

THE INTERNATIONALIST

- Published by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International

April 11, 1963

ALGERIANS ACCLAIM STEPS TOWARD SOCIALISM

PARIS -- The nationalization of big properties of both European and Algerian landholders and the announcement of decrees definitively establishing Workers Management Committees, Workers Councils and Workers Assemblies have been received with enormous enthusiasm throughout Algeria. In a nationwide tour following announcement of the new measures, Ben Bella was greeted with celebrations reminiscent of those when independence was won last July. Entire populations of towns and villages turned out to hail the head of government who, not so many months ago, when he came to power in an unclear factional struggle, was met with chilly reserve.

Everywhere he went, Ben Bella appealed to the people to organize themselves by setting up workers councils and workers management committees. These are now being formed throughout the country at an accelerated pace.

From various sources, principally the Algiers dailies Le Peuple (formerly Al Chaab) and Alger Republicain, we reproduce below extracts from Ben Bella's speeches, indicating the topics he covered during his tour:

+ + +

"We will never accept our country serving as an arena for the testing of bombs. The French government has been warned. It is up to it to decide."

+ + +

"They say that taking back Borgeaud's land is contrary to the Evian Agreement. So be it; if we are violating the Evian Agreement by this decision, so much the worse for the Evian Agreement."

(The first press reports said that Ben Bella declared he didn't "give a rap" for the Evian Agreement. ("Si des décisions ne sont pas conformes aux accords d'Evian, Ben Bella s'en moque.") Correspondents stuck by the version which they said they had heard but the Algerian

Ministry of Information issued an official correction.

+ + +

"We are going to pursue the speculators and all those who try to envenom the people through false or alarmist news. We have begun to attack them. We are going to continue. There are still some measures to be taken against them and some decisions are going to follow.

"We are going to attack not only the Borgeaud's and the Germain's, but also the bloated rich who amassed big fortunes during the war."

+ + +

"This struggle consists in discouraging once and for all the bourgeoisie of this country. If we have plucked Borgeaud and the others, this is not because of racism: we have suffered too much from this ourselves to resort to that. . . .

"Believe me, this minority, which constitutes around five per cent of the Algerian people is nonetheless powerful for that. Unfortunately, they hold the power of money. But the ninety-five per cent who constitute the other part of the people are absolutely with us in taking up the cudgels against this fauna. To carry this out, you the humble, join the national organizations in mass and in particular the UGTA [the unions] to make this the November 1 of Algerian socialism."

[November 1, 1954, was the day the struggle began for national freedom from French imperialism.]

+ + +

"It has been repeatedly said that women played their role in the struggle for freedom. The whole world has repeatedly said that women participated fully and in a way that did honor to Algeria in the struggle for freedom. . . . But in the struggle to construct the country? Women are searching for their place."

Noting the presence of many women in the audience, Ben Bella continued: "Women must take their destiny into their own hands. Women must not wait for directives to follow from the men but must integrate themselves spontaneously in the public life."

+ + +

"Today we are opening a still greater struggle than that which ended July 2, 1962 -- the struggle for socialism. The time has come to struggle in order to reap. We don't want to replace one set of pigs by another set wearing turbans. This is the revolution of the poor people, of the widows, the shoe-shine boys. We have undertaken these decrees swiftly in order to defeat the maneuvers of imperialism and of certain Algerian elements who wanted to turn the vacated properties and enterprises over to the colonialists."

+ + +

At the first Assembly of Management Committees to be held in the Algiers area:

"This is the happiest day of my life because a new page has been turned; our people, and in particular those who have been exploited, are called on today to take an active part in the different tasks awaiting us. I ask everyone who has something heavy in his heart to speak frankly and freely."

Within a month or two "you will fully understand the functioning of the management committees; you yourselves will elect your management committees in complete freedom and in complete democracy. These will be the committees that will actually run the farms."

+ + +

"The socialist sector is already important, it will be still more so in a few days. It is up to the unions to concern themselves about this and we need genuine fighting trade-unionism. The unions must take the management committees in hand, those in charge of the so-called 'vacated properties' or the hotels. They must interest themselves in the peasants, the most important part of our population."

+ + +

"The State has not taken the place of the Borgeaud's and the Ben Gana's. Nevertheless there will be a division of the profits and so far as concerns the State, this will be discussed in all its aspects and in complete freedom with the Management Committees, because you are not unaware that the responsibilities of the State are great in the fields of water supply, electricity, roads, in brief, the economic infrastructure.

"Another part will be reserved for farm equipment and another will go to swell the funds of solidarity which in turn will bring relief to the unemployed who are very numerous."

