

# WORLD OUTLOOK

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In this issue

Page

Boumedienne's Seizure of Power .....	1
Youth Festival in Doubt .....	5
Johnson Escalates to New Levels .....	6
"Project Long Hot Summer" -- by Evelyn Sell .....	9
A German Columnist Names Johnson's Actions .....	11
Philippine Students Condemn U.S. War in Vietnam .....	12
School on African Affairs Held in London .....	13
Arms Stolen in South Africa .....	14
News About South Africa's Prison Island .....	15
Students Demonstrate in Addis Ababa .....	17
Kyoto Rally Backs Vietnamese Freedom Fighters .....	18
The Neon Lights Go Out in Sasebo .....	18
An International Capitalist Custom .....	19
Depression Hits Japan .....	19
157,026 Japanese Unionists Punished for Strike Action .....	20
Portuguese Accused of Using Gas in Angola .....	21
Hiroshima to Reveal Story Banned by U.S. ....	21
Defferre and the Bucket of Milk -- by Pierre Frank .....	22
Want to Tour Free World Before It's Too Late .....	23
Followers of Posadas Released in Cuba -- by Joseph Hansen .....	24
Extremely Careless .....	29
Documents:	
Defend the Algerian Revolution! .....	30

### BOUMEDIENNE'S SEIZURE OF POWER

JUNE 25 -- The coup d'état pulled by Colonel Houari Boumedienne in Algiers June 19 has been judged by experts in this field to be one of the most skillful in history. It caught virtually everyone by complete surprise, the most stunned of all being Ben Bella who was hauled out of his bedroom at 2:25 a.m. by the

conspirators.

Of all the top figures in the Algerian leadership, Boumedienne has been the most taciturn. He was credited with being personally not inclined to take power, being content to stand behind Ben Bella. Behind the mask other ideas were brewing.

One of the explanations offered for the complete success achieved by the plotters in gaining the advantage of utter surprise, is that the coup d'état was hatched only a few hours before it was carried out. It was an emergency operation, in this view, to counter an impending move by Ben Bella to remove Boumedienne and to cut down the power of the army. Boumedienne decided that the best defense was an attack. His tactics won.

In today's Le Monde, however, Philippe Herreman writes that this version is now questionable. "It seems, instead, that the military were preparing this coup d'état for some time and that it was not, as was first believed, improvised during the evening. It is said in fact that they discreetly sounded out certain French circles eight days earlier in order to ascertain what the reaction in Paris would be in case power changed hands in Algiers."

This implies that while top circles in imperialist France may not have given Boumedienne the green light, they did not discourage the ambitious colonel and certainly did not warn Ben Bella.

The first effect among the masses in Algeria was complete shock. The plotters had seized all the mass communications media and therefore were able to block any appeals to the public for resistance and to issue instead their own versions of the news and appeals to remain calm. The radio was confined mostly to music. The newspapers carried a few paragraphs. The main impression was that the rigid censorship demanded in the past by Boumedienne on everything relating to the army had been extended to all other fields.

In the absence of a well-organized vanguard party, of unions with an independent leadership, the army stood as the only cohesive force in the country. Under such conditions the resistance had to begin from scratch and the big question -- one that has not yet been fully answered as of today -- was what would be the reaction of the masses? Obviously Boumedienne counted on their demoralization, on the slackening and sag in the revolution which has been visible for the past year or so.

But teen-age youth began demonstrating in Algiers on the evening of June 20 and these demonstrations have been repeated after sundown every evening since then, with a significant rise in the age level of the participants.

The demonstrations have been small enough to be dispersed by limited numbers of troops under Boumedienne's command. But the demonstrations are symptomatic.

In Bône and Oran much larger demonstrations have been building up. The tight censorship has slowed the news and left it incomplete, but enough travelers have reached France with eyewitness accounts to confirm the conclusion that the unrest over the coup d'état is considerable.

At Bône it was said that even a general strike had been staged to protest the seizure of power by Boumedienne.

Casualties are said to have been high in some areas.

In Cairo, Mohammed Hassanein Heykal, editor in chief of Al Ahram, wrote in a front-page article, upon returning from a visit to Algiers, that a foreign ambassador in Algeria who favors the new regime told him nonetheless that in his opinion seventy per cent of the people favor Ben Bella.

"As I was leaving," wrote the Cairo editor, who is a spokesman of Nasser, "there were many rumors that resistance committees were being organized against the new regime. Events have occurred that seem to confirm these rumors."

The most contradictory rumors are coming out of Algeria concerning the fate of individuals. One report has it that Ben Bella was gravely wounded in the abdomen on being seized. Other reports claim that he is well and his life has been guaranteed. His whereabouts have been listed as somewhere deep in the Sahara, in a suburb in Algiers, and in the center of the city itself.

The same kind of rumors are reported concerning left-wing figures. Mohamed Harbi, who was ousted from the editorship of the weekly Révolution Africaine by Ben Bella in one of his many maneuvers to appease the right wing, and, in this case, Boumedienne in particular, was reported to have been arrested and killed. But a different rumor said he had escaped, was already in the underground, and was busy with like-minded figures in organizing resistance committees.

Henri Alleg, and in fact the whole staff of Alger Républicain were also reported to already be at work in the underground.

At the same time there were reports of nation-wide raids in which hundreds of left-wing figures had been arrested, caught by Boumedienne's troops before they knew what had happened. It was clear that Boumedienne was working from lists that must have been prepared some time ago.

As for Boumedienne's program, this remained highly ambiguous.

Jean Lacouture, writing yesterday from Algiers, describes a press conference attended by 300 journalists at which Commandant Slimane, speaking for the "Council of the Revolution" in whose name Boumedienne seized power, floundered for answers for more than an hour. The new doctrine, reports Lacouture, can be summarized as follows:

"(a) The foreign press alone is responsible for the atmosphere of uneasiness with regard to Algeria. Let the journalists be more honest and everything will be all right. If after five days, the journalists find themselves the object of threats and rough treatment, this is because they have compelled the new Algerian regime to act against them.

"(b) Mr. Ben Bella becoming insupportable, the true Algerian democrats had the choice between appealing to the party bodies or acting in a more expeditious way.

"(c) Why talk about militarism and fascism? Such an attitude presupposes a social tradition that does not exist in Algeria.

"(d) It is impossible to reveal the names of the members of the Council of the Revolution at present. Did anyone ask the chiefs of the Wilayas [areas] to give their names during the war?"

"Thus," declares Lacouture, "the Commandant's audience learned neither the composition of the leading bodies, nor the present fate of Mr. Ben Bella, nor how he is to be tried, nor the state of negotiations with this or that personality ('the revolution is not negotiating'), nor above all the political plans of the new power. They did learn however that a stop was going to be made in the country to people 'clawing at each other like lions in a cage,' and that a White Book will reveal how the ousted leader was guilty of 'high treason.'"

It has been surmised that the coup d'état was timed to occur on the eve of the Afro-Asian conference, which was scheduled to open June 29. The conference, under preparation for several years, was viewed as of enormous prestige value to Ben Bella since it gave Algeria the appearance of standing at the very crossroads of the entire Third World. The plotters wanted to block Ben Bella from reaping all the publicity and political advantages.

Now it turns out that the advanced state of the preparations is hampering the swift military mop-up work required to consolidate the dictatorship. Eric Rouleau, another special correspondent of Le Monde, describes this in a dispatch from Algiers dated yesterday:

Boumedienne and Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika are both said to be wishing for "adjournment of the meeting and the early departure of the hundreds of journalists and foreign observers whose presence in the capital appears to be inopportune if not

frankly troublesome. It is in truth difficult for a regime operating under its own rules to liquidate its adversaries, to consolidate its positions, and to reorganize the public life in front of alert and often critical witnesses."

