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IMPORTANT NEW MEASURES IN ALGERIA

PARIS -- On March 29 the Algerian government enacted into law a number of measures that were initiated during past months in various sectors of the country's economy. Thus another essential step was taken on the road of Algeria's development toward socialism. The two-part decree involves the "organization and management of vacated industrial enterprises and agricultural undertakings" and the "division of the revenue from undertakings and enterprises under self-management."

In addition, on the same night, the Algerian authorities took over some huge properties which were not at all "vacated"; particularly the immense Trappe farms held by Henri Borgeaud, who for many years made and unmade the governor generals sent by France to Algeria. The properties nationalized in this way were turned over to management committees elected by the workers.

In its decrees the Algerian government has not yet formally raised -- on the legal plane -- the question of the ownership of the properties in question; but in deciding that it would no longer utilize the term "vacated properties" ("biens vacants") and that Algeria from now on will be dealing with "self-management undertakings" ("exploitations d'autogestion"), the accent is placed on the decisive social aspect of the new measures; that is, the management of these means of production through the workers themselves on the scene.

Possession is nine-tenths of the law, says an old juridical adage in regard to personal holdings. But to take practical action in this sense in regard to real estate will at once arouse vehement protests from the French government, which expresses in the circumstances the thinking of the capitalist world.

The Algerian Revolution, after having conquered independence, is now in a social phase in which victory cannot be gained except through a socialist revolution culminating in establishment of a

workers state. This point has not yet been reached, but the measures which have been taken, together with their repercussions in Algerian society, have stimulated and strengthened the trend toward this outcome. Force would now be needed to take these enterprises out of the hands of the workers and go back to the past.

A noticeable feature of the decrees is the stress placed on the most effective possible participation of the workers in the management of the enterprises. Of course, it requires more than mere legislation to convert texts into realities, above all in this domain, but the texts constitute a point of departure, a guide and a stimulus for putting into practice measures that are profoundly revolutionary. In his speech presenting these measures to the Algerian nation, Ben Bella, as head of the government, emphasized that this was the meaning of the actions that have been undertaken.

Just before announcing the decrees, Ben Bella told a group of youth preparing to form a volunteer work brigade: "In the second phase of our revolution, we are going to put into effect extremely important decisions. We are going to deal a mortal blow to speculation in this country. We are going to make those who want to continue in the pattern of the colonial bourgeoisie understand that there is no place for them here. We are going to see to it that there will no longer be a bourgeoisie here that profits from the labor of their brothers but only Algerians, not grubbing after money, but generous in exerting themselves to serve their country."

KEY CLAUSES OF THE MARCH 29 ALGERIAN DECREE

The March 29 decree "dealing with the organization and management of industrial, mining and artisan enterprises as well as vacated agricultural undertakings" establishes four institutions:

- "(1) the General Assembly of Workers,
- "(2) the Workers Council,
- "(3) the Management Committee,
- "(4) the Director."

The General Assembly of Workers is composed of permanent workers on the job over 18 years of age. The size of the General Assembly is determined each year according to the degree of development of the enterprise. Its duties include:

"Adopting the enterprise's plan of development or cultivation within the framework of the National Plan as well as the annual programs of equipment, production and sales;

"Adopting rules in regard to the organization of the work and in regard to the determination and division of tasks and responsibilities;

"Approving the books at the end of the accounting period;

"Electing the Workers Council where this body is set up."

The General Assembly makes its decisions by a simple majority of workers present, although a quorum of two-thirds of the members is required for valid action. Voting takes place by secret ballot.

Workers Councils are set up in enterprises where more than 100 workers are employed. Representation is on the basis of not more than one Council member for every 15 and not less than one for every ten. The rules for voting are the same as for the General Assembly. Elected for three-year terms, one-third of its members are renewed each year. Its duties, with some differences, are the same as those of the General Assembly in smaller enterprises. But it also "elects and controls" the Management Committee.

The Management Committee consists of from three to eleven members who hold office on the same basis as members of the Workers Council. Its duty is to run the enterprise. It must meet at least once a month; oftener, if the interests of the enterprise demand it or the chairman, which it elects, convenes it. It can admit to its meetings in a consultative capacity members of the Workers Council or the General Assembly.