+ + +

"I thank God that France put us in prison because thus we had time to think and to work out the policies which we are applying today. We studied the experiences in Cuba, the USSR and Yugoslavia. I am from the soil like you and I have the same difficulties as you."

+ + +

"In the press abroad they reproach us among other abuses with the theft of automobiles, occupation of properties and taking over in place of the French who left. What should I say? Those who reproach us with such things don't know what a revolution is.

"Fidel Castro told me that even now, three or four years after his entrance in Havana, he is still battling against such things. The Yugoslavs likewise testify that it took many years to eliminate such situations."

+ + +

"The Algerian Revolution remains constantly at the side of Cuba. . . because we believe there can be no socialist construction without socialist action outside our country. We will not accept a crust of bread in exchange for the liberty of others."

+ + +

Speaking about the need to build the FLN (National Liberation Front) into a strong party, Ben Bella cited the example of the Soviet Union where a country of 200,000,000 people is guided by a party of some 2,000,000. In Algeria the FLN should have from 100,000 to 150,000 members. "The day when we have found these 100,000 Algerians, militant in the true sense of the word, we will have won, we will have guaranteed the future of Algeria for a hundred years."

+ + +

"The imperative need for unity of the party led quite naturally to the dissolution of the Algerian Communist party. It would be absolutely false to see in this an arbitrary measure or some kind of anti-Communism. Algeria is not and never will be anti-Communist. It was not a question of a decision emanating from the government or from the Political Bureau but the consequence of the principles defined in the Tripoli program. The PCA could not be made a privileged party when the country had pronounced in favor of a single party. It was not logical to let the PCA remain as an organization when parties like the MNA (Algerian National Movement) and PRS (Revolutionary Socialist Party) were banned.

"What was banned was a plurality of parties and not the PCA."

+ + +

The Algerian Communists, nevertheless, do enjoy a certain privileged status, Ben Bella said, since they can express themselves freely through a daily paper (Alger Républicain), "which, however, must not fall into negativism."

+ + +

"I told Alger Républicain that they owe it to Fidel Castro that they are in existence and that they must not be negative."

+ + +

He appealed to the Communists to join the ranks of the FLN as individual members. "During the struggle" they participated as individual militants, why don't they do likewise in the struggle to construct the country?

FRENCH DISSEMBLE ANGER OVER SEIZURES

PARIS -- The de Gaulle government has decided to follow discretion in relation to the nationalization of properties owned by Europeans in Algeria. A formal protest was filed April 5 charging the Algerian government with having violated the Evian agreement which ended the war last year. The owners of the nationalized holdings were not "compensated" for their losses as is required by the agreement.

The protest demanded that Algeria live up to the agreement, but no threats of specific reprisals were made.

The press reported that the French ambassador to Algeria, Georges Gorse, will make a stronger statement in private, telling Algerian officials that French tolerance has reached its limit and that further measures of this kind will wreck co-operation.

Henry Giniger, Paris correspondent of the New York Times, explained the reasons for the French restraint as follows:

"One key to the relatively mild French stand is understood to be France's desire to protect her considerable investments in Saharan oil. Drusque or aggressive action by France, it is feared, might incite the Algerians to 'socialize' the oil installations as they have other French-owned property. . . .

"Another key is France's desire not to compromise her rapprochement with the Arab world. That was symbolized by the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cairo this week."

On April 6, Ben Bella interrupted a speech he was giving in Arabic at Oran to say a few words in French to the reporters. "I greet with satisfaction the position taken by the French government, as expressed yesterday, above all since it indicates that this government understands that Algeria wants to carry out things its own way."

Later he added: "I thought out my socialization projects during the years I was in prison in France."

TURN IN ALGERIA WINS SUPPORT OF COMMUNISTS

Alger Républicain, the daily paper in Algiers which voices the opinion of the banned Communist party, is solidly supporting the new steps toward socialism taken by the Ben Bella government.

In a front-page editorial in the April 6 issue, Henri Alleg declared that the Management Committees open a "non-capitalist road for Algeria."

In the issue dated April 7-8, in another front-page editorial, Boualem Khalfa approved Ben Bella's statement that Algeria is "entering the second stage of its revolution."

"The recent governmental measure," he continued, "which President

Ben Bella announced for the coming days, opens for the workers, for the people, to all the healthy and revolutionary forces, stirring perspectives."

In the April 9 issue an editorial signed "Alger Républicain" pulled out the stops still further:

"The historic decisions nationalizing the big colonial domains and the declarations of President Ben Bella clearly indicating Algeria's faithfulness to the Tripoli program and his will to take the non-capitalist road without any equivocation, has aroused profound echoes abroad."

