

# France target of terror as separatists tighten ties to the 'Islamic' crazies

by Paolo Serri and Thierry Lalevée

Since late August France has been hit by a major terrorism wave. This targeting of France, just before West Germany is expected to become the next victim of terror and sabotage acts around the annual fall NATO maneuvers on its territory, coincides with the resurfacing and upgrading of "separatist" groups throughout Europe. At the root of the new terror wave is a development French and other European law enforcement agencies have feared for some time: the institutional link-up between local terrorist groups and separatist movements, Islamic "fundamentalists," and international terrorists of the Irish Republican Army and Armenian ASALA type.

French intelligence and security forces leaked to the press in mid-September that there was a general alert in France, especially at airports, given precise information in their possession that "in the next days new terrorist actions" might take place. French sources reported that a TNT-type of explosive would be used, and would be placed in brown and blue imitation-leather suitcases, produced by the "Stractic" company and labeled "made in Paris."

On cue, during the night of Sept. 17 six bombs exploded throughout Paris against religious and government centers. No one has yet claimed responsibility for a series that recalled the 1983 "blue nights" wave of explosions organized by the Corsican National Liberation Front (FNLC), but the Islamic-French Action Directe connection is under scrutiny.

In fact, since August, the Iranian Embassy in Paris has a new commercial attaché with a worrisome background: Ali Reza Mo'ayeri. He was involved in the 1979 takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran as well as the bloody takeover of the Mecca shrine in the same period. In 1982 Mo'ayeri was the commander of the first contingent of Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards) fanatics to reach Baalbek, in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon, the initial deployment of what later become the kamikaze terrorists. A founder of the Savama, Khomeini's bloody intelligence and secret police, Mo'ayeri is known to have established new contacts with both the Corsican FNLC and the Brittany Liberation Front (FLB).

## Stepped-up arms smuggling

The type of explosive, TNT, gives another lead. During the week of Sept. 9, French intelligence and police sources

reported to the press on a major terrorist attempt which took place on Aug. 23 when Action Directe (AD) placed a car full of 23 kilos of TNT in front of the West European Union building at President Wilson Avenue in Paris. The bomb did not explode, either due to a malfunctioning detonator or because it was only meant to be a warning. Set to go off at 9:00 a.m., the bomb could have caused the worst massacre in French postwar history, possibly destroying the entire building. The explosives came from a stock of 800 kilos stolen on June 3 from the Ecaussines town of Belgium, north of Brussels.

Previously, during the last week of June, French police had broken up an Islamic arms-smuggling ring operating between Belgium and Paris, coordinated by the Iranian ambassador in Bruxelles, Hoveda. At the center of this network, which supplies both Action Directe and the Islamic fanatics, is a Paris-based Algerian fundamentalist leader working at Unesco, Rashid Bin Issa.

On Aug. 8, French police arrested five individuals in a car which just crossed the Swiss-French border in the town of Bonneville. Fifteen guns and some machineguns were found in the car. Interestingly, the driver, still known only by his first name Philippe, has been a bodyguard of the Islamic fundamentalist leader Ben Bella. According to French police this trip was part of a regular smuggling ring between Geneva and Lyon. The coordination for the smuggling was under a man named Boukhari, a close associate of Ben Bella.

Also, during the week of Sept. 9, police in eastern France arrested two German individuals from Hamburg, Martina Bick and Peter Schoenwiese, who had been living under false identities in the village of Allarmont, in the Vauges mountains area. Involved in financial crimes, the couple was reputed to be close to the RAF apparatus.

As *EIR* has documented in the past, AD has been transformed recently from a French version of the terrorist Italian Red Brigades and Autonomia groups, into a coordinating center for terrorist groups internationally, especially for the West German RAF (Red Army Fraction), the Italian Red Brigades, and Islamic groups. Sometimes AD operated as a kind of "mafia," carrying out their criminal actions on behalf of and on a contract basis for other terrorist groups.

The reactivation of terrorism in France has immediate

implications for Italy, as Prime Minister Bettino Craxi confirmed in an official paper on security and terrorism questions delivered to the Italian parliament in early September. Craxi warned against a relaxation of the fight against terrorism which still enjoys international support, above all in France. The Italian premier also exposed the close ties between traditional terrorism and the peace and environmentalist movement, and reported on at least 70 documented cases of terrorists caught disguised as "pacifists."

