zealously cutting the budget. Sarkozy, now Interior Minister, is referring to those blamed for the unrest as “trash,” and is advocating “war without mercy” against them.

EIRNS

lic. The economic austerity measures which he implemented during his stint as Economics Minister in 2004, have helped to break down the French economy, and are within the policies of other European central banks, controlled by financiers who have, step by step, taken away the sovereignty of the European nations. The public deficit, which he claimed to want to diminish by cutting the State’s budget, happens to also be of his own doing: When he was Budget Minister in the former Balladur government, the deficit deepened.

On the other hand, one should not make the mistake of putting him at the center of everything, for he is merely a puppet, brought out in a time of economic and social disintegration by a global synarchist oligarchy which is eager to prevent any Franklin Roosevelt-type reorganization. Could France, now left prey to the impish ranting of the a Newt Gingrich-type conservative revolutionary, fall into the trap of the French Revolution for a second time, fleeing from Jacobin mobs only to turn itself to a new “little Napoleon,” to bring law and order?

This bombast of the financial oligarchs’ local *nain de jardin* (garden dwarf), isn’t new, but it would be too easy to blame Sarkozy and overlook the process of looting, or primitive accumulation, that is the anti-human logic of free trade.

### Permanent Immigrant Status

At the forefront of social tensions is the difficult integration of the socially castaway second- and third-generation children of immigrants from France’s former African colonies. Much of this section of the population inhabits large suburban public housing projects, commonly termed *les*

*banlieues* (suburbs), built in the 1960s and 1970s, which form ghetto areas with 20-45% unemployment, dilapidation, and unrest around the country’s main cities. But among young men between 15 and 25, the unemployment rate is 36%—and even higher if only young Arab men are counted. The average yearly income here is 10,500 euros, compared to a national average of 17,180 euros. Your chances of finding a job are slim to none, once it is noticed that you live in a “sensitive area,” or more generally, if your last name is Ozcan, Dadzi, or Sharaf. The shame that the third- and in some cases fourth-generation French citizens are still referred to as “immigrants,” or the politically correct label of the “socially excluded,” weighs on the dignity of the nation which prides itself on *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*.

Having much more social and economic difficulty than the average youth of French origin, the rate of failure in schools among these youth is very high, many dropping out of school at age 14 and 15. In these conditions, and having nothing but the present TV culture of violence to nourish themselves, the dehumanization of some of the more active elements in these riots is very high, leading to this outburst of desperate and gratuitous violence. The youth are not only burning the belongings of their own community—gymnasiums, public schools, public transportation, and their own and the neighbors cars—but are also committing “Clockwork Orange”-style violence against totally innocent elderly and handicapped people. Thus, a handicapped lady riding in a public bus, and the driver of that bus, were sprayed with gasoline before being set on fire. In another area, a retired man of 61 and his friend were viciously beaten up, gratuitously, resulting in the death of one of them. A couple of years ago,



EIRNS/Yves Palmier

Lyndon LaRouche (left), shown here with Jacques Cheminade at a Jan. 12, 2005 EIR seminar in Berlin, has criticized the French government for aping the economic and social policies of the Bush Administration. Cheminade, in his 1995 French Presidential campaign, had called for developing the low-rent suburbs, where much of the current unrest has taken place.

in the same downtown district where the riots started, petty criminal elements had made it a habit of terrorizing the elderly by beating them during broad daylight.

France's 5 million Muslims also have clashed with France's institutional religion of secularism. In September 2004, a law prohibiting the wearing of the Islamic head-scarf (*hijab*) in schools (along with all "conspicuous" religious insignia) was introduced, adding a lot of fuel to the fire. The combined issues of the alienated children of immigrant ancestry and an increase of provocations from the right-wingers against the Muslim community, represent the major challenge for social integration that calls for an overthrow of the whole formal social system in France, and of the international economic system which underpins it. No one in the official leadership today has the courage or compassion to carry out the necessary fight. However, outside the establishment, leadership is being provided by a man who has long been a close friend and collaborator of Lyndon LaRouche, Jacques Cheminade.

### The Hamstrung Government

This outbreak of violence has put the new Prime Minister, Dominique de Villepin, in an extricable situation. Very close to President Jacques Chirac, and thus a virulent factional enemy of Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, nothing would please him more than the resignation of his own minister, which many had been calling for in the period which preceded the outbreak of violence. The weekly *Canard Enchaîné* on Nov. 9 reported statements by Jean Louis Debré, president of the National Assembly and a very close ally of both Chirac and de Villepin, summing up the sentiments of the Chirac

crowd: "If Chirac could kick him out, he would kick him out. But one cannot fire the Interior Minister in the midst of chaos." The explosion of violence gave to extreme right-wingers, such as Le Pen and de Villiers, a great opportunity to come to the fore, calling for the Army to be deployed, to respond with real bullets! The Sarkozy-connected UMP deputies are also pressuring for stringent law-and-order measures which would only make things worse.

In an attempt to end the chaos, de Villepin has been trying to out-manuever his Interior Minister, and to re-establish order with a different approach, wielding both law and order measures, as well as basic economic assistance. Refusing to mobilize the Army, he instead invoked a law dating back to 1955, which gives the right to county and town administrators to impose a curfew after midnight if they deem it necessary. Article 1 reads: "A state of emergency can be declared on all or part of the metropolitan territory, Algeria, and the overseas departments . . . in the case of immediate danger resulting from serious breaches of public order." Under Article 5, state-appointed governors can "forbid the movement of people and vehicles in places and times fixed by decree." The same article permits the county and town administrators to keep out of the zones "any person seeking to obstruct, in any manner whatsoever, the action of the public powers." Article 6 authorizes the Interior Minister to issue house-arrest warrants for people "whose activity is dangerous for public safety and order." Under Article 8, the authorities can "order the temporary closure" of theaters, cinemas, bars, and "meeting places of all kinds." "Meetings likely to provoke or fuel disorder" can also be banned. Article 11 allows the authorities to "order house searches at any time of day or night" and to "control the press and publications of all kinds as well as radio broadcasts, cinema projections, and theatrical shows."