The editors note the response in Tunis, Morocco and Africa as a whole, the Middle East, the countries of the West and the "Third World" where hopes have been raised and the applause is ringing.

"As for our friends of the socialist countries, from Cuba to the Soviet Union, they wish from the bottom of their hearts that we will continue along the route which we have entered and they assure us of their complete solidarity.

"Thus, all the world forces of progress have grasped that the battle which we are in and the orientation defined by President Ben Bella, concerns not only the future of our country, but can influence by their ultimate consequences the future of the continent itself and the world."

In France the Communist party took note of the happenings in Algeria by publishing in L'Humanité the text of a congratulatory message to Ben Bella sent by "Algerian Communists in France."

Failing the nationalizations and the measures concerning "vacated properties" the message assured Ben Bella of their solidarity and of their resolution "to unite and to mobilize the Algerian workers in extending their taking in hand the destiny of our country by the working class and the poor peasants for the development of our country and the construction of socialism."

Welcome as this support is, it is not without its irony. The Algerian people won their freedom while the powerful Communist party of France either openly backed the imperialist French government or turned its gaze coldly away from the freedom fighters in their most desperate hours of need.

SCORE SUCCESSFUL AGAINST BELGIAN ANTISTRIKE BILL

BRUSSELS, April 9 -- The struggle against antistrike legislation now pending in parliament reached a new pitch at the Enlarged National Committee meeting of the Belgian Federation of Trade Unions yesterday when 43% of the mandates were cast against adoption. With 3.5% abstaining, the right wing was able to muster a majority of only 53.5%. This is the smallest majority ever registered at a congress or enlarged meeting of the FGTE.

The vote is even more significant in light of the fact that 75% of the mandates from the Walloon part of the country were cast against the legislation although on April 6 the Socialist party congress adopted a motion instructing the Members of Parliament to vote in favor of the bill.

The minority opposing the projected law got 30% of the vote but 59% of the Walloon ballots.

As a result of this sensational progress of the left wing in both the Socialist party and the unions, 12 Socialist MP's refused to follow the instructions of the SF congress when the antistrike legislation came up for a first vote today in the House of Representatives.

This is the first time in the history of the Belgian Social-Democratic party that such a large number of Members of Parliament have broken reformist discipline. They were suspended from the Socialist group in Parliament, but their future depends on the fate of the whole left wing in the Socialist party and the trade unions.

Leaders of the left wing have repeatedly made it clear that they will stick together. However, this does not imply that the expulsion of some of the rebels would automatically lead to a major split off.

The district organizations controlled by the left wing, including the Liège district, Belgium's most important industrial, working-class and socialist stronghold, would defy the decisions of the bureaucracy by reinstating the expelled comrades as members of their districts with full standing.

The bureaucracy would then have to either expel the districts with their tens of thousands of members or accept the new situation and the de facto autonomy of the left wing of the party in Parliament.

Meanwhile "harassing" strikes continue in several parts of the country as protests against the proposed laws and advanced workers are following with the greatest interest this tug-of-war between the left wingers, who have remained faithful to the working class, and the reformist bureaucrats, who have sacrificed every principle of socialism to maintain a coalition government with the bourgeoisie.

BALANCE SHEET OF THE FRENCH MINE STRIKE

PARIS -- How should the five-week strike of the French miners be assessed?

In the Nord and Pas-de-Calais basins, the miners, especially the youth, were displeased with the agreement signed by the unions and the management of Charbonnages de France. On the other hand, among the French working class the general sentiment was that the struggle ended in a success for the workers. Who is right?

The truth is that one conclusion does not exclude the other.

On the level of the wage demands of the miners, the results, in view of the power and solidarity of the movement, appear mediocre. This especially seems so to the youth who were on strike for the first time and who expected more to be won from it.

But if you take the situation as a whole in France and take into account that this was the first big test of strength in the class struggle since de Gaulle came to power (the worst defeat of the European proletariat since the end of the war), the results appear different.

On the level of the demands themselves, wage increases were obtained in numerous areas. The four-week paid vacation has become general throughout the country. But that is only one aspect of the problem since one can maintain that more could have been obtained. What is most important is that the strike ended with an advance in the relation of forces in favor of the workers.

The prestige of the Gaullist government was significantly lessened for the first time. A requisition decree signed by de Gaulle and not by just any minister was ignored by the miners. De Gaulle, who broke generals, wiped out bourgeois parties, slammed the door on the Americans and the British, had to give way up to now only to the Algerians. Now it is the miners who have lowered his prestige. He wanted, according to a report from someone in his entourage, "to break the unions." He failed.