The Director "represents the State" in the running of the enterprise. He checks the legality of economic and financial operations to see that they are maintained in conformity with the National Plan. Under the authority of the Chairman he checks the daily conduct of affairs, particularly financial accounts, inventories, and minutes. He has a deliberative voice in the Management Committee but can never serve as chairman. He is nominated and withdrawn by the government body in charge of the enterprise in agreement with the Council of Communal Enterprise and Self-Management.

In addition to the decree codifying the establishment of the above organisms, a second measure was passed setting up related bodies.

"In every commune," reads the decree, "a Council of Communal Enterprise and Self-Management is created composed of the chairmen of the Management Committees, a representative of the Party, of the UGTA [unions], the ANP [army] and of the administrative authorities of the commune. In case of necessity, an intercommunal Council can be created in place of the communal Councils but without power to substitute itself for more than five Councils."

These Communal Councils aid in creating management bodies, in interesting the workers in the problems of self-management, and in co-ordinating the activities of enterprises.

They have the power to accord or withdraw approval of directors appointed by the government.

The following articles of the decree are of special interest:

"Article 26. The members of Workers Councils, of the Committees of Management of enterprises and undertakings, or of Councils

of Communal Enterprise and Self-management, cannot receive any special remuneration for the accomplishment of their duties, it being understood that the time devoted to the deliberations and work of these bodies will be considered as normal work time and remunerated on the same scale.

"Article 27. The members of the above bodies exercise the functions devolving on them only in the meetings of the bodies of which they are members and cannot extend the said functions outside the sessions of the said bodies unless expressly mandated by the body to which they belong.

"Article 28. Any person who knowingly blocks the functioning of a Management Committee, will be liable to a penalty of five years imprisonment and a fine of from 1,000 to 10,000 francs (\$200 to \$2,000) or one of the two penalties.

"Article 29. The measures of the present decree become effective with its publication and must be put into full and entire effect with a maximum delay of one year.

"Article 30. The present decree on the organization of the self-management of vacated enterprises and undertakings annuls all contrary measures."

FULL TEXT OF BEN BELLA'S SPEECH

On announcing a two-part decree March 29 establishing Workers Councils and related institutions, Ben Bella spoke to the Algerian people over radio and television, explaining the meaning of these significant measures. The full text of his speech is as follows:

Working men and women of Algeria, as I speak to you the Official Journal of the Democratic and Popular Algerian Republic is publishing the text of some of the most, if not the most important decisions which the government has taken since its constitution.

It concerns a decree bearing on the organization and management of industrial, mining and artisan enterprises as well as vacated agricultural undertakings.

Already last week, more precisely Friday March 23, the Official Journal published a significant text defining the meaning of "vacated" once and for all. Those who imagined that the government of revolutionary Algeria would wait, arms folded, in face of maneuvers which aimed at nothing more nor less than liquidating the "vacated properties"; well, they were mistaken.

I have said it before and I repeat it now. It was not we who drove away the former exploiters of this vast sector of the Algerian economy which then became "vacated properties." It was not we who sought to asphyxiate the Algerian economy. It was the former exploiters who left, seeking to make their exodus a way of sabotaging and blocking the possibilities of reconstructing independent Algeria. We had to stem in the briefest possible time the disastrous conse-

quences of this sabotage.

To those who left, the Provisional Government appealed that they return. How many of them returned?

Before anyone starts to invoke great principles, let him tell us clearly how many of them responded to the appeal of the Provisional Government to return and to participate in the reconstruction of the country.

Could the government that issued from the Algerian Revolution stand arms folded before such a challenge? If it had done so, it would not have been worthy of the Algerian Revolution, it would not have been worthy of speaking in the name of the Algerian people. Moreover, the working masses of the country, they understood their duty. Almost everywhere, they organized themselves spontaneously and moved in to replace the absconding exploiters. In this respect, the decrees of October 22 and November 23, 1962, setting up Management Committees, did no more than ratify a state of affairs which the working masses, in their patriotic and revolutionary spirit, had created throughout the extent of the country.

