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The Warmongers in Parliament plan a Hold-Up to seize the French People's Savings

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Up till now whenever you deposited a sum of money into your Booklet A, you thought you were protecting your savings from inflation, just a little, while helping to finance social housing. If you deposited it into your Booklet LDDS (sustainable development and solidarity) you thought you were contributing, as the name implies, to measures for social and environmental protection.

Well, forget that illusion. The days of virtuous civil action linking personal interest with the common good are over. Here we have a public service - one more of them - that will not last. Your social-humane-ecological savings will soon be seized in a cynical hold-up.

Eight MPs and senators, led by Thomas Gassilloud, the *Renaissance* representative of the Rhône electorate and, more importantly, the chair of parliament's Defense Commission, have tried to justify this hold-up in an op-ed published in *les Echos* (1).

They are supporting what is called a "cavalier" (a surprise amendment, crafty and incongruous), taken up by the government in its 2024 finance bill, which will make possible the surreptitious diversion of part of the people's savings (booklets A and LDDS) away from its natural destination and directing it instead to the arms industries. These, as everyone knows, contribute to the sustainable development... of death - organised, planned and exported death, lucrative death.

Let us understand one another. National defense is indeed a necessity. And indisputable imperative. We can't do without civil and military defense against dictators like Hitler or Putin. To defend human freedom and human dignity, sometimes, we must obtain and use weapons. Even Gandhi recognised this.

But it is a different matter to seize the savings of individuals and citizens so that they finance the enormous profits of Dassault, Lagardère, Thales and company, to the detriment of the national solidarity that strengthens our civic fabric against internal and external aggressions - as we see with the Ukrainian people's resistance. That is a step that would be indecent to take. And yet our eight conspirators are taking it.

Consider first that national defense is not the business of eight individuals, albeit ones provisionally appointed through direct or indirect suffrage. The defense of a people is the business of all. It is not a "reserved domain", less than any other. This means that it ought be, above any other, in its great orientations, the subject of "fundamental choices" - decisions taken by referendum.

For example, the choice to assign over 20% of the national defense budget to maintaining and developing a nuclear strike force, and to increase the sum by nearly 50% in 7 years (the Military Programme Law for 2024-2030) should have been a choice made by the people as a whole, submitted to referendum and preceded by a thorough debate, with negative arguments having equal access to the media.

You are certainly right to say, Messieurs et Mesdames (among the eight signatories of the article are two woman senators), that « our security is threatened today by upheavals in the international order and the return of war to the gates of Europe ». But you omit to say that France, by her nuclear arms policy, has contributed to this tragic evolution of the international order - or rather disorder.

The current disorder is the obvious (but unadmitted and inadmissible) product of the nuclear "order". France, instead

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of doing everything to to keep her so-called "nuclear deterrence", which is based on the promise of collective suicide, should have urged the other nuclear-armed states to negotiate with her the planned and controlled eliminatin of their weapons - as they were required to do by Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). If France had done so, then Vadimir Putin would not have been inspired by his nuclear arms to invade Ukraine - threatening to use them. Similarly Benjamin Netanyahu would have lacked the arrogance that incited him to trample the UN resolutions and the Oslo accords, to flout humanitarian law, and now to defy the international community by massacring thousands of Gazans so as to avenge the crimes of Hamas (and yet not managing to destroy it).

Similarly, the ginormous sums spent on nuclear weapons, which are "fundamentally dangerous, extraordinarily expensive, militarily ineffective and morally indefensible" (the 1992 words of US general Lee Butler, former head of Strategic Air Command), could have rather financed the real needs of France's army, improved the living conditions of France's people, strengthened to development of countries in the Third World (thus reducing migration pressures), and set up a reserve of civic and popular resistance.

Things should not be done upside down: France's strategic decisions ought to have been stated, debated and decided by the whole nation - rather than concocted by a bunch of deciders all from the same enclosed milieu. Today they want to push further the despoiling of democracy, in addition to the share of our taxes that go to the stupid and monstrous nuclear arms that make us accomplices and potential victims of crimes against humanity - with a concealed tax that benefits the military-industrial lobby.

If their manoeuvre succeeds, if they pick our pockets, then the French people need to rise up against this abuse of power, for example by boycotting the savings booklets A and LDDS, and all the banks that join the deal. Not to mention the MPs and senators who initiated or supported it.

We already have more than enough military-nuclear tyranny.

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(1) Défense : mettons à contribution l'épargne des Français