The Afro-Asian delegations arriving in Algeria have thus been able to see the student demonstrations and the difficulties faced by the gendarmes despite clubs and water-trucks in "reestablishing order."

"Colonel Boumedienne thus faces a dilemma that will last as long as there is any possibility of holding the conference. In fact, he cannot resort to force of arms in Algiers as he has done in the towns of the interior without running the risk of provoking serious conflicts under the eyes of his guests, many of whom have come in order to calculate the chances of the new regime lasting. Nor can he show prolonged tolerance toward his adversaries, who would take advantage of the respite in order to get organized and incite greater difficulties for the government. Wednesday, the demonstrators had the audacity to tear down the flags of the governments favoring Boumedienne and burning them in the garbage cans lining the Rue Michelet.

"These incidents, like the alarmist news coming from the interior, can only add to the reasons numerous governments already have for advocating adjournment of the conference."

The speed with which Peking rushed to recognize the Boumedienne regime and to assure it of full cooperation and aid led to considerable speculation that the Chinese had a hand in the plot to overthrow Ben Bella.

It is more likely that the Maoists were seeking to take factional advantage of the situation. One of Peking's major aims in the scheduled Afro-Asian conference was to gain the exclusion of the Soviet Union on the grounds that it is a "European" power. In return for quick recognition, Peking probably hoped for the quid pro quo of an assist from the host government in barring the Soviet delegation.

Within a few days, signs of hesitation and a bit more caution could be observed in the Chinese attitude. Chou En-lai held up going to Algiers, ostentatiously continuing conversations with Nasser.

#### YOUTH FESTIVAL IN DOUBT

JUNE 24 -- The French Preparatory Committee for the World Youth Festival has asked the International Preparatory Committee, whose headquarters is in Algiers, to transfer the festival from Algeria, where it was scheduled to be held July 28 to August 7, to

another country as soon as possible.

According to the Italian Preparatory Committee, members of the International Preparatory Committee have been arrested by the Boumedienne dictatorship. They have threatened to withdraw from the Festival if they are not released.

The Moroccan member of the International Preparatory Committee has left Algiers and gone home to Casablanca.

The Communist Youth Movement of France denounced Boumedienne in today's issue of l'Humanité in violent terms and added:

"The Ninth Festival, prepared under the slogan of solidarity with the youth and the people of Algeria struggling for the socialist construction of the Democratic and Popular Algerian Republic, cannot be used to help Algerian reactionary elements, allies of imperialism, who have tried up to now to block the preparations for the Festival in Algeria."

Colonel Boumedienne is said to have been unenthusiastic from the beginning about Ben Bella's idea of proposing Algeria as the host country for the Festival.

#### JOHNSON ESCALATES TO NEW LEVELS

U.S. troops occupying the Dominican Republic are digging in for a long stay. The first phase of the project assigned them -- to smother the uprising in Santo Domingo before it could flash through the island and bring down Trujillo's heirs -- is almost completed. They are carefully tightening on the sector of the city held by the Constitutionals. This is the origin of the frequent outbursts of fighting in which the casualties continue slowly to mount.

The Imbert puppet gang are also continuing their work of counterrevolutionary collaboration with the occupation forces. The secret firing squads have been at work and the toll of victims is rising. An effort was made to scandalize the United Nations about the butchery, but this body does not scandalize easily after its record in the Congo and before that in Korea.

As Johnson continued wielding the Big Stick that is to make the Dominican Republic safe for the American Way of Life, in another part of the world he was working away equally assiduously.

The publicity from the White House about reluctance to getting in deeper in Vietnam, about not wanting to start a Korea-type

war, proved as usual to be Johnson's way of preparing for a big move exactly opposite to his declarations.

On June 16 Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara revealed at a news conference that the White House was sending another 20,000 men to Vietnam, bringing the total to between 70,000 and 75,000 troops.

Johnson's escalation of the war has now reached the point where it no longer goes by jumps in the hundreds of men as at first, and then by thousands. It now goes by the tens of thousands. The figures set by those in position to know, such as Senator Morse and Hanson W. Baldwin, the military expert of the New York Times, no longer appear so fantastic as at first -- 300,000 American troops as a minimum.

A few days before the latest escalation in troop landings, the special correspondent of the London Observer cabled from Washington [June 12] that the Johnson administration is now "reluctantly and cautiously preparing the American public for painful casualty lists from Vietnam this summer." The headline of the article reads, no doubt without any intended irony: "L.B.J. ready for heavy casualties." His only problem, it seems, is to ready the mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers. "There is a feeling among some Washington officials that the Communists are counting on the greater toll of dead and wounded to produce a strong reaction in the American public against the war."

Still more ominous was the bombing mission that Johnson ostentatiously ordered June 17.

Thirty B-52 bombers, built to carry nuclear weapons, left Guam and flew 2,500 miles to Vietnam, refueling in air from tankers sent from the Philippines. One plane had to turn back due to mechanical trouble. Two crashed in mid air, costing two crews and \$18,000,000 worth of equipment. The 27 remaining planes reached a designated spot of jungle where each of them dropped 30,000 pounds of bombs in a half-square mile area.

The proclaimed objective was to "aid" Saigon's mercenary forces. A subsequent survey disclosed little damage to the freedom fighters in the area.

The Paris daily Le Monde ironically called it a "pile driver for swatting flies."

The real reason for this particular escalation of the Vietnam war was, of course, not the one proclaimed by the liars in Washington. The maps issued to show the long flight of the B-52's to their target were displayed in such a way as to include a good part of China. The curve showing the flight path from Guam to Vietnam,

if turned toward the northwest instead of the southwest, would have put the planes deep inside China.

The implication was only too obvious. In his way, Johnson was rattling the threat of sending nuclear bombers into China. This is a definite step in the Pentagon's blueprint of how to escalate a country into nuclear war. At a certain point the possibility of using nuclear weapons is brought increasingly to the fore. The idea is to condition the public to the idea of crossing over the sill before actually doing it. That way there is less chance of a stampede reaction among the herd.

A still further step in the escalation was taken by Johnson June 22 when for the first time he ordered bombings to begin in areas north of Hanoi; i.e., another jump closer to the border of China.

While this grim march went on toward a Korea-type war, and beyond that to a war with China and the possibility of a nuclear conflagration that could wipe out humanity, comic relief was provided by the government of the ineffable Harold Wilson.

The London Times [June 16] reported, with as much excitement as is possible to this staid journal, that the "Prime Minister has begun a new diplomatic initiative to try to bring the Vietnam crisis to the conference table."

The consultations "are multilateral and they presumably involve both Washington and Moscow. They are still at an early stage of development."

The "new initiative" proved to be very exciting indeed. In a secret session of the annual Commonwealth conference June 17 it was decided to send a five-man negotiations-seeking mission "to the countries concerned in the Vietnam war."

It was a great idea. It won huzzahs and hurrahs. Wilson said he had of course made sure to check with Johnson beforehand and Johnson had given his unqualified approval. In fact Johnson even made sure to give the mission a good send-off by announcing on the very same day that Wilson's "new initiative" was unveiled that he would reject any idea of "direct negotiation with the Viet Cong."

Johnson's warm approval of the work of the bright London boy on his team was matched by the coldness of the reception that came from the victims of U.S. imperialist aggression.

It could confidently be predicted that Wilson's ingenious rejoinder to the unkind things being said about his policy of approving everything Johnson does will not be long remembered. Perhaps Wilson will try again -- after he first gets Johnson's permission.



"PROJECT LONG HOT SUMMER"

By Evelyn Sell

Two men, Hubert Humphrey, vice-president of the United States and chairman of the President's Council on Equal Opportunity, and Le Roy Collins, director of the Community Relations Service, have been working fast and furiously on what is now termed "Project Long Hot Summer." The aim is to head off the expected eruptions of civil-rights volcanoes this summer.