Since the kidnaping of American NATO General Dozier and the murder last winter of U.S. diplomat Leamon Hunt in Rome, the Italian authorities have detected a shift in the "ideological justification" for terrorist acts, toward a more direct anti-American thrust, coherent with the "peace movement." The same development was noticed by French authorities around AD in the last two months when AD announced "American imperialist" personnel and installations in Europe as their targets.

### **'The separatist international'**

This overall pattern of terrorist escalation goes together with a strong activation during the summer of "separatist" and so-called "national liberation" terrorist groups and their support apparatus. Again in France, this time in Marseille, a secret meeting of the Irish IRA, the Armenian ASALA, the Basque ETA, and the Corsican FLNC groups reportedly took place in August. This Marseille event was the secret side of a more public gathering in Pamplona and San Sebastian in Spain, the so-called "summer university," with the participation of the Corsican FLNC, the French Basque group Herri Falde, its Spanish counterpart, Herri Batasuna, the Irish Sinn Fein, as well as Armenians and Kurds of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran. These "summer universities" have been ongoing since 1982 as the gathering point for contacts of the "legal" branch of what the French daily *Le Figaro* has termed "the nationalist international."

In July at the University of Corte in Corsica, a seminar for the "self-determination of struggling peoples" organized by Corsican separatists, provided the cover for members of ETA, IRA, ASALA, and Kurdish groups to meet. Later in August, a "Summer Seminar of the Oppressed People" in Prades close to the Spanish border gathered the same groupings and more ethnic and separatist organizations. At the same time, Ciemen, the international separatist organization of Barcelona, held its yearly seminar at the abbey of Saint Michel de Cuxa to discuss the "linguistic problems of minorities."

At the same time, the "separatist" question was reactivated in South Tyrol (Trentino-Alto Adige) in northeastern Italy. The detonating point was the 175th anniversary in Innsbruck, Austria of the Tyrolean victory over Napoleon, celebrated on Sept. 10. At the parade of the 35,000 Tyroleans before all the Austrian authorities, a large contingent of South Tyroleans participated, who are Italian citizens. Among the delegation was a large group of so-called "Schützen" (shoot-

ers), the extremist separatist fringe, with many old and neo-Nazis among its ranks, who were responsible in the '60s for many spectacular terrorist actions against the Italian government. Many banners and leaflets with the slogan "los von Italian" (breakaway from Italy) were visible at the parade. This resulted in increased tensions between the Austrian and Italian governments.

On Sept. 11, the well-known South Tyrol leftist separatist, Alexander Langer, an associate of the German Greens and linked to Libya's Colonel Qaddafi, wrote an article for the Rome daily *La Repubblica*, under the headline "Before the Ethnic Hatred Explodes." Attacking both the Italian government and the German-speaking right-wing community, Langer claims that a "new conflict, which has been incubating for more than five years, threatens to explode in a worse way than in the '60s: then the clash was between the Tyrolean minority and the Italian government, while the next one will counterpose one local ethnic community against the other."

Other sources reported that in late July meetings were held in Barcelona between representatives from the ETA, the IRA, Action Directe, and Iranian Pasdarans. A week later, Spanish police dismantled a Pasdaran-run network in Barcelona and Madrid which was setting up a wave of assassinations. However, in early August, fundamentalists of the Al Jihad al Islami terror groups shot at the director of a Kuwait newspaper in Marbella, and the same group shot to death a Saudi engineer on Sept. 15, also wounding his friend, a Saudi oil executive.

### **French government softness**

As a result of such actions, general anti-terror alerts have been launched in France, West Germany, and Italy by police forces, often against the will of their governments. Indeed, there is no doubt that the information continuously leaked to the French press on the terrorist danger has been made public to force the hand of a government which has given the terrorists freedom of action. The new French interior minister, Pierre Joxe, known as a Marxist ideologue, lost no time last August in telling police forces that he wanted their operations severely curtailed, even ordering surveillance of individuals to be approved by him personally before being implemented—a decision which would leave France wide open to all terrorists, if actually followed.

Benefitting from such laxity, it is known that several Middle Eastern-based terrorists networks have been able to easily reach French territory in recent weeks, laying the ground for new operations aimed at Iran's enemies either in the Middle East, like Iraq, or directly against American interests. A potential link-up of these new Iranian-sponsored commandos with the sabotage actions led by the peace movement in West Germany against NATO maneuvers is not ruled out. Indeed, we have previously documented how Cologne has for years been the European headquarters of the Pasdarans under the complicity of West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher.