

Headed by Skorzeny? Neo-Nazis Linked To Algeria French

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(First of two articles)

PARIS—The morning newspaper Combat recently published a cartoon showing a hooded man standing in the attitude of the Statue of Liberty holding a bomb and a copy of Mein Kampf. The caption reads, "Liberty (according to Ultras) Enlightening Le Monde" (The World).

"Ultras," of course, refers to the European extremists in Algeria. The cartoon refers to the bombing two weeks ago of the respected liberal Parisian evening journal, Le Monde, presumably by French Algerian fanatics.

The cartoon seems to spring from the conviction, gradually growing here, that the Algerian "ultras" are now tied in with the worldwide clandestine neo-Nazi organization which has existed ever since the end of the war, built around a core of Hitlerites who escaped post-war justice.

The head of this international Nazi underground has always been believed to be Madrid's man of mystery, Otto Skorzeny, the SS trooper who rescued Mussolini from his captors.

Skorzeny is reputed to maintain contacts with former Nazis scattered throughout the world, especially in Latin America and the Middle East. They have not given up hope that Nazism may yet triumph throughout the world, and they seem prepared to lend their aid in any desperate venture of like political ideology which might achieve a Rightist authoritarian government anywhere.

Within the past week, well-informed sources reported that two of the four defendants who fled to Madrid from the Algerian revolt trial now going on in Paris have been affiliated with Skorzeny's network.

This fits in with other rumors that Rene Kovacs, the ringleader in the attempt to assassinate then Gov. Gen. Raoul Salan of Algeria, was also a member of the Skorzeny network.

Joseph Ortiz, ringleader of the Jan. 24, 1960, revolt of the barricades in Algeria, was a Kovacs aide, and would therefore presumably be involved with the Skorzeny ring also. Kovacs and Ortiz both escaped to Spain.

It has long been discernible that the Algerian European extremists have international connections. They gave birth

to an imperfectly known organization called the Red Hand which has operated especially in Germany and Belgium, specializing in blocking arms shipments from those countries to the Moalem Algerian rebels, but indulging also in acts of terrorism against individuals.

Thus in Liege, Belgium, a history professor whose two sons belonged to organizations sympathetic with the Algerian rebels was killed last year by a bomb hidden in hollowed-out pages of a book sent him through the mail.

Another history professor in Brussels, himself a member of a pro-rebel organization, escaped a similar bombed book on the same day when the mechanism jammed.

The bombs were professionally machined, which led to the conclusion that the terrorists had substantial means at their disposal.

Similar conclusions were drawn from the explosions which blew up the arms-running freighters Atlas in 1958 and the Alkibara in 1959, both of which had been professionally mined in the port of Antwerp.

In Germany also, two persons involved in arms traffic for the Algerian rebels were victims of the Red Hand.

There have been several incidents recently which have revealed activity across the Belgian frontier on the part of Algerian extremists. Explosive material was found in a car crossing from France into Belgium, one of whose occupants was a Rightist French Deputy.

In the other direction, pro-French-Algeria tracts of an incendiary nature have been intercepted coming from Belgian printers to France, for transshipment to Algeria.

Prominent in such activities has been a Belgian who turns up regularly in French extreme-right activities of a conspiratorial nature, Pierre Joly.

Joly recently produced in Belgium a tape recording of an interview with fugitive revolt leader Ortiz, promising continued French Algeria action. Joly was also one of the persons who appeared in Madrid, when Pierre Lagallarde and the other refugees from the Paris revolt trial arrived there.

The existence in Madrid, on territory where extreme Rightists of all countries can reasonably expect to find political refuge, of the headquarters of an international neo-Nazi organization, helps to encourage a funneling of all revolutionary Rightists groups into the same conspiracy. But political kinship tends in any case to throw the like-minded of all countries together, so that even without formal organization there has been built up an intricate maze of cross-relationships among Right extremists of all countries.

Thus when the Katanga Government, which few persons doubt now is encouraged by elements in Belgium unreconciled to the loss of the Congo, looked for a commander to head their forces, they turned to French Col. Roger Trinquier, former paratrooper who played a prominent part in the first Algerian coup in 1958.

Some observers are wondering whether the international links which apparently exist between the Algerian "ultras" and extreme Right groups in other countries did not enter into the mysterious affair of the delivery to Katanga last week of three French jet planes from a factory in Toulouse.

Toulouse has always been a hotbed of French Algerian activity. It was one of the places allegedly chosen, for this reason, for a landing of paratroopers at the time when certain Army elements in Algeria were believed ready to assume the responsibility of invading France, just before de Gaulle stepped in to avert civil strife.

It would not be unreasonable to assume that alliance between Algerian "ultras" on the one hand and Rightists sufficiently well organized in Belgium could have delivered the jets to Katanga over the wishes of both the French and Belgian governments.

Communist intervention on the side of the Algerian rebels has already made the conflict a delicate international issue. If now international neo-Nazism is entering the picture by alliance with the "ultras," it becomes more than ever a matter for world concern.

But a visit to a de Gaulle, already engaged in, or about to begin, peace negotiations for the purpose of helping along that process could greatly increase the Tunisian leader's influence throughout North Africa and the Afro-Asian world. Few have as high stakes in peace as Mr. Bourguiba has. The war on his country's frontiers has strained and distorted Tunisia's international relations and domestic development. Tunisia has played host, willy-nilly, to some 20,000 armed rebels—a force rivaling her own army—and many thousand civilian refugees from Algeria.

Constant Friction

This has produced constant friction with France. It has produced the specter of Communist Chinese and Soviet infiltration if the rebels were to take up the option of proffered Communist aid.

M. Bourguiba knows that he could resist such infiltration only at the price of an open break with the rebels and most of the rest of the Arab world, where Communist aid would be justified by a new deadlock with France.

President Bourguiba has told journalists that he is running "frightful risks." But in his long career of leading his own country from protectorate status to world-respected independence he has proved himself a master of calculating risks. This time he has clearly bet on peace.

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