Collins, in particular, has been traveling around the United States, conferring with local government and business leaders. The primary concern of the Johnson administration is to avert a repetition of 1964's explosions in the North and civil-rights murders and violence in the South.

Collins has a simple sales talk. It boils down to persuading local businessmen and politicians that racial strife does not pay off in dollars and cents. He points to the cost of crime, of public charity, of bad publicity for business. He argues that the civil-rights movement has become so powerful that it cannot be suppressed and that the best tactic is to temporize with it lest it get completely out of hand.

These are persuasive arguments. But the truth is that both businessmen and politicians have gained enormously from racial discrimination. Racial divisions within the working class have helped keep the unions out, wages down and profits up. Are they inclined to raise wages, to provide jobs -- in other words advance a solution to get at the heart of the problem?

Collins and his staff can claim some success in their efforts to "enlighten" business and political leaders as to where their best interests lay. In April twenty-two Alabama business groups took out full-page advertisements in the nationally circulated Wall Street Journal and in their local papers pledging compliance with the civil-rights law. They said they would provide fair job opportunities and promised to improve race relations.

The Mississippi Economic Council announced that it would seek equal job rights for Negroes among its business members. Collins is especially proud of the results of his work in McComb, Mississippi, the site of sixteen bombings and Ku Klux Klan terror during 1964. Desegregation of all-white motels and restaurants and a pledge of "equal treatment under the law" followed editorials by McComb publisher Oliver Emmerich and secret citizens meetings that grew from an attendance of twenty-five to more than 600.

Collins' persuasive arguments would have borne little fruit

without the continuing activities undertaken by the Negro community. Caught between the freedom fighters and the extreme violence and disruption created by the racist police and the Ku Klux Klan, business leaders grasp at Collins' battle tactics like drowning men clutching at straws.

Local white community leaders are constantly being reminded that this summer's racial peace depends on their actions. When Attorney-General Nicholas Katzenbach was asked about a "long, hot summer" of racial demonstrations, he answered, "I think whether there are difficulties this coming summer will depend to a large extent on how well the mayors of the bigger cities, which have the biggest problems, move to meet these problems and to anticipate them -- and how much we in the Federal Government can do to help such efforts."

The federal government is trying to do a great deal. Trusted "responsible" Negroes, such as Carl T. Rowan, director of the U.S. Information Agency, are trying to divert Negro militants into "constructive channels." Speaking at a fund-raising dinner for the Chicago branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP], Rowan urged the members to engage in civil-rights battles with dignity, intellect and a public relations campaign rather than with "another long, hot summer of discontent."

"I recognize," said Rowan, "that in some of our youth circles today a jail record is a badge of courage...but I am constrained to remind youngsters also that a Phi Beta Kappa key [awarded for scholastic ability in college] is a badge of honor...and no less vital to the successful outcome of our struggle."

In addition to such soothing speeches, the Johnson administration members are considering a massive conference on religion and race to be held in Washington during the summer. It is hoped that such a conference would serve as "a nondestructive outlet for pent-up emotions against racial discrimination." Tentative plans call for a two-day meeting of civil-rights and religious groups climaxed by a large demonstration.

The May 16 New York Times reported: "It is believed that another March on Washington, even on a smaller scale than that of 1963, would serve as a safety valve by giving minority groups an opportunity to express their grievances. At the same time, the Government could reaffirm that its goal is to wipe out discrimination."

When asked about their reactions to such a proposed conference, several civil-rights leaders who were in the 1963 March on Washington said they knew nothing about such plans and doubted that it would serve any useful purpose "especially if it were organized

by the Government." (My emphasis.)

Phony Negro "leaders" and phony marches organized to divert the civil-rights fighters from reaching their goals are very poor bulwarks against what Collins himself has called "the social change now sweeping America." Every day there is some news of a racial clash, a demonstration, a campaign being launched. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee [SNCC] and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference [SCLC] have announced voter registration campaigns and freedom schools in the South again this summer. The Mississippi Freedom Democratic party continues to campaign to unseat the five white Mississippians elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Project Long Hot Summer must contend with Project Freedom Now.

#### A GERMAN COLUMNIST NAMES JOHNSON'S ACTIONS

There are many signs of uneasiness in Germany over Johnson's belligerent foreign policy. A good indication of the course of thinking is provided by an article written by Sebastian Haffner in the June 13 issue of Stern. Haffner, one of Germany's best known columnists ran with the pack of cold-war extremists until he came to realize what an atomic war against "Communism" could signify for humanity. Stern is Germany's biggest illustrated publication, having a circulation of 1,700,000. It is read by an estimated audience of 10,000,000 people.

"I am not an anti-American," Haffner wrote. "On the contrary, I am an admirer and defender of America. I cherish the still unmatched model of liberal democracy to be found in the United States of America...Nevertheless I believe it is absolutely necessary to speak out and say that the American actions in Vietnam and Santo Domingo are not merely political mistakes, but crimes. It is difficult to see wherein what President Johnson is doing differs from the deeds for which Ribbentrop was hanged at Nuremberg and the Soviet Union was condemned when it crushed the Hungarian uprising."

"In Vietnam," Haffner continued, "Johnson is conducting a cruel war of destruction against a country that has done nothing at all against America and that only wants to live the way it finds best. That is why everything in Vietnam, painfully constructed in the struggle against poverty, is now being blown to bits by the daily American bombings.

"In Santo Domingo an uprising occurred against a military junta that had ousted a freely elected government. Whereupon a huge American army invaded the country in order to restore dictatorial

rule through the use of armed force.

"In both instances aggression was involved -- something not only declared to be a crime in the Nuremberg Charter of 1945, but the greatest of crimes...

"At home Johnson is certainly no Hitler. In the racial strife he has even acted as a progressive reformer and he has not ended American democracy. Thank heaven for that! Thus there is still hope that the Americans themselves, through the democratic process, will restore reason to a President now running amok and prevent a third world war. However, Hitler's worst crime, not staying at home but arrogating to himself the right to invade foreign countries by force of arms, has, alas, been committed by President Johnson, too. And unfortunately it is to be feared that this can end in a world war....

"America's friends and allies, including the Federal Republic [West Germany] need moral courage. They should warn President Johnson in unmistakable terms -- if possible all with one voice. This together with the warning voices to be heard inside the country, saving America's honor, could possibly still prevent the threatening disaster. If through cowardice, we fail to tell the Americans the name of their deeds, the time can come quicker than might be thought when all that remains to be said is "Each man for himself!"

#### PHILIPPINE STUDENTS CONDEMN U.S. WAR IN VIETNAM

[The following declaration appeared in the January-February issue of the Progressive Review, a vanguard publication in the Philippines.]

\* \* \*

We, students of various colleges and schools in the Philippines, condemn the clear attempt of the United States to provoke an international war in Asia, involve the Philippine youth in another futile war of American expansion as in South Korea, contravene our fundamental law which renounces war, and moreover, endanger the lives and homes of our people who themselves have more than enough problems of their own due to colonialism and imperialism.

We know for a fact that the United States, in taking over what the French left in South Vietnam after Dien Bien Phu, has transgressed the Geneva Agreement which prohibits foreign intervention. The Bogey of Communism has been raised only to justify the suppression of the South Vietnamese peasantry and strengthen American imperialism through the successive "free world" dictatorships of Ngo Dinh

Diem and Nguyen Khan and the brutal use of strategic hamlets (barbed wire enclosures), noxious chemicals and other forms of "special warfare." We know for a fact that the South Vietnamese movement now bravely opposing the full power of the United States is neutralist and nationalistic in policy and would have none of imperialism.

Now, as if it were not satisfied with the senseless killing and oppression of the South Vietnamese peasants, the United States is trying to provoke a northward war against the Democratic Republic of North Vietnam.