Did the decrees of October 22 and November 23, 1962, close the door to those who had left, neglecting their duties toward the land which had nourished them? In no fashion. Revolutionary Algeria has its traditions of generosity. The decrees of October 22 and November 23, 1962, left them the possibility of returning and even of being reinstated in their enterprises and undertakings which they had abandoned, but on condition that they gave sufficient guarantees for honest and productive management of the enterprise and on condition of accepting sincere collaboration with the Management Committees.

How many of them returned and agreed to collaborate with the Management Committees?

What national government, worthy of the name, would have permitted the situation to deteriorate? It was high time that Algeria went to work. It was high time that the government which issued from the Algerian Revolution organized the management of the undertakings and undertakings abandoned, betrayed by their former exploiters. The Algerian workers had proved their capacity to fill the gap. It was necessary to give them the opportunity to continue in their efforts.

It then proved to be impossible to organize anything in a sector in which "vacated" could be continually placed in question, in which "vacated" could be made the object of pressure, of bargaining, of the business of influence. It was necessary to definitively settle the question of the "vacated properties." It was necessary that the sector of "vacated properties" be defined, determined, once and for all!

It was in this spirit that we passed our decree of March 18, 1963, dealing with the regulation of the "vacated properties." This

decree which the National Constituent Assembly approved in its session of March 26, 1963, barred any appeal from a ruling taken prior to March 22, 1963, that a property had been "vacated." All enterprises of an industrial, commercial, artisan, financial and mining character, all agricultural and forestry undertakings, all the offices, real estate or portions of real estate which, on the date of March 22, 1963, had been ruled to be "vacated," were, once and for all, definitively, "vacated properties" and from this fact their management passed, once and for all, definitively, to the Algerian workers.

From now on we will not speak any more of "vacated properties" but of enterprises and undertakings of self-management.

Once defined as "vacated," once determined as the key sector of the Algerian economy, we must turn, seriously, to the problem of the management of this sector which we wish to use as a "pilot" for our socialism.

Two solutions are offered. Should we place management in the State? Should we place it with the workers?

In fact no hesitation is possible. The principle of self-management of the enterprises by the workers has already been inscribed in the reality of the Algerian Revolution by the spontaneous, conscious action of the laboring masses. The powerful movement of the Management Committees, which multiplied throughout the country, awaited simply legalization in all its revolutionary extension.

The decrees which the Official Journal of the Democratic and Popular Algerian Republic is publishing today legalizes and institutionalizes the enterprises of self-management being run by the democratic collectivity of the workers.

With the General Assemblies and the Workers Councils, with the Management Committees, the Algerian workers are taking their destiny in their own hands. It is the workers, in their General Assemblies, who will decide on the plan of development for their enterprises within the framework of the National Plan. It is they, the workers, who will establish, examine and adopt the bookkeeping accounts. It is they who will determine bonuses for output. It is they who will harvest the fruit of their labor. They will participate in the management of the national funds for investment and the balancing of employment.

Working men and women of Algeria, I would like to stress the national funds for balancing employment.

As you know, there are unemployed, many unemployed in Algeria. There are jobs, many jobs with poor or little pay in Algeria. There is heavy labor which exhausts a person and other work that is not so bad. There are rich regions, but also poor ones in Algeria.

It is through the national funds for the balancing of employment that the solidarity of the working men and women of Algeria expresses

itself. It is through these funds that the workers of the Mitidja and those of the Aures express their fraternity. From the east to the west, from the north to the south, the Algerian workers, through the national funds for balancing of employment, express once again the unity of the Algerian nation.

Working men and women of Algeria, I would also like to speak about the Director who constitutes one of the instruments of your self-management.

This Director will be selected on a moral and professional level. He will be nominated by the State, but this nomination will be submitted to your approval.

Because it is necessary that within your enterprises of self-management someone should represent the national collectivity to which you belong and safeguard its interests. It is necessary that within your enterprises of self-management there should be someone who can serve as a transmission belt between our enterprises and the State, someone responsible for the National Plan of development.

