

# THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM IN ALGERIA

## Class Struggle May Lead To Civil War

**T**HE political crisis which is rocking Algeria, threatening to plunge the country into a civil war, is not just due to a clash of personalities. It is not just a matter of Ben Bella struggling with Ben Khedda for personal advantage.

The issue at stake is: what sort of Algeria is going to emerge from independence? Will it be a socialist or a capitalist Algeria? Will it be tied to the West, neutralist or favourable to the socialist countries? Will there be land reform and what will be its nature?

The rival forces which are jostling for position at the moment represent widely differing outlooks. During the liberation war, they were all united by anti-imperialism, by the need to join forces to get rid of the French.

Now that Algeria is independent, ideological differences are coming to the fore.

Ben Khedda, the "provisional" Prime Minister, was described by Clare Hollingworth in the Manchester Guardian recently as "pro-Western," while Ben Bella was dubbed "pro-Eastern."

### Socialism

Ben Bella himself described his aim, in an interview with K. S. Karol published in the "New Statesman," as being to build a socialist Algeria.

The revolution, he said, must be inspired by socialism. "It must be based on the participation of the masses and its most urgent task is land reform."

Ben Bella stressed that he was neither anti-European nor anti-Semitic. "I would never allow any racial discrimination in my country," he said.

He accused leading members of the provisional government (GPRA) of planning to set up a dictatorship directed against the FLN militants—"a police apparatus which would be incompatible with the promises of the revolution. If I struggle against the GPRA it is solely so that the revolution may be saved."

This interview was given in Morocco, before Ben Bella returned in triumph to Algeria. But it is probable that the conflicts of which Ben Bella was speaking at that time are the same as those which are now racking the country.

### Democracy

Political independence has not yet given Algeria democracy. The country's economy is still characterised by the relationship of domination and dependence imposed by the colonial regime of the French.

This domination is first of all direct: the landed property owners, ultra colonialists, possess the best land, while the French monopolists and foreign monopolists have their hands on the mineral and fuel resources, on industrial enterprises and the banks. Seven thousand colonialists own about 90 per cent of the colonised land.

Domination is exercised in indirect ways—by colonial institutions imposed on the people, such as the Customs Union with France, by freedom to transfer capital, public investment control, bank credits etc.

The Evian Agreement with France made provision for independence, but said not a word about agrarian reform or nationalisation of the main wealth of the country. In other words, the fight to free Algeria completely from

economic dependence on France has still to be won.

Right-wing forces within the FLN would like to see Algeria stay just as it is, with themselves in the positions of power instead of the French. Others realise that if the mass of the people are to gain anything from the tremendous sacrifices they have made for freedom, the country must undergo a thorough social and economic revolution.

The FLN leadership is still dominated by elements aiming to create an Algeria on the Egyptian model, where, under cover of "national unity," a bourgeois and militarist dictatorship will hold sway, with tame trade unions, muzzling liberty, imprisoning the democrats and Communists and genuine workers' leaders.

It is significant that in the FLN list of 196 candidates for Algeria's first free Parliament (the elections were to have been held on September 2 but have now been postponed), there was not a single representative of the Algerian Communist Party, though there were 74 officers of the Algerian National Liberation Army.

### Need For Unity

The Algerian Communist Party consistently supported the aims of the FLN during the liberation war, and dissolved its own army so that there could be a unified national liberation military command. As recently as July 31 the Algerian Communist Party welcomed the announcement of the Ben Khedda-Ben Bella agreement, stressing that the agreement "chooses internally the non-capitalist road for the economic development of Algeria and, in relation to foreign affairs, an orientation in conformity with this choice, that is to say an anti-imperialist policy, a policy of peace and support for the socialist countries."

The Party said the programme could be improved upon in connection with agrarian reform and the problems of democracy and could gain by being more precise about the role of the army. But it concluded:

"The Political Bureau of the PCA solemnly promises to work loyally and resolutely for the application of the programme together with all patriots without distinction, within the framework of the present stage of the revolution and to open the way to the socialist society which the Party has drawn in its own programme."

### Civil War Danger

But there are apparently military figures, backed by certain right-wing politicians, who want to block the road to socialism in Algeria. It is these elements who are threatening the very safety of the Algerian revolution, for it must never be forgotten that sitting in the background, waiting patiently for an excuse to intervene and restore the old regime, are the French imperialists, well

armed, their forces intact, their bases untouched.

If civil war develops in Algeria at this stage, the only ones to gain will be the imperialists, who will once again proclaim: "Remove the hand of the White man and there is chaos."