We condemn both the basic fact of American intervention in Indo-China and the heightened provocation against peoples wanting to live peacefully within their own national territories. We hereby affirm the principles of national freedom and peace to which we are deeply committed in the Manila and Bandung Declarations and the U.N. Charter. The U.S. has always been flagrantly too far out from its own national territory.

We see clearly that our military treaties and commitments with the United States negate our constitutional process and would be the very cause of our doom if a general nuclear conflagration breaks out in Asia. And, death shall not be our only share, but also shame -- shame for allowing the military bases of the United States in the Philippines to be the staging grounds for attacks against our Asian brothers.

#### SCHOOL ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS HELD IN LONDON

[The following article appeared in the June 11 issue of the British pacifist publication Peace News under the title "Violent revolution anticipated by African affairs school." The author is Wendy Butlin.]

\* \* \*

A three-day school on African affairs sponsored by The Week, the socialist news digest, took place over Whitsun at Africa Unity House in London. One of the main subjects under discussion was the struggle for democracy in South Africa -- the way ahead for the Africans fighting for liberation in that country and the role of their supporters in other countries, specifically the role of the British Labour movement. Speakers also talked of the theory and practice of neo-colonialism and the prospect for socialism in Africa as a whole.

The most striking thing about the school was that the whole discussion about South Africa took place within the framework of

the assumption that the only possible outcome there is armed revolution. All the official speakers and almost everyone who made a contribution from the floor assumed this. Mr. Mathew Nkoana of the Pan Africanist Congress said:

"We accept boycotts and discussion of sanctions as a symbol of solidarity, but we are not pleased when a boycott campaign is made the main international platform. We want material support for an armed revolution in South Africa."

Mr. Charles van Gelderen, an ex-Labour councillor for Hammer-smith, who spoke on the role of the British Labour movement, said that the Labour Party must see itself as part of the colonial revolution, which is the most important thing happening in the world at the present time. It must be ready to supply arms to the revolutionaries in South Africa.

There was strong criticism of the Anti-Apartheid Movement from several speakers. Some said that it did useful work but did not go far enough. But others said that it in fact does more harm than good by claiming there can be a peaceful solution in South Africa and deflecting attention from the need to build up support for armed revolution.

Several speakers interpreted the South African situation basically as an economic problem, not a racial one; they said that the racial question was invented to cover the truth of the situation which is that once the early settlers had turned the indigenous people into an economic asset by using them as a cheap labour force they needed to keep them in subjugation.

Among the speakers, in addition to the above-named, were Raymond Kunene, European representative of the African National Congress; Cardiff Marney, chairman of the South African Coloured Peoples' Congress; Ernest Mandel, of La Gauche, Belgium's left-wing weekly; Ken Jordaan, an exiled South African; and Kojo Amoo-Gottfried, last year's president of the Council of African Organisations.

South Africa presents an acute problem for everyone concerned with liberty and social justice. The feeling uppermost in my mind after attending this symposium was that those among us who hope to help the coloured peoples of South Africa to attain liberty and justice without recourse to violence and bloodshed need to think very hard and move very fast.

#### ARMS STOLEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

The June Anti-Apartheid News reports that 13,236 firearms have been stolen in South Africa and West Africa over the past four years. The figures were released by Justice Minister B.J.Vorster who said this only included cases reported to the police.

NEWS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA'S PRISON ISLAND

[The following article reporting the most recent facts available about Robben Island prison is by Colin Legum. It appeared in the June 6 issue of the London Observer. Legum is known for his concern about truthful presentation of the facts. Among the details which he makes public is the confinement of Dr. Neville Alexander, one of South Africa's most distinguished intellectuals, to the "punishment block." The grim news should serve as a reminder to all supporters of the South African freedom struggle that the families of the prisoners need help. In the case of Dr. Alexander, funds can be forwarded through Connie Kirkby, Secretary of the British Alexander Defence Committee, 27 Thursley House, Holmewood Gardens, London, S.E.2.]

\* \* \*

Despite undertakings by the South African Government to improve its prison island -- Robben Island, off Cape Town -- two reports by regular visitors throw a disturbing light on the conditions under which its 1,329 inmates survive.

Most are political prisoners, and include leaders like Nelson Mandela and Robert Sobukwe as well as a score or so of leading African and Coloured doctors, poets, writers and lecturers.

Stung by overseas criticism, the Verwoerd Government has conducted specially selected guests around the island, and has produced a series of pictures to show how well its political prisoners are treated. Even the Red Cross was unable to establish the true facts when Dr. Hoffman, its delegate, was taken round the island. The few prisoners who dared to complain to him were subsequently punished.

The first report of conditions on the island comes from the Christian Council of South Africa and deals with the pastoral care of the prisoners. It complains that no proper services can be held by the chaplains. They have to stand at one end of an empty corridor. "When hymns are sung, each man joins in from the cells."

No distinction

Although the chaplaincy letter of appointment requires that each chaplain should be informed of all new arrivals, this is not done. Accordingly they do not know whom to visit. They are forbidden to discuss with prisoners the studies on which they are engaged. All conversations are in the full hearing of security officers.

No distinction is made between the political prisoners and those in "D" category, who comprise the hardened criminals of the thug type. "The political prisoners are confined under the same

rigorous conditions as the worst criminals in the land."

At present prisoners who wish to study are able to do so only if their families can supply the necessary funds.

The second report comes from a privileged visitor of professional repute. He describes the special punishment block as a corrugated-iron unit with emergency cells which should hold about 15 prisoners. They usually hold about 50. There is one water tap and an exposed toilet.

All the persons convicted at the Rivonia trial with Nelson Mandela have been confined to the punishment block at one time or another.

Others who have been confined there include the brilliant German-trained scholar, Dr. Alexander, Dr. Ngakane, Fiquile Bam and Billy Nair.

#### Short of food

Inmates are punished for the slightest infringement -- usually for "not working hard enough." This means three meals disallowed.

Food is insufficient and unvaried. Africans get porridge mixed with soup and sugar for breakfast, black coffee and sugar, but no bread. For lunch on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays they are given plain boiled maize. On the other days they are given boiled maize and beans. They have their last meal at 3:30 in the afternoon and get nothing again until 6 a.m.

Prisoners are afraid of reporting sick. When they do they are usually told by the warders that they are shamming and are sometimes assaulted. Most prisoners only go to the hospital when they are in dire need. There appears to be only one treatment for stomach complaints -- castor oil.

Prisoners are kept in cells of about 80 ft. by 20 ft., which should accommodate 40 to 50. Instead there are usually between 80-90 men in them. There is always a shortage of water, especially on Saturdays and Sundays. Each cell has two modern flush toilets to be shared between the 80-90 people.

Although Robben Island has a cold and changeable climate and prisoners work in open quarries, they have inadequate clothing and no raincoats. Those who do not arrive with shoes are given one pair, which must last for as long as they are on the island. Prisoners complain of having to endure daily insults.



STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE IN ADDIS ABABA

The Ethiopian People's Movement Council [EPMC] reports that a peaceful demonstration of some 500 students in Addis Ababa May 15 was brutally suppressed by the police, five or six being clubbed unconscious. Eighty-two students were arrested, including eighteen girls. Nineteen teachers were hauled in for interrogation, six of them being detained.

The demonstration was organized to protest against the dismissal of ten students on charges that they had organized a new student union following the banning of their former council in reprisal for a massive demonstration last February demanding an immediate land reform, equitable distribution of the land and the abolition of serfdom.

