

## CERN with ITER, by François of Rose

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Among the disappointments met by the foreign politics of the France in 2003, most serious, and by far, is that which would be finalized this year if the establishment of the research center on controlled fusion ITER escaped from the site from Cadarache. The fractures between the members of the European Union, the failure of the project of Constitution such as it is proposed by the Convention chaired per M. Giscard d'Estaing, the nasarde of the agreement of renunciation of Libya of the nuclear weapons concluded with the Anglo-American ones and major deterioration from the relationship between Washington and Paris were unpleasant and important. But it is lacking so much that the disappointments thus tested are comparable with the true scientific failure, economic and cultural which the choice of the Japanese site for France and Europe would represent, from which it is in this business the champion, like that of Russia and China.

It is possible that the signatory of these lines is particularly sensitive on this subject to be narrowly implied in creation, at the free-Switzerland border, of the CERN (European Center for the nuclear research) at the beginning of the years 1950 and his extension in French territory to the beginning of the years 1960. It is true that the initial negotiations had an asset which the negotiators missed today: the full support of the United States, represented, in particular, at the stage of the design of the project, by the American physicist Robert Oppenheimer and the impulse given by Isidore Isaac Rabi, Nobel Prize of physique 1944, at the time of the conference of UNESCO in 1952.

Having acquired themselves the essence of their knowledge in Europe before the war, they justified their support while making the point that it would be basically unhealthy that the European researchers do not lay out, on their continent, of the large essential instruments of research from now on, the particle accelerators, too much expensive for the resources of only one European country. The extension of the field of this research center in French territory was decided by General de Gaulle, convinced of the importance that the possibility for the CERN represented of continuing to offer to the European researchers means putting them at equality with the American and Soviet researchers without them having to go to the United States or to the USSR.

As for the ITER project, it acts of a company of such a breadth that it will make necessary the broadest international co-operation and that it will necessarily lead to a distribution of research. Undoubtedly it performs research of a fundamental nature on the fusion of the light elements, and if this work is crowned successful in two or three decades, then a decisive opening will have been made in the control of an inexhaustible and nonpolluting energy. It is the future of very whole planet, its activities and its climate, which in terms impossible to envisage today, will be related to this success.

If it is true that the American vote against Cadarache is due to the political tension which reigns between France and the United States since our dissension about Iraq; if it is true consequently that Europe, by the result of this dissension, will see escaping from her a scientific research center incontestably the most important which can be conceived of at this beginning of XXI century; and even if it were true that we were entirely right in these quarrels, it should be recognized that it would be an expensive price to pay for the praise which our policy has received.

François of Rose is an ambassador of France, former president of the CERN (1958-1960).