To draw this balance sheet by no means signifies that the trade-union leaders and the leaders of the big workers parties followed an absolutely correct line in the strike. The contrary is the truth. But it is necessary to make criticisms that have bearing; that is, those that will count in the struggle against the reformist and post-Stalinist leaders. To shout "betrayal" in the present circumstances gets nowhere, leads to no effective results.

What were the mistakes committed by the leaders?

First of all, they led the struggle in bureaucratic fashion, no strike committee being elected by the unionists and the unorganized although the unorganized constituted not far from half the strikers.

In addition, on the national scale, the appeals for solidarity were limited to the financial plane -- indispensable, but not capable of attaining sufficient proportions to keep 200,000 strikers and their families going. An action of the working class as a whole was required.

On this point, some called for a general strike. Those who did this were mainly syndicalists who do not have a correct idea of a general strike; that is, an extremely high political stage which can lead into the struggle for power. Given the relationship of forces existing in France, it was erroneous to envisage a general strike at the beginning of the strike of the miners.

A general strike is not the only action which the working class can take as a whole. Appealing to workers solidarity, one can call

for big demonstrations, for marches and rallies in the streets through which the political consciousness of the workers could be raised.

Especially after the end of the second week of the strike, after the caravan of the Lorraine iron miners came to Paris, it would have been possible to organize a caravan of some tens of thousands of coal miners to come to Paris. This would have compelled the government to give in more quickly to the miners or create a more tense political situation.

Finally, all the trade-union and political leaders conducted themselves in this strike as pure and simple trade unionists for whom nothing existed except the demands of the miners, without any program to unify the will of the workers and without any wide perspectives for the future. All of the big organizations kept their programs in their office files; they raised no questions beyond the immediate demands.

Under these conditions, the government power, which was caught by surprise by the strike, by the tenacity of the miners, by the solidarity which was affirmed throughout the country, including part of the petty bourgeoisie, was able to hold out until a compromise could be reached with the trade-union leaders.

Thus it was that a struggle as magnificent as that of the miners ended in mediocre fashion on the level of the miners wage demands; yet at the same time injured the prestige of a power that for five years seemed able to overcome all obstacles.

REBELLION AMONG FRENCH COMMUNIST YOUTH

PARIS -- The conflict between the leaders of the French Communist party and the Communist youth of the UEC /Union des Etudiants Communistes/ is far from subsiding. It has already been going on for some years, the Communist students having been responsive, during the war with Algeria to the currents in the colleges that were putting up an effective struggle for peace and for the victory of the Algerians, while the CP leadership confined itself to general phrases and expelled members who took up the cause of the Algerian Revolution. In addition the UEC was particularly responsive to the de-Stalinization tendencies that appeared in the international Communist movement and resented the Thorez regime which remains closest to the Stalin era.

At the recent congress, the UEC was openly opposed to the CP leadership. When the congress was over, the CP leadership began a systematic campaign against the leadership of the UEC. Day after day, L'Humanite, the daily newspaper of the French Communist party, published letters from Communist students. In general these represented small groups while the greatest part of the Communist students, notably at the University of Paris, continued to hold their own opinions. This was likewise the case at a recent assembly of students in Paris. Finally the Political Bureau had one of its members open attack in an article taking up a half page of L'Humanite.

There can be no doubt that the leadership of the Communist party has decided to do everything possible, including breaking up the

organization of students, to achieve its aims. The leaders are placed in a position of which they never dreamed -- an organization officially recognized by the CP is in disagreement with the policies and above all the methods of the leadership.

It is not possible to forecast how the situation will turn out. The students have found support in the French Communist party as well as in CP's in other countries although this is not publicly displayed. Among the ranks of the workers in the party their audience is weak and cannot be widened because the questions they have put into debate, while related to the general problems dividing the international Communist movement, are expressed in terms which pass over the heads of the workers. Moreover, while the leaders of the UEC demand discussion, the CP leadership has nothing in mind but to crush them. Finally, the Communist students, far from having a precise line, represent different currents that have scarcely crystallized. How could it be otherwise given the conditions in which they seek to disengage themselves from Stalinism.

In relation to past crises in the French Communist party, it is a considerable development that a Communist organization should be found in opposition to the leadership and able to hold for such a long time. No matter what the immediate outcome of this crisis may be, the Thorez leadership will be weakened by it.