In protesting the dismissal of their ten school mates, the students were putting into practice the resolutions adopted by the Fourth Annual Congress of the National Union of Ethiopian University Students held May 4-8, 1964, in Addis Ababa. The students resolved to "protect the rights and privileges of students, such as freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of worship, etc., and also to stand against any infringement on students' rights of associations and/or travel...; to render any justified opposition to any government's move to detain student leaders fighting for student rights and privileges;...to eliminate the evils of suffering and oppression regardless of any reprisals from governmental and/or other authority organisations;...to participate in the political and economic life of their societies and to see to it that the political and social systems of their countries should be in line with the general will of the people..."

The Ethiopian People's Movement Council issued a statement expressing its solidarity with the students which was read over the radio. The EPMC statement declared: "Clubbing our heroic students cannot stop the revolutionary and democratic movement in our country. Nor can it save the monarchy whose fall will be similar to that of Russian Czarism -- the organised gang of exploiters and assassins...Ethiopian students! Ally yourselves with the moving force of history -- the masses of the people. Bring the masses forward to storm this ruthless system of parasitism which leaves nothing to them like the locusts that starve them every year. Throw stones at this glass house called monarchy until it is utterly shattered. The EPMC is with you. Have no fear; only those who live on guilt have reasons to fear. The EPMC congratulates you. Be vigilant. Be united. Be organised. Long live the revolution!"

KYOTO RALLY BACKS VIETNAMESE FREEDOM FIGHTERS

A mass rally was staged in Kyoto May 31 to protest against U.S. aggression in Vietnam. About 500 participated. Organized by a committee representing twenty-five local peace organizations, including faculty unions of Kyoto, Doshisha, Ritsumeikan and Kyoto Gakugei universities, it was held on the Ritsumeikan University campus.

The rally adopted plans on collecting signatures to endorse the National Front of Liberation in south Vietnam and on raising funds for its cause.

A declaration was adopted stating, "We protest the Government cooperating with the U.S. in Vietnam and will fight for peace with all other peace-loving Japanese people."

The rally decided to send protests to Johnson and to the Japanese government as well as a letter of encouragement to the Vietnamese people.

After the rally the participants marched through the streets of Kyoto.

THE NEON LIGHTS GO OUT IN SASEBO

War generally means profit bonanzas for many kinds of business. But Sasebo port in Nagasaki Prefecture, where a big U.S. naval base is located, has been hard hit by the war in Vietnam, reports the June 3 Japan Times.

In February "when America began bombing North Vietnam," supply ships and mine sweepers "steamed out of the port."

With the Americans gone, neon lights in the "entertainment district" were darkened. Some 600 hostesses and 300 waiters were thrown out of jobs.

"In Sasebo port," explains the Japan Times, "there are exclusive bars for U.S. servicemen and about 2,000 entertainment houses. There are also barbers, taxis, realtors and others who cater to servicemen." It is estimated that about 50,000 persons, or one-fourth the population of Sasebo, depend on the naval base for an income.

How the next turn in the war will affect the fortunes of Sasebo is not predicted. Hideyoshi Mizumoto, head of the "A-Class

Caterers Association," said, "We will have to change to some other business if American servicemen do not come back." He hoped that U.S. nuclear submarines might visit Sasebo.

Most of the Japanese people have been demanding that Washington's nuclear pig boats stay out of Japanese harbors. They remind the country too grimly of how the last big scramble for the profits of war ended.

### AN INTERNATIONAL CAPITALIST CUSTOM

"The gas explosion in the Yamano colliery in Fukuoka Prefecture took the lives of 236 coal miners Wednesday," the June 4 Japan Times reports the Tokyo Shimbun as saying in an editorial. "The mine, since it parted from its former parent firm in 1962, doubled production per head in 1963 and 1964, which surpassed by far the nation's average in that period. The high production, however, was attained through a greater number of casualties, which was also doubled. The fact indicates that management had failed to take adequate safety measures in pushing the policy to increase production. The Yamano mine blast was the third of its kind this year. These disasters can hardly be called accidents as they were all caused by explosions of gas deposits in the colliery. We regret to notice that despite the safety measures that were established since the Mike mine disaster in 1963, which killed 458 miners, no improvements had been made to ensure the safety of coal miners."

### DEPRESSION HITS JAPAN

Japan has been hit by a depression. The Asahi Shimbun calls it "the worst" in the history of the country. Other newspapers are not so pessimistic. The Nihon Keizai Shimbun, for instance, calls it only a "recession" although it admits that the economy is in "the grip of a mood of depression..."

A clamor has gone up among businessmen that the Sato Cabinet do something about the situation and ideas of many kinds are pouring into the suggestion box. Opinions seem to be divided, however, on exactly what should be done.

The effects of the depression are noticeable in many fields. A Waseda University student told the June 7 Weekly Sankei: "Whenever our classmates gather, we talk only about job-hunting. We are too worried about our future to concentrate on study."

A survey carried out by the publication shows that 60 out of

134 well-established Japanese companies will hire fewer new employees next year than in the past. Fifteen companies plan no expansion whatsoever. Nearly 80% of Japanese companies will hire fewer university graduates next year than previously, according to the weekly.

Bonuses this year will increase in amount but drop in ratio to monthly salaries. The drop is calculated to be about 5%.

The first reaction of the union bureaucracies is to go along with fewer increases in bonuses than last year. This will mean a drop in the standard of living since prices have continued to rise.

Last year, one company paid a cash bonus. This year it is going to give a small transistor radio to each employee. Since the company has 50,000 employees, it can "deplete its transistor radio stock by 50,000 units."

#### 157,026 JAPANESE UNIONISTS PUNISHED FOR STRIKE ACTION

The Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. [NTT] has announced that punishment is to be meted out to three-fourths of its 210,000 workers for participating in illegal half-day strikes on April 20 and 23 for higher wages. [See World Outlook May 7.]

Thirty-two union leaders were ordered discharged, 677 were suspended for four to twelve months, 11,877 had their wages cut for one to eleven months, and 142,848 were "admonished."

The union immediately protested the punishments, stating it would take all possible measures to have them retracted.

The central executive committee of the union said that protest action would include refusal of overtime work for ten days.

The law prohibits government enterprise workers from striking but the General Council of Japan Trade Unions [Sohyo] has been seeking repeal of the legislation as contrary to the conventions of the International Labor Organization.

Sohyo demanded immediate withdrawal of the punishments. It also said it would take its case to the ILO.

Members of the Japanese National Railway Workers Union [Kokuro] were also hit by disciplinary action for striking for higher wages last April. Punishment was ordered by management against 1,592 workers accused of participating in the strike.

The Kokuro announced it would stage a long-range struggle of "noncooperation" against management by way of protest.

PORTUGUESE ACCUSED OF USING GAS IN ANGOLA

The Angolan Press and Information service [API] reported June 8 that the Portuguese forces of repression in Angola used gas against the freedom fighters at Dembos, not far from Bula Atumba, and also in an area eighty kilometers south of Golungo Alto.

The gas was used in retaliation for the heavy losses suffered by fascist dictator Salazar's troops in the mountains and forests of Dembos.

Several dozen peasants were poisoned by the gas, the API reports.

This is not the first time the Portuguese colonialists have resorted to the use of gas but it is the first time they have used it in such large quantities and with such heavy consequences.

The Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile [GRAE] informed the International Red Cross and appealed to world public opinion against this inhuman use of Nazi methods. It asked that vigorous protests be lodged against the Portuguese government.

The API also reported that Portuguese planes bombed and burned the villages of Mpala, Lufico, Lukossa and Miezi in the first part of June, causing many casualties.

HIROSHIMA TO REVEAL STORY BANNED BY U.S.

Hiroshima has scheduled early publication of a book Our Experience with the A-Bomb which will tell for the first time what really happened when the nuclear device was exploded over the crowded city on President Truman's orders.

The book is a collection of more than 600 personal records written in 1947 by those who were in the city at the time it was levelled to the ground.

The book was to have been issued on August 6, 1950, by the city in commemoration of the first use of a nuclear weapon on human beings but the U.S. occupation authorities banned it.