**This superficial view of the White Supremacist conceals the reality of decolonisation in Africa, which is that the class struggle continues to be fought after independence is won, for freedom depends not merely on the right to vote, but also on the right to work and to eat.**

The Algerian Communist Party has called for support for the ruling FLN Political Bureau led by Ben Bella in the dispute with the army units of Willaya Four, which controls Algiers.

A Communist Party communique last week said it would support the Bureau because a central authority was needed to organise elections. In present circumstances this authority could only be the Bureau.

On the other hand, Mr. Belkacem Krim, one of Ben Bella's strongest opponents with backing in the mountainous Kabylie region, last week accused Ben Bella of wanting to clear the way for his own dictatorship. Krim is known to be a supporter of Western-orientated Ben Khedda.

Right now Algeria is in a state of economic chaos. Food supply services, hospitals, schools, community services are not functioning. Queues of people line up for emergency relief.

**In the tense atmosphere which is being created a spark can set off a conflagration—and the fate of the Algerian people be decided for some time to come.**



## HUNGER STRIKE BY GIZENGA

**T**HE former Congolese Premier, Antoine Gizenga, has been on hunger strike in an attempt to secure his release from detention.

Mr. Gizenga's supporters in the Parti-Solidaire Africain said he was "in danger of death" from his fast. His mother had been unable to persuade him to start eating again.

Mr. Gizenga has been held prisoner on an island in the mouth of the Congo River for eight months by the Central Congolese Government.

Mr. Cleophas Kamitatu, Congolese Interior Minister, said Mr. Gizenga was being examined by doctors.

If necessary he might be trans-

ferred to hospital, the Minister added.

Mr. Robert Gardiner, United Nations representative in the Congo, said a U.N. medical mission would also go to the island to find out Mr. Gizenga's state of health.

Mr. Gizenga was Deputy Premier in the first Congolese Government led by Patrice Lumumba and took over as Premier when Mr. Lumumba was murdered in Katanga.

Since his seizure Mr. Gizenga has repeatedly demanded that any charges against him should be published and that he be brought to the capital for his trial so that he could clear himself.

## Polish Jazzmen Dig The Twist

**BRITISH** jazz man Owen Bryce recently returned from Poland, where he was on the judges' panel at the International Festival of Light Music, held at Sopot, the Baltic resort.

He took his trumpet with him and spent a lot of his free time playing with Polish jazz musicians—of different musical persuasions.

Some of them, he says, were modern, like Jerzy Matuskiewicz, a very talented alto and tenor player—but Owen spent most of his time with a group of Dixielanders led by Zygmunt Wichary.

This was Owen's first visit to Eastern Europe, and his reaction was one of surprise and tremendous enthusiasm for what he heard.

The interest in jazz in Po-

land is considerable, and its followers are well-informed.

The eight-year-old monthly magazine Jaz, produced by the State publishing house, has a larger circulation than the two similar magazines published in London.

### 'Twist' Popular

But as in Britain, "pop" music, "rock" and "twist" generally has a bigger following than jazz.

Owen was most keen, however, to dispel any lingering notions of any sort of "disapproval" of jazz. Over a period of years, Poland has been visited by U.S. jazzmen such as Dave Brubeck, Stan Getz and jazz veteran Albert Nicholas.

From Britain have come Bruce Turner, Tony Coe, Graham Stewart and others.

According to Owen, Polish musicians are tremendously

keen to improve their playing and to learn from those of other countries.

What of the music they do play?

Owen himself felt he could teach the Polish jazzmen very little.

### Know Them All

"They know all the tunes, for example," he said, "from Dixieland warhorses like 'That's A Plenty' right through to moderns like 'Moanin'."

"Their major fault is the major fault of all European jazz—a tendency toward stodginess, which arises out of insufficient relaxation, a quality which only comes with deep experience of the idiom."

Owen is keen to return to Poland for another visit; in the meantime he is to broadcast monthly on the Polish radio.

## DENNIS BRUTUS ELECTED TO WITS. S.R.C.

JOHANNESBURG.

THE student candidate who was stopped by Minister Vorster from speaking or writing in his own election campaign, Mr. Dennis Brutus, polled the third highest votes in elections to the Student Representative Council last week in a fine demonstration of student opposition to apartheid.

Mr. Brutus, leading organiser of the campaign to have South African segregated sport isolated from international sport, is a part-time law student on a bursary. He has been banned from all gatherings and is one of the 102 silenced by the Vorster List under the Sabotage Act.