FRENCH COMMITTEE FORMED TO AID ALGERIA

PARIS -- A preparatory committee has been formed here to help organize aid, especially of a technical character, for Algeria. The committee is composed of J. Daboulene, J. Baretts, Claude Bourdet, René Catroux, René Dumont, A. Sauvy, J. Souleil, M. Stern, P. Teitgen.

The committee has issued the following appeal:

Algeria needs disinterested aid to step up reconstruction, its general development and the struggle against misery and the consequences of eight years of war. At the present time Algeria has no recourse but to appeal for technical assistance from various governments, first of all the French government and the international organizations. Without minimizing the value of this aid on the governmental or inter-governmental level, it remains nonetheless true that it converts Algeria into a certain field of rivalry between the capitalist groups, with whom many of these technicians are linked, and the socialist states from which other technicians come, leaving untouched the many technicians, cadres and skilled workers who, in Europe, would be ready out of disinterested sympathy for the Algerian people to participate in the effort but who are not linked to any of the power groups.

We think that it is our duty to bring together in France and in Europe these people of goodwill. Out of this came the idea of an International Nongovernmental Conference for Technical Assistance to Algeria. The Algerian government is extremely interested in this project and assures us of its support and the warmest welcome in Algiers.

The objectives of the Conference will be, first of all to make an inventory of needs with the aid of the services of the Algerian govern-

ment and a number of technicians, Algerians as well as French and others, working under the heading of technical assistance, with whom we are now in touch. After this inventory, priorities will be examined; that is, determination will be made of the most urgent Algerian needs, and these, however they may fit the inventory, will be considered in relation to the support which French and foreign technicians can bring to achieve the most rapid results.

Parallel committees are being formed abroad (Britain, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Austria, Italy). A joint meeting of the delegates of each committee is scheduled for the end of April. Its objective is to organize and prepare for the conference in Algiers which is scheduled for May 27, 1963.

Following the Conference, in agreement with the Algerian leaders, an appeal will be launched by the international committee in each country of Europe -- and countries outside of Europe -- specifying the nature of the skills needed and the possible remuneration for people who are recruited.

+ + +

To get in touch with this committee write: René Catroux,
30 rue de Verneuil, Paris 7, France.

JANUARY-MARCH ISSUE OF "FOURTH INTERNATIONAL"

The January-March issue of Fourth International, English-language edition of the theoretical organ of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, which is now published in Ceylon, carries articles covering a wide range of topics. The table of contents is as follows:

Editorial Notes: "Latin America on the Cuban Path"; "Crisis in the Common Market"; "New Stage in the Nuclear Terror"; "The Coup d'Etat in Iraq"; "Coming Independence in Kenya: Coming Revolution in South Africa."

"The Sino-Soviet Conflict" by Livio Maitan.

"Imperialist Rule Continues in Jamaica" by Den Honroe.

"'Arab Socialism' and the Nasserite National Movement" by A. Sadi.

"Latin America 1962" by Livio Maitan.

Resolutions on: "Algeria" and "The Conflict between India and China."

A copy of Fourth International can be obtained by sending the equivalent of 35 cents (U.S.) to the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, 47 Driberg's Ave., Colombo 10, Ceylon.

SPRING ISSUE OF "CUARTA INTERNACIONAL"

The first issue of Cuarta Internacional, Spanish-language edition of Fourth International, is now off the press in Santiago, Chile. A 56-page number it carries the following table of contents:

Editorial: "Eseñanzas de la Crisis Cubana."

"América Latina 1962" por Livio Maitan.

"Carta a Fidel Castro" por Michel Pablo.

"Sobre la Naturaleza de la Revolución Cubana" (Resolución del Sexto Congreso de la Cuarta Internacional).

"La Eliminación de Escalante"

"La Segunda Declaración de la Habana"

"Carta Abierta a los Editores de la Revista Hoy"

"Todos a la Acción por la Defensa de la Revolución Cubana!"
(Llamado de la IV Internacional a los Trabajadores del Mundo Entero.)

"A Todos los Participantes del Festival Mundial de la Juventud de Helsinki."

"Resolución Sobre Argelia." (Adaptada por el Secretariado Internacional.)

"La Revolución Española que se Avecina y las Tareas de los Marxistas Revolucionarios." (Manifiesto del S.I. de la IV Internacional.)

"Informaciones Internacionales"

+ + +

For a copy of Cuarta Internacional send \$1 (U.S.) or equivalent to Jorge Cantero C., Casilla 5219, Santiago, Chile.

§ § §

Supplément du 11 avril 1963 de "Quatrième Internationale"

Directeur-gérant : Pierre FRANK, 54, rue de Valenciennes, PARIS 2e

Compte Chèques Postaux : P. Frank 15600-46 Paris.