A book written by Kiyoshi Yoshikawa, My Experience and Fight Against the A-Bomb Disease, suffered a similar fate in 1947. It was first drastically edited. The U.S. occupation authorities then devoted more thought to the problem of the book's probable repercussions and decided to ban it.

DEFERRE AND THE BUCKET OF MILK

By Pierre Frank

Who does not recall La Fontaine's fable about Perrette and the bucket of milk she was carrying to market? In her daydream she saw herself investing the proceeds in some eggs which she hatched out and sold, to reinvest in a pig, and so on until she ended up rich. But then she stumbled over a rock. "Goodbye, cow, calf, pig, chicks..."

Who would have thought that the mayor of Marseilles, Gaston Defferre, would illustrate this fable in life in French politics? Egged on by a brain trust headed by the publisher of the Paris weekly Express, which is fascinated by the American way of launching a presidential candidate, Defferre took a series of steps aimed at winning the biggest prize of all. It began with the mysterious "Candidate X." This algebraic formula was filled in with the name of Defferre. He then sought the backing of a special congress of the Socialist party. Next came the support of the "clubs" -- these associations of technocrats flourishing under de Gaulle's Bonapartist regime. This would enable him to launch the formula of a "democratic socialist federation" to be approved by congresses of the Socialist party and the bourgeois MRP [Mouvement Républicain Populaire]. It all met its end in a ten-hour session where the Jesuits of the MRP and the Freemasons of the SFIO [Socialist party] opened up their bag of tricks.

The day after the downfall of Defferre's visionary "federation," some of the commentators, including those on the payroll of Le Monde [France's most serious daily newspaper], deplored the setback, attributing it to the maneuvers of Mollet, Lecanuet, etc. It is true that the maneuvers of these old dogs in politics are beyond count; but in this case they didn't need them. The people dazzled by advertising techniques simply failed to take into account the facts of life in French politics, thinking that a high-powered campaign would be sufficient to bowl over parties with deep roots in the country, particularly the Socialist party.

Some of them, no doubt, do not understand this and we will see new attempts at overriding the parties with a kind of Gaullism. But at the moment, the so-called "left" parties of France still face the problem of what to do about the presidential election now less than five months away.

Although Defferre has shown himself to be a very seedy-looking politician, the Socialist party is putting the maximum pressure on him not to give up his candidacy. For the Guy Mollet leadership, it is out of the question to run a joint candidate with the French Communist party. And Mollet has no alternative to Defferre. It is

quite likely that Mollet himself thinks a defeat at the polls will do more harm to Defferre's position inside the SFIO than it will to the future of the SFIO as an electoral party.

The setback to Defferre's Operation Federation has suddenly revived all the hopes of the French Communist party leadership for a common candidate of the "left," for they are particularly anxious to avoid having to run a Communist candidate, fearing that the inevitable loss of votes will convert the election into a plebiscite for de Gaulle and aggravate the deep uneasiness observable in the party ranks. The Communist party leadership is showing interest in a committee of artists and writers which amid general indifference a few months ago expressed its hope for a single candidate of the left.

It is not our intention, however, to follow in detail the corridor operations to be expected in the next two or three months. For years the labor leaders have worked in this way to the profit of de Gaulle. In the short period ahead things cannot be righted and the presidential campaign will again offer the spectacle of dispersed labor forces and a serious loss of votes.

At bottom this will prove to be another illusion of the ineffectiveness, of the illusory character of the solution offered by the leaderships of the traditional workers parties to Gaullism. Bourgeois democracy, whatever the adjective used to decorate it with (real, renovated, etc.), is not capable of arousing the working masses, of breaking through the resistance of the socialist leaders on even the very limited question of a candidate in the election. The united labor front needed to engage in a serious struggle against Gaullism at present -- not in order to prepare for "after de Gaulle" -- can only be organized on the basis of a program that begins with the immediate needs of the masses, advances solutions that will in themselves point to the perspective of a new power and a new regime, the perspective of a Workers and Peasants Government that will open the road to the construction of a socialist society.

#### WANT TO TOUR FREE WORLD BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

Business Week predicts that travel from the U.S. to Europe will break all records this year. One of the reasons for the big jump, the U.S. magazine believes, is President Johnson's appeal to the public to stay home.

Some Americans seem to feel, says Business Week, that "if the Government just asks them not to go this year, it might forbid them to go next year." The article quoted a travel agent as saying, "People are going abroad now before Johnson clamps on restrictions. For everyone who puts off a trip this year, five are going."

FOLLOWERS OF POSADAS RELEASED IN CUBA

By Joseph Hansen

In a "letter" dated April 23, which was published in the April issue of the Mexican Voz Obrera, J. Posadas announces that "all of our Cuban comrades" have been released from prison. Posadas claims to be the head of the world Trotskyist movement, although in reality he split from the Fourth International several years ago; and his followers in Cuba have frequently been described as "the Cuban Trotskyists" because that is how they designate themselves.

While Posadas takes the entire front page of Voz Obrera to hail the release of his followers, he unfortunately provides few details about the circumstances of their arrest and imprisonment.

He states that his organization had "forecast" that its members would be freed "long before completing their infamous sentences of nine, six, five and three years..." The prediction was borne out, he notes, by the fact that they served only somewhat more than a year and a half.

As for the reasons for the sentences, Posadas says merely that "The Trotskyists were imprisoned in Cuba for reasons of political interest to the bureaucrats and the reactionary interests." ["Los trotskistas fueron presos en Cuba por razones de interés político de los burócratas y de intereses reaccionarios."]

Posadas offers high praise for the conduct of his followers in prison. "In the jails our comrades dedicated themselves to giving an impulse to the revolution, to raising the fighting capacity of the prisoners in defense of the Cuban workers state. They were in charge of courses on Marxism. Our comrades dedicated themselves to this activity with complete revolutionary passion, responsibility and objectivity to give an impulse to the revolution. They were fighting within the jail in defense of the worker's state and the world revolution. And they were prisoners of the leaders of the Cuban worker's state. Their conduct, their dignity and resolution, objective responsible activity (placed above personal concern and their struggle for freedom) in defense of the revolution, in defense of the Cuban worker's state, were factors of fundamental importance that won their freedom."

For some unknown reason, however, Posadas fails to mention their names and it is not even clear from his letter how many were involved.

The rest of the letter, which is a lengthy one, deals with the significance of the event. As Posadas sees it, "The freeing of our Cuban comrades is a historic event, comparable to the great



advances in the revolutionary struggles of humanity." ["La libertad de nuestros camaradas cubanos es un acontecimiento histórico, comparable a los grandes avances de las luchas revolucionarias de la humanidad."]

The credit for correctly predicting the early release of the group goes to the head of the organization. Posadas himself makes this absolutely clear: "In the December 1964 letter from Comrade Posadas to the Cuban comrades, he said that soon the rise, the development of the world revolution would bring the release of the comrades from jail. The confirmation of these forecasts must serve the whole International to raise its spirits, its functioning, to harmonize and dynamically organize its activity and its objectives."

In view of the importance of his April 23 letter, Posadas declares that "meetings must be immediately organized to explain and discuss this letter and its conclusions" and that it "must be published in the newspapers" of his grouping; and "a dynamic political offensive of activity by our parties in all parts of the world must be carried out."

A more specific account of the arrests appeared in the January-February issue of the Spartacist, published in New York by James Robertson, who appears to have succeeded in establishing fraternal relations with Posadas or at least to have won the confidence of some of his followers.

The author of the article, who is not named, "was one of several supporters of the SPARTACIST who participated in the trip to Cuba last summer of eighty-four American students, in defiance of a State Department ban on travel to Cuba." This group spent two months in Cuba "making an extensive tour of the country, investigating the results of five years of the Cuban Revolution. During this time the author had lengthy interviews with Leon Ferrera, son of the imprisoned leader of the Cuban Trotskyists."