Despite the high Brutus poll, a number of students elected to the same SRC have threatened to resign if Brutus takes his seat.

The Student Representative Council has asked the Minister of Justice to define the rights of a duly elected member who is also on the banned list.

**FOOTNOTE:** In Cape Town last week Miss Elizabeth Thaele, a Non-White B.A. student, was elected senior woman student—the first Non-White to hold this position. Mis Thaele is the daughter

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of Mrs Frances Thaele, a former member of the Franchise Action Council and now an official of the Coloured Affairs Information Service.



Mr. Brutus

## 150 AFRICANS AT OSLO CONFERENCE

A RESOLUTION strongly condemning the racial discrimination practised by the South African Government was adopted by the Afro-Scandinavian Youth Congress which was held in Oslo recently.

The resolution denounced the unbridled tyranny of the racist regime of South Africa. It denounced the western imperialists for supporting the Verwoerd regime which, by promulgating a series of apartheid laws, had violated the most elementary democratic rights of the African people. The resolution demanded the abolition of all repressive laws against the Africans, granting of democratic rights to the people and the release of all political prisoners. It called for material and moral support for the liberation movement in South Africa.

A second resolution adopted by the Congress called for strong international action against the apartheid policy of South Africa. The resolution, submitted by Scandinavian delegates, urged the Scandinavian governments to support the struggle for freedom and basic human rights in South Africa.

A third resolution denounced the western European "common market" as "a danger to the political and economic freedom of African, Asian and Latin American countries."

One hundred and fifty African delegates took part in the congress. They came from European countries where they were residing or studying as well as from Africa.

At Indian Tribal University

## STUDENTS PLAN S.R.C. ELECTION BOYCOTT

DURBAN.

STUDENTS at the Indian Tribal College at Salisbury Island, Durban, have formed an organisation—ISA—the Island Students' Association to fight against the formation of an SRC on the campus.

A leaflet issued by ISA alleges that the authorities, instead of treating them like University students, treats them like school-children.

"According to the constitution of the proposed S.R.C., the Secretary is compelled to take minutes of everything said at meetings. These minutes are to be examined by the authorities," states the leaflet.

"What student will dare speak his or her mind in opposition to

the action of the authorities? What a mockery this makes of the freedom of speech?"

**SHACKLED**

Stating that through an Act of Parliament this university is Government-controlled, the leaflet adds that the authorities seek to "shackle us even more."

"Are they so afraid of student demands that they must bind us hand and foot?" asks the leaflet.

**Calling for a boycott of the elections by the students, the leaflet states: "Let us show our contempt for undemocratic methods! Together, let us refuse to vote!"**

The leaflet ends with the following explanation of I.S.A.'s aims: "ISA stands for Island Students' Association. ISA fights for academic freedom and against indoctrination of student thought. ISA is not a secret organisation although it is forced to work in a secretive fashion."

## Tembuland Exiles Return Home

PORT ELIZABETH

Recently the Nationalist Government allowed Messrs. Jackson Nkosiene, Twalimfene and Mbeki to return to their homes from exile. They have been allowed back conditionally and for a trial period.

New Age learns that these men, who had already escaped from their places of exile and were living in Basutoland, had their conditions of exile withdrawn as a result of representations made by Chief Sabata Dalindyebo for their return.

The three men and Mr. McGregor Mgolombane were exiled because they had been strong opponents of the Bantu Authorities and more particularly of the role of Kaiser Matanzima.

## EDUCATION COMMISSION A FARCE

PORT ELIZABETH.

AFRICAN parents and teachers expect little of value to emerge from the departmental Commission appointed to enquire into the use of Xhosa as a medium of education in Bantu Affairs Department schools.

The commission was appointed after strong pressure from the chiefs, who constitute the main group of that section in the reserves able to pay for the education of their children. Their complaint had its origin in poor results in the Matric and Junior Certificate examinations.

Unable and unwilling, because of their position, to challenge Bantu Education as a whole, the chiefs seized on only one aspect—that of mother-tongue instruction.

Four Bantu Education field officers (Messrs R. Cingo, N. H. Hela, B. B. Mdledle and D. M. Ntusi) have been appointed as members of the commission. They are being "advised and guided" in their investigation by two white inspectors of schools, Messrs P. R. T. Nel and J. L. Boshoff, both known for their devotion to the principles of Christian National Education.

What, it is asked, can be expected from such a commission with such advisors and guides?

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