This Director, whose nomination is subject to your approval, this Director is a worker like you and will share your troubles and joys and participate, with you, in the socialist construction of our country.

Make his task easy. Help him. Protect him like one of your own.

Working men and women of Algeria. It is up to you and only you to prove to the world that the Algerian Revolution wants to be and can be in the vanguard of the socialist experiments of our times. Close your ranks, demonstrate to the world that you are masters of your destiny, united, vigilant and conscious of your duties and your rights; organize yourselves so that everywhere, over the whole Algerian territory, the General Assemblies of the Workers can join together and that everywhere, throughout the Algerian territory, the Management Committees, democratically elected, can harness themselves to the exalting task of the socialist construction of our country.

CONFERENCE PROPOSED TO HELP BRING AID TO ALGERIA

Organization of an All-European Conference to Help Bring Aid to Algeria was proposed at a meeting of Labour party members and Young Socialists held March 14 at the House of Commons. The meeting was chaired by John Baird, Member of Parliament from Wolverhampton East and former editor of Free Algeria.

The proposed conference would explore ways and means of bringing technicians and scientists to Algeria to help speed reconstruction of the country. The date of the conference has not been finally fixed but will probably be sometime in May.

The speaker, Michel Raptis, stressed the importance of the Algerian Revolution to the Arab and African peoples.

There are tremendous difficulties to be overcome in Algeria, he said. More than a million lives were lost in the seven-and-a-half-year war and the country was left devastated. On the granting of independence, 800,000 Europeans left the country. Today Algeria is desperately in need of skilled workers.

In spite of all this, the Algerian people are optimistic about rebuilding their country along socialist lines. Already nearly 600 enterprises and 4,000 square miles of land are under the control of workers management committees.

France, for economic and political reasons, is trying to foster neocolonialism in Algeria. Because of the hostile attitude of the leadership of the Social Democratic and Communist parties during the struggle for independence and their passivity since then, the Algerian people were disappointed in the European working class.

This is one reason, Michel Raptis declared, why the conference should receive extra vigorous support from the labor movement throughout Europe.

It is essential, he said, that a left united front be set up to help secure material aid for Algeria. Socialism is not confined to national frontiers; it is international. More than pious resolutions are needed to express solidarity with the Algerian Revolution; solidarity must speak the language of material aid.

John Baird moved that a preparatory committee be formed to organize meetings and raise funds to send delegates to the conference. Twenty MP's have agreed to sponsor the committee.

UNEMPLOYED DEMONSTRATE IN LONDON

LONDON, March 27 -- Parliament was given fair warning of the mounting anger over the unemployment situation among trade unionists and jobless workers when 7,000 of them from all parts of the country assembled yesterday in a mass lobby at the entrance to the venerable building.

Police violence finally broke up the determined demonstration but only after scenes had been enacted which reminded observers of the bitter days of depression of the thirties.

The lobby was sponsored by right-wing bureaucrats who conceived it as a tame, mild affair. Left wingers and unemployed workers decided to make it a real demonstration. They sang the Red Flag, fixed red banners on the walls of Parliament, and shouted slogans demanding jobs and a Labour government.

When police felt that they could not succeed in barring the lobbyists from entering the building, they sent for reinforcements. Mounted cops plunged into the crowd. Nine arrests were made and several injuries were reported.

After the lobby, some 1,300 demonstrators gathered in a hall where they heard speakers under the auspices of the Lambeth Trades Council. The themes were the solidarity of trade unionists and unemployed, youth and adults, the need for militant action, and the socialist solution to the ills of capitalism.

Following the general strike in Belgium, the mine strikes in Spain and the current wave of strikes in France, the action in Britain offers fresh evidence of the fact that militant action is reviving among the workers of Western Europe.

NASSER SPOKESMAN SUPPORTS KHRUSHCHEV AGAINST MAO

Hassanein Heykal, a close confidant of Egypt's President Nasser, published an article March 30 in the daily paper Al Abram of which he is the editor, on the problem of relations between Arab nationalism and Communism.