It is to be noted that the author of the article was able to travel freely and extensively in Cuba and to investigate what is listed as "repressive acts" undertaken "by the Cuban government." The atmosphere in Cuba, clearly, is less repressive than in the United States where the editor of the Spartacist correctly deemed it wise to hide the identity of the author of the article.

The arrests began in November 1963, according to the Spartacist, when Andrés Alfonso was "arbitrarily ordered arrested" by the administrator of the shop in which he worked. The arrest came after he distributed copies of Voz Proletaria "among his fellow workers." Voz Proletaria is the paper published by the Posadas group in Cuba. The contents of the particular issue involved is not reported by the Spartacist.

"Florida Fraga, the companion of Andrés, was arrested without charges at her home the night of December 1, 1963, after returning from a meeting of her CDR where she had denounced the arrest of Andrés and asked the Committee to solicit his immediate release...."

"The following day, December 2, 1963, when Ricardo Ferrara went to inquire about Florida at the Fifth Unit of the CDR, he himself was seized and illegally ordered arrested."

These three "were held incommunicado for five months without any accusations or charges being placed against them..."

Finally in the spring of 1964 "they were taken from their prisons to a trial that was closed to the public."

The author of the article in the Spartacist, however, was able to ascertain the charges. These were: "(1) distributing an illegal paper, (2) advocating the overthrow of the Cuban government, and (3) being critical of Fidel Castro." The sentences were two years each for Florida Fraga and Ricardo Ferrara and five years for Andrés Alfonso. [Posadas lists only four sentences as indicated above, and says that the lowest sentence was three years, not two.]

Two more followers of Posadas were then arrested the same month. "Roberto Tejera was taken into custody when he went to inquire about his three comrades. Later, the police came to the apartment of Idalberto Ferrera, the General Secretary of the POR and editor of Voz Proletaria, and arrested him, again with no explanation." They were brought to trial and found guilty "on the same charges as the others." "Roberto was sentenced to six years; comrade Ferrera was sentenced to nine years!"

The author of the article in the Spartacist reported other items about the persecution of the Posadas tendency collected during the extensive investigation. For example: "While in Cuba some of the students spoke with another comrade from Guantanamo City, who had been fired from his job by the factory administration because he was a Trotskyist."

During the investigation, according to the Spartacist reporter, the students met with Che Guevara and one of them asked the Cuban leader "concerning the jailed Trotskyists, if it would not be better if political criticism in the framework of unconditional support and defense of the Revolution, should be handled politically, rather than by suppression of views." In the ensuing discussion, Guevara is quoted as raising the question of the loyalty of "the Cuban Trotskyists" and their record in the revolution.

The students also took up the question with Blas Roca, an old-time leader of the Cuban Communist party, and apparently had a lengthy discussion with him on points related to the position of the

Cuban Trotskyists during the past thirty years. Blas Roca, of course, gave a Stalinist version.

The author of the article was very favorably impressed by Leon Ferrera, "son of the imprisoned General Secretary and editor of Voz Proletaria..."

"We spoke with Leon and other comrades of POR in his small apartment in a workers' district of old Havana. His father had received his nine year sentence only about three weeks before we had arrived in Cuba and he was not sure just when he and the rest of his comrades would also be arrested. Sitting there in his Militia uniform he looked very much 'inside' the Revolution. When questioned about the repressive actions taking [sic] against his father and the other comrades, he was primarily concerned that, aside from the discredit to the Cuban Revolution by these Stalinist tactics, the arrests represented a very serious threat to the advance of the Revolution. He explained that all of the Trotskyists' criticism had only one purpose -- to strengthen the Revolution and correct its weaknesses already manifesting themselves."

The author of the article holds that a kind of "cat and mouse" game was played with the followers of Posadas. "Some of the Trotskyists were detained and released several times before their final arrests; while three were being held for months without charges or any sign of release, their modest press was permitted to continue publication." This is an "indication of the variety of powerful forces acting on the Cuban leadership and elements within it, that prevent it from acting as a unified and free agent."

It appears that during the investigation, the author interviewed Robert Williams, who went into exile in Cuba after he was framed up on kidnap charges by racists in North Carolina and the FBI launched a nation-wide manhunt for him. Williams apparently talked quite freely with the Spartacist reporter and said that at one time his "Radio Free Dixie" program had been stopped for several weeks due to pressure from "a group of expatriate American Stalinists residing in Cuba."

In the opinion of the author of the Spartacist article, "These repressions are a manifestation of a distinct shift to the right by the Cuban leadership, adopting the 'peaceful coexistence' line, with the corresponding strengthening of the most conservative, conciliatory trends and forces within the Government, represented generally by the sector made up of the leaders of the old PSP (Cuban Communist party) and a whole layer of new elements in the administration.

"It is a rule in the class struggle that a shift to the right by an organization or a government is generally accompanied by an attack on its left...."

"The suppression of the Cuban Trotskyists marks a dangerous milestone in the development of the Cuban Revolution."

Since the logic here is strikingly close to that of Posadas himself, it is reasonable to assume that the Spartacist would now agree with him that the release of the prisoners constitutes a "historic event, comparable to the great advances in the revolutionary struggles of humanity." In other words, it is an immense milestone in the progress of the Cuban Revolution.

Is it possible to arrive at a more balanced judgment?

However solidly "Trotskyist" the author of the article in the Spartacist considers the ideas of Posadas to be, their main characteristic is a strange imbalance fortified with a megalomania that has increased in proportion to the decline of the group in Latin America since it split from the Fourth International. The axis of the Posadas position is that Moscow should engage in a preemptive nuclear strike against imperialism in order to clear the ground for "socialism." It is a position not well calculated to win a sympathetic hearing in the besieged fortress of Cuba where the main source of material aid is the USSR. It obviously lends itself singularly well to the frame-up methods of alumni from the school of Stalinism. Precisely because Posadas presents his views as "Trotskyist" and his cult as the "Fourth International," he has provided a most convenient straw dummy for the use of the Cuban Stalinists in their attacks on the Trotskyist movement. That they find it necessary to engage in such attacks testifies to the influence of genuine Trotskyism in Cuba and the attractiveness of its program to the sincerely revolutionary Cuban vanguard.

There is thus a grain of truth in the contention of the author of the Spartacist article that the ups and downs of the Posadas group offer a certain reflection of the play of some big contending forces in Cuba. But these forces do not follow the lines visualized by the Spartacist. Particularly mistaken is the Spartacist view that Castro would like to sell out the Cuban Revolution to the White House. (The Spartacist has the temerity to cite as "evidence," an interview in the New York Times in which Castro's views were either garbled or deliberately distorted, as was proved at the time.) [See the article in the July 31, 1964, World Outlook, "What Castro Really Said in that Interview with the New York Times."] ]

The main flaw in the Spartacist's line of reasoning is not difficult to locate. If the arrests of the Posadas group began "around the time of Castro's trip to the Soviet Union, where he agreed to support the Russians in the Sino-Soviet dispute in exchange for the vital stable sugar price," thus making "a shift to the right" that was accompanied by an attack on the left, in the view of the Spartacist, how is the freeing of the group to be explained? Some new trip? This year's huge success in sugar pro-

duction? A reversal of position in the Sino-Soviet dispute? Or perhaps Castro was converted to the views of Posadas or Robertson?

The question is less involved. It would seem that the struggle conducted in many fields by the Fidelista leadership against the growth of bureaucratism in Cuba has yielded at least some results. Among other things, a miscarriage of justice in relation to the Posadas group was rectified and the Cuban Revolution became that much the stronger.