While the rioting has to be stopped, and these measures are being accepted by practically all parties as a lesser evil, on condition that they are temporary, the invoking of this particular law which was used to quell revolts during the Algerian War, at the time when Algeria was a French colony, sends to these youth, many of whom are children of Algerian families, a very bad message: After 50 years, France intends to treat them exactly as it did their grandparents.

The would-be Gaullist, de Villepin, by not proposing the necessary economic solutions, has thus not shown himself to be acting at the required level which this great moment of crisis demands. Rather than taking the opportunity of this grave moment to propose a total change in the economic system which has led to this impoverishment of the nation, the same system which was rejected by the electors on May 29 when the proposed European Constitutional Treaty was voted down, de Villepin has announced yet another series of social assistance handouts for the poor. This includes 20,000 new minimum-wage jobs to be created in those areas, and the companies which create jobs in those risk areas will get fiscal benefits. Six thousand jobs of school assistants will be created

## Change People's Lives

by Jacques Cheminade

*The following statement was issued on Nov. 8, 2005, by Jacques Cheminade, 1995 candidate for the Presidency of France, and head of Solidarity and Progress, the political party of the LaRouche movement in France. In his 1995 Presidential campaign, he called for development of the immigrant suburbs.*

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." These are the words which come to mind after the 11th night of violence in our suburbs. Today's France is a country which creates or tolerates the conditions for this violence. It no longer insures equality of opportunity to each Frenchman and foreigner settled in its national territory, nor does it offer a culture of life and human dignity to all. Starting from there, all provocations become possible: A handful of provocateurs is sufficient to inflame the powder keg.

Let's look back a bit: In 1995, candidate Chirac promised to reduce the social breach, and adopting a diagnosis formulated by Emmanuel Todd in a note to the Saint Simon Foundation, stated indignantly: "When too many youths see nothing ahead but unemployment and useless workshops at the end of uncertain studies, they end up by revolting." What has happened since? Chirac and the left allowed

the Republican pact to be ripped apart, and Mr. Todd prefers to sit in an office rather than to become a hero.

Why this paralysis? Are Mr. Chirac and the left, so hypocritical and spineless? It has not been stated enough that Mr. Chirac's destiny was sealed, in 1995, when he capitulated on another subject: Denouncing the "financial AIDS" at the Halifax Summit, he didn't fight for a new, more just, economic monetary order, and permitted injustice to continue. On his side, Mr. Fabius served the European plan of Mr. Mitterrand, which with Maastricht, Amsterdam, the Stability Pact, the European Central Bank, and the euro, destroyed Europe as a project and a hope.

So? So, the only possibility of re-establishing justice for the humiliated and the offended, for the French and the foreigners who live in the suburbs, in front of the courts of justice, the prisons and the immigrant communities, is to eliminate social austerity worldwide. Four or five books have just been published, denouncing a financial capital which is destroying itself. Mr. Patrick Artus, chief economist of France's public savings and loans bank, the CDC, gave a brilliant interview to Uncle Bernard in *Charlie Hebdo*, on this issue, but nobody is proposing anything. They are like doctors who would tell their patients: You have a cancer, but go back home and watch TV.

On the contrary, we will defend a program of creation of 6 million jobs with a New Bretton Woods, a Eurasian Land-Bridge, and a culture of life. It is the very foundation of our society which we must change, in order to pick up the fight where our predecessors left it.

by 2006-07 to improve the youths' chances to succeed in school. One hundred million euros will be extended to all social work associations present in those areas, which had been forced to close down due to the austerity cuts imposed in recent years. Finally, the proximity police, formerly deployed in those areas for security purposes, but also to help in solving difficult social problems in the communities, will be re-established. Their credits had been cut back by 40% by Sarkozy, who stated that he favored a "harder style" police force in those areas.

President Chirac, since the violence erupted on Oct. 27, has made only one public appearance, calling for the "re-establishment of security and order." This President has preferred to let his close ally, Prime Minister de Villepin, take the field, earning him criticism that he is politically "absent" during the country's time of need. When Chirac was elected in 1995, he promised to attack "financial AIDS" (lifted from Jacques Cheminade's attack on the "financial cancer" during his own campaign for President) and to heal the social divide. After being re-elected in 2002, the promise was to provide security. Failing to give direction for so many years has taken

its toll on the society, and France has found out that globalization has made France, and the world, one big *banlieue*.

While the opposition Socialists remain divided internally, and have no alternative long-term program for France, they criticize, without offering a solution, leaving France leaderless, and caught up in the blame game.

A society whose young adults are desperate is a doomed society. Lyndon LaRouche has launched an international youth movement precisely because our generation, refusing the legacy of the 68ers, can be the catalyst for the creation of solidarity between generations, to build a bridge into the future. This is why there is a need for a new leadership of youth in France dedicated, as the French statesman Jean Jaurès said, that "every human individual has the right to complete development. He has therefore the right to demand of humanity all that can second his effort. He has the right to work, to produce, to create, without any category of men submitting his work to usury or under a yoke." Around Jacques Cheminade, who is running for President in 2007, an emerging political force—the LaRouche Youth Movement—is acting to create such a paradigm shift.