This article is worth noting. First of all, Heykal expresses his "support for the position defended by the Soviets in the ideological conflict, putting them in opposition to the Chinese position, in which they advocate co-operation with all national revolutions that adopt a policy of nonalignment." In other words, the radical spokesman of the national bourgeoisie of course sympathizes with those leaders of the bureaucracy who advocate all-out support for the colonial bourgeoisie, and he is rather frigid towards the leaders of the Chinese CP who play with the idea of "uninterrupted revolution" in the colonies.

Secondly, he points out that the recent events in Iraq cannot be correctly held to be a victory for the West in the cold war. "The leaders of the Iraqi Communist party have not been executed because they belonged to that party, but because they had committed murders." This is an attempt to justify the fierce persecution suffered by the Iraqi CP leaders as being nothing more than understandable revenge exacted by the Iraqi nationalists for the support the CP gave Kassein in butchering the nationalist Nasserist forces during the Mossul and Kirkuk uprisings. At the same time Nasser serves notice to American imperialism that he is not ready to abandon his position of "nonalignment" in the cold war, a position that greatly strengthens his bargaining power. The Soviet bureaucracy, it has been shown, will continue to send military and economic aid to the Arab nationalists even when they butcher the local CP leaders and militants.

Thirdly, Heykal points out the contrast between the full support to Nasser and Nasserism adopted by the Arab Communists during the Suez crisis in 1956 and the violent opposition of the Syrian Communists, including their leader Khaled Bagdache, to Syro-Egyptian unity in 1958. Heykal tries to show in this way that Communists only support

national uprisings temporarily and for tactical reasons. In fact, once again a basic lesson is driven home the hard way: neither the opportunism of 1956 nor the sectarian break with the mass movement in 1958 enabled Arab Communism to win leadership of the Arab national-democratic mass movement. Yet in several Arab countries conditions were excellent to build a powerful movement on the basis of working-class independence and a program of permanent revolution.

Finally, Heykal is compelled to conclude that "we are not hostile towards Marxism as an ideology. Nobody can deny that Marxism has left traces in our country, notwithstanding the activity of the local Communist organisations." Here Heykal makes an important admission. Notwithstanding the political mistakes and crimes committed by the Stalinist leadership, Marxism continues to exercise a very strong appeal to radical students, intellectuals and advanced workers fighting for the socialist unification of the Arab people.

YEVTUSHENKO UNDER HEAVY FIRE

PARIS, April 22 — For several weeks now, Yevgenii Yevtushenko has been under heavy fire from various spokesmen of the Soviet bureaucracy. The Soviet poet was first strongly criticized by Khrushchev at a March 8 meeting of writers and artists. Three weeks later, the literary newspaper Literaturnaya Gazeta published a speech by Yuri Zhukov. A minister for cultural relations with foreign countries, Zhukov is considered to be a leading spokesman for bureaucratic conservatism on the "cultural front." A few weeks ago he wrote a fulminating article against Michel Tatu, Moscow correspondent of the Paris daily Le Monde. The attack read like any of the old-time Stalinist exercises in abuse and vilification. Finally, a broadside against Yevtushenko was printed in the Communist youth daily Komsomolskaya Pravda, over the signatures of three authors, including one of the paper's deputy chief editors.

While Khrushchev's attack against Yevtushenko mentioned other reasons for the bureaucracy's wrath against the young poet, both Zhukov's speech and the Komsomolskaya Pravda article single out Yevtushenko's Precocious Memoirs as the poet's main "corpus delicti." These memoirs were published in five installments in the Paris weekly L'Express and Yevtushenko evidently gave them to that magazine while he was in Paris. (His spectacular reception by the Parisian Communist and progressive youth was reported in the February 27 Internationalist.)

It is true that the editors of L'Express added their own titles and subtitles to Yevtushenko's manuscript, and that some of these subtitles may have been misleading. However, if one analyzes the contents of the attacks against Yevtushenko, and especially if one reads the full text of the Memoirs, it becomes very clear why the bureaucracy is both angered and frightened -- not by what L'Express added, but by what Yevtushenko himself said.