It is unfortunate that in fulfilling the need to celebrate the prophetic prowess displayed in "the December 1964 letter from Comrade Posadas," Posadas failed to see any need to indicate the circumstances of the release of his followers. Apparently he regards even their names as unimportant or irrelevant. A few facts would have helped clear up the case and would have provided a welcome check as to the accuracy of the Spartacist. Thus it still remains difficult for those genuinely interested in the case, and not in using it as a factional football, to determine how much the Stalinist or bureaucratic factor was involved, how much was due to possible errors committed by the followers of Posadas, how much might be ascribed to blanket security measures in which the Cubans openly admit that injustices have occurred, as at the time of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Posadas, we repeat, says not a word about this in his historic April 23 letter. However, the Spartacist may be able to make up for the lapse through a follow-up article. Robertson obviously enjoys the confidence of the people who organized the student tour to Cuba last year. Perhaps he can manage a repeat trip. And there is no question, as the Spartacist itself proves, that once in the free territory of revolutionary Cuba, quite stern critics of the government are granted considerable opportunity to carry out investigations in what would be a highly sensitive area in all the other workers states.

Even in the absence of fuller and possibly more accurate details, however, it is clear that despite the pressure of imperialism, despite the strain of the blockade, despite the immense and continuous danger of military invasion, despite the weight of the bureaucratic elements, acknowledged by Castro himself, the democratic tendency runs very deep in the Cuban Revolution.

#### EXTREMELY CARELESS

Gert Cornelius de Bruyn, a housepainter, was found guilty in Johannesburg of culpable homicide. De Bruyn killed a Coloured man when he attempted to hit him with the barrel of a loaded shotgun; but he had his finger on the trigger and the gun went off. The magistrate, R.D.Bax, fined de Bruyn £100 and described his action as "extremely careless."

DEFEND THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION!

[The following declaration was issued by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International June 23.]

\* \* \*

The military coup d'état in Algeria June 19 ended the alliance between the wing of the Front de Libération Nationale led by Ben Bella, which was oriented toward socialism, linking itself to the masses through "workers' self-management," and the "frontier army" headed by Houari Boumedienne, which favored an Islamic "Arab socialism." It was this alliance that enabled the Ben Bella-Boumedienne combination to topple the regime of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic in the summer of 1962. The coup d'état constitutes a heavy blow against the left wing of the Algerian revolution and places in danger the main conquest of the revolution up to now -- workers' self-management of the nationalized enterprises.

The support immediately accorded to the new regime by the uléma [Muslim theologians], the absence of any support for the coup d'état from the unions or the youth of the FLN, the massive arrests of left-wing militants, the first popular demonstrations against the coup d'état and in favor of Ben Bella, all confirm this estimate of the basic meaning of this grave development.

On the other hand it would be a serious error to view Boumedienne's military dictatorship as the direct instrument of a social counterrevolution, as the direct instrument of bourgeois or neocolonialist forces. Subjectively, Boumedienne and the army cadre favor continuing and even expanding the nationalized sector of the economy -- but along the lines of Nasser's Egypt. Objectively the new regime is Bonapartist and under the given relationship of class forces could not restore the nationalized sectors to capitalist ownership for quite a time. To consolidate his power, Boumedienne is capable of taking some steps in the direction of the second agrarian reform promised by Ben Bella although this would run against the wishes of the Algerian landowners to be seen behind the Muslim clerical faction for whom Boumedienne has become a spokesman. But due to his isolation from the masses, Boumedienne, even more than Ben Bella, will find himself obliged to keep in the good graces of French imperialism.

The ease with which Ben Bella was removed from power at the very moment when his prestige appeared to be the highest and when he seemed to have all the strings of government in his own hands shows the correctness of the criticisms which the revolutionary Marxists offered while supporting Ben Bella against the right-wing forces that sought to block, slow down and derail the Algerian revolution.

The reasons for the easy victory of the coup d'état are quite clear. There was no genuine mass party of the vanguard capable of mobilizing the most politically conscious sector of the toiling population of the towns and countryside on a nation-wide scale. The second agrarian reform was interminably postponed, thus disappointing the most disinherited layers of the countryside, to whom the revolution has not yet brought any fundamental change in their miserable standard of living nor any perspective of relieving it in the immediate future. No solution was worked out to the bitter problem of unemployment, thus contributing to a grave rise in apathy and the progressive demobilization of the masses, who demonstrated their support for a revolutionary socialist orientation by the hundreds of thousands in March and May 1963. The decision of the FLN congress to construct a genuine popular militia, thus arming the workers and poor peasants, was never carried out. In short a military coup d'état, put into motion in the dead of night, was able to take over in a few hours because the Algerian revolution had not been carried through to the end, to the institution of a workers state based on committees of workers and poor peasants exercising the real power.

The displacement of Ben Bella by right-wing forces is the bitter price which the Algerian left wing must pay for a policy of continual compromise at the top, which for more than a year was substituted for mobilizing the masses and deepening the revolution. The failure to mobilize the masses, to organize a mass vanguard party, to extend the revolution, left the country without a powerful counterweight to the army which was becoming a professional force holding a privileged position in relation to the rest of the population. This opened the way for Boumedienne's coup d'état.

The increasing personal Bonapartism, which Ben Bella substituted for a revolutionary socialist policy, was a big factor in his downfall. Ben Bella did strike at the right-wing forces, but he balanced these with blows at the left. The inordinate concentration of personal power reflected the narrowing basis of his rule and therefore his increasing vulnerability. This was masked by his speech-making and his capacity to maneuver with the heads of the rival cliques and factions.

The revolutionists of Algeria and all other countries must draw the indicated lessons. Once again the theory of the permanent revolution has been strikingly confirmed; this time, unfortunately, not in a positive sense as in the case of Cuba, but in a negative way. No conquests in a colonial revolution can be considered to have been consolidated until a workers state has been created, until a revolutionary socialist party has been built, until the workers and poor peasants hold power through their own institutions of proletarian democracy.

The Algerian revolution has just lost a battle. But it is far from having been liquidated. Its roots in a population of some

twelve million are too deep, the militants it aroused to political consciousness during eleven years of tumultuous struggles are too numerous, the hopes which it aroused among the masses are too great for the Algerian people to passively accept the installation of a military dictatorship that would begin by eliminating at least part of the conquests of the revolution.

Even in the best of cases, the Boumedienne regime stands on a program of "austerity" and the military direction of self-management, the abolition of any tendency toward the development of popular institutions of rule, the liquidation of what remains of workers' democracy (Ben Bella himself contributed to this), the smothering of spontaneous mass action, the reinforcement in the long run of all the rightist elements in the state apparatus and the economy. Already the political spokesmen of the circles linked to the business world and to imperialism, who were driven out by Ben Bella, are again moving onto the scene. The military Bonapartism of Boumedienne raises the specter of Algeria becoming another Syria or another Congo.

The resistance to the engineers of the coup d'état is beginning to form. It must be organized and extended to all fields -- in workers' action in defense of self-management, in political struggle, in armed struggle. A campaign must be opened to save the lives of the leaders of the left and to free them from prison. An underground network must be organized to unleash a mass struggle at the first favorable opening. The military dictatorship must not be permitted to become consolidated.

The Fourth International, which was the first organization to come to the aid of the FLN in the most difficult days of the struggle for freedom, appeals to the workers and poor peasants of Algeria, the Maghreb, of Africa and all countries in the world to defend the Algerian revolution against the new danger. A lasting setback to the Algerian revolution would signify a terrible blow to the Arab and African revolutions.

In this defense of the endangered Algerian revolution, the workers and poor peasants will draw all the lessons of the latest experience. The main lesson is absolutely clear. It is necessary to build a mass revolutionary party that will actually carry out the Algiers Charter, that will lead the socialist revolution forward to victory in the creation of a stable government of the workers and poor peasants in Algeria.