According to the Literaturnaya Gazeta version of Zhukov's speech, this spokesman of the bureaucracy declared that Yevtushenko's

Memoirs "abound in untrue and misleading statements and assessments not only of the literary but of the social life of our country," while the editors of Komsomolskaya Pravda charge Yevtushenko with having made "sacrilegious statements" about the Revolution. But the quotations used as substantiation for these accusations indicate that Yevtushenko's "sacrilege" was not against the October Revolution at all, which Yevtushenko venerates and which he defended again and again during his public appearance in Paris. What he spoke against was some of the worst crimes of the Stalinist regime. When writing about the forced collectivization and rapid industrialization of the thirties, Yevtushenko wrote:

"Russian people preferred to work rather than analyze. With heroic stubbornness rarely found in history they built power station after power station, factory after factory. They worked with bitterness so that the roar of machines, tractors and bulldozers muffled the cries and sighs that tore through the barbed wire of the Siberian concentration camps."

This is in fact a true and realistic picture of the Soviet people's attitude during the thirties!

But the spokesmen of the bureaucracy have not publicly attacked the parts of Yevtushenko's Memoirs which are most damaging to them. These are the parts in which Yevtushenko reveals himself to be a left-wing critic of Stalinism, upholding the tradition of Bolshevism and the October Revolution and even speaking in a nearly conscious way for the young generation which wants to link up with that tradition.

At least three important passages of the Memoirs point in that direction:

(1) Yevtushenko explains in his Memoirs that his maternal grandfather was a leading partisan fighter in the Urals during the Civil War who was later sent to the Military Academy while Trotsky was still Commissar for Defense, eventually becoming a general of the Red Army. Yevtushenko's grandfather was arrested and killed in the Stalin purge of 1938. The evening before his arrest he went to see his grandchild and spent the night singing revolutionary songs to him. This moving scene, as described by Yevtushenko, becomes almost symbolic in character, the spirit of the October Revolution being transmitted by the old fighter to the young generation over the heads of the "lost generation" which matured under Stalin.

(2) Yevtushenko tells the story of Stalin's funeral where dozens of people were crushed to death as a result of the GPU blocking the streets with big trucks. A great crowd pressed against this barrier, trampling down those who happened to be in front. The poet tells how he suddenly felt cold fury at seeing this waste of human beings in consequence of blind police obedience to senseless discipline that required them not to move the trucks. At that moment, Yevtushenko relates, he started to hate Stalin as the incarnation of that inhuman attitude towards people.

(3) Yevtushenko tells the story of how his famous poem Baby Yar, denouncing anti-Semitism got printed. He had brought it to a literary magazine, whose editor hesitated a long time. But a delegation of the printshop workers came to tell him that everybody in the shop had read the poem and enthusiastically approved it. Yevtushenko describes the rousing ovation he got when he first read this poem in public. When the session was over, he continues, an old man with a cane came to see him. He was very moved. "I have been a member of the Party since 1905. I've spent fifteen years in a forced labor camp, but this evening I know that notwithstanding all betrayals Bolshevism is alive again. . . ."

Yevtushenko made some self-criticisms after the heavy attacks he was subjected to. He admitted that it was a mistake to publish his Memoirs in a foreign magazine. But he didn't recant on any of the essential points of the Memoirs.

BELGIAN WORKERS IN ACTION AGAINST ANTISTRIKE LAW

BRUSSELS, April 3 -- To give a dramatic demonstration of their views on the antistrike legislation now under consideration in Parliament, Belgian workers began turning this week to direct action.

Day before yesterday a wild-cat strike involving 10,000 workers broke out at the big electrical equipment plant of ACEC at Charleroi.

Yesterday wild-cat strikes of tramway workers snarled up Charleroi's public transportation system.

Today more than 50,000 workers in Liège staged a two-hour general strike. They met in three separate mass meetings to hear union spokesmen denounce the projected antistrike law.

On April 6 an emergency congress of the Socialist party will decide what way the Socialist Members of Parliament should vote on the pending bills. The work stoppages are intended to help stiffen resistance against the laws and weaken the pressure of those seeking to put them on the books.

(For a background account of this struggle see the March 6 Internationalist.)

FRENCH MINERS WIN STRIKE

PARIS, April 5 -- Although miners at some pits, demonstrating their militancy, grumbled at the settlement, it appears that the majority consider they have won their strike after 34 days on the picket line.

So far as the demands raised at the beginning by the miners unions are concerned, the struggle is ending with a quite favorable compromise. A wage boost of 6.5% goes into effect at once, retro-

active to April 1. Further increases will go into effect until the rise reaches 11% January 1 and 12.5% by April 1, 1964. An immediate payment on account is granted, and the government agrees to another week's paid vacation, giving the miners an annual paid vacation of four weeks.

Against the background of general class relations in France, both the objective reality and the prevailing mass sentiment, the struggle terminated in victory for both the working class and the unions. It suffices to cite the facts to show this.

The united take-off of the strike was a surprise for everyone, including the unions. The government, to save face, named a "committee of wise men" who recognized that wages had fallen behind 8%. In response to this, the government, while making out that it was accepting the report, granted only a derisory increase, hoping that the miners, at least those in Lorraine, would go back to work and thus break the strike. This was at the end of the second week.

The maneuver failed; new vague promises were made at the end of the third week; the miners rejected them unanimously.

At the end of the fourth week, another identical maneuver, and this time the representatives of the UNR (de Gaulle's Union pour la Nouvelle République) elected in the Lorraine area personally appealed for a back-to-work movement. A new failure.

This time the government permitted top management of the Charbonnages of France to engage in genuine negotiations which, after some twenty hours, ended in an agreement.

In almost five weeks -- not a scab. The miners left and returned to work as one man. The decree signed by de Gaulle, requisitioning the miners was thwarted.

Parallel with the miners, workers in other industries presented their demands. Substantial concessions were either gained or are in process of being gained.

Solidarity with the miners was widely demonstrated. Not only on the part of the working class but also among wide layers of the petty bourgeoisie, and even toward the end of the strike.

The regime had counted on defeating the miners and the union through weariness, debt, material difficulties (important as financial aid was, it is self-evident that solidarity collections could never rise high enough to assure minimum subsistence for 200,000 strikers and their families), the irritation of the middle class over a succession of demonstrations upsetting the daily routine (stoppages of electricity, gas, transport, etc.) which accompanied the upsurge of demands during March.

All this failed to achieve the results sought by the regime. It became engaged in a test of strength. Although the unions did

not exactly reply on this level, the movement was so powerful that the government was unable to follow through. At no time did it dare engage the forces of coercion which it brought into the strike-bound areas. At no time did it succeed in dividing the miners whether in getting a return to work in the coal basin or in pitting the three unions in competition with each other.

Without overestimating the victory of the miners, it must nevertheless be underlined that it involves a serious loss of prestige for de Gaulle and his regime, both nationally and internationally. This personage who only had to speak to bring the generals to heel, to make the bourgeois political parties bite the dust, to cancel out the American and British projects, this great personage who already had to change his tone in speaking with the Algerian revolutionists, was checked by the miners in his first great test with the French working class. He sent his ministers to discredit themselves with declarations on radio and television; he kept his mouth shut.

After such results, does this signify that the workers organizations followed correct tactics? Understandably in this first confrontation with the regime, the unions wanted to assure unity of action at all costs and did everything possible to avoid incidents. However, it was possible to achieve more in building solidarity for the miners. We have in mind not so much the financial side of it as workers action.

It could not be a question of a general strike, which presupposes a different relation of forces in the country, but of mass demonstrations in the streets.

Toward the end of the second week of the strike, the ferment had reached such proportion that much greater pressure could have been brought to bear against the government to obtain its capitulation.

The other great weakness was that the mass organizations, both parties and unions, while they supported the strike did not utilize the opportunity during the course of it to speak out strongly for a program (for a forty-hour week, against de Gaulle's atomic weapons policy, etc.) which would have placed the combat in proper relation to a perspective of further battles of greater scope, reaching even to a struggle against the regime itself.

The French working class scored an important victory, especially if one takes into account the atmosphere which has prevailed since de Gaulle came to power. But it still has a hard road ahead of even more difficult battles which may not always end as favorably as this one did.

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