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# Algeria Seven Years After— Socialism or Capitalism?

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*We print below an article by Henri Alleg written in December 1969, and originally published in pamphlet form in Paris. The sub-heads are ours. It was translated by Pat and Regina Allen.*

This year, the leading financial publications have rediscovered Algeria. In April *Europe-France-Outremer* published a special issue on Algeria; *Expansion* included a long article, and in June *Marchés Tropicaux* also published a special issue. They all paint a rather pleasant picture of Algeria, as a country which has outgrown its teething troubles of the period which followed independence and which, despite the “socialist” label it likes to parade, offers promising perspectives to companies and businessmen. This renewed interest, together with the change of tune of the “big press” following M. Maurice Schuman’s trip to Algiers at the beginning of October 1969, and the spectacular resumption of Franco-Algerian co-operation, are obviously not accidental. They occurred at the most opportune moment. To understand their significance more fully, one must study the political and economic situation in Algeria today, some seven years after its accession to independence.

## **Government Policy after June 19th 1965**

Prior to the coup d’état of June 19th 1965, Algeria gave the impression of being a sort of African Cuba, irrevocably launched on the road to socialism and at the same time opening the way to social and national liberation for the entire African continent and the Arab world. The truth, however, was probably less idyllic than the enthusiasm of the early months of independence would have led one to believe. Nonetheless Algeria did indeed emerge as one of the standard bearers in the revolution of the Third World. The new state had already enshrined its “socialist choice” in its constitution. Many industrial and agricultural undertakings previously owned by the French colonialists were taken over and managed by the workers themselves, this being legalised by Government decrees. Following considerable nationalisation, a state sector of the economy came into being, along with a thorough-going agrarian reform to be carried through in the autumn of 1965 and the first steps towards making the FLN, the patriotic

anti-colonialist front of the war period, into a real leading party bringing together the active socialists with an ideological basis largely influenced by scientific socialism.

In foreign affairs, Algeria carried on an active policy of anti-imperialism. She gave her support to all the national liberation and democratic forces, and strengthened her friendship and co-operation with the USSR and the socialist countries. In spite of certain shortcomings, this policy won the support of the Algerian masses. At the same time as winning the sympathy of revolutionaries and progressives in all continents, Algeria also encountered the distrust of the Western capitals.

## **Overthrow of Ben Bella**

The overthrow of Ben Bella on June 19th, 1965 was greeted by the reactionaries as a happy and expected development, bringing to an abrupt halt the wave of popular enthusiasm. The big land-owners, alarmed about the agrarian reform, the commercial interests linked with foreign business, the rich speculators anxious to exploit the properties more or less legally taken over from the departing Europeans and a significant section of the top officials in the key posts of the civil service, the army and the nationalised boards, more concerned for their personal advancement than for the interests of the public, were also delighted, seeing the overthrow of Ben Bella’s government as a deliverance. Nor did foreign imperialist interests disguise their satisfaction at this change of régime, hoping that it would lead to a basic change in the domestic and foreign policies hitherto pursued and that it would enable the capitalist world to establish closer relations with Algeria.

To judge by the initial decisions of the new leaders, it could be thought that the hopes of the reactionaries would be fulfilled. Following June 19th various official statements let it be understood that Algeria would henceforth follow a policy of the strictest neutrality *vis-à-vis* the two blocs, in contrast to the previous policy which was “too biased towards

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the East" and the first foreign visit of a representative of the new government<sup>1</sup> was to Washington.

On the domestic front, numerous known and proved active socialists were arrested and underwent the most appalling tortures, while the military security organisations and the police sought to smash all resistance from the trade union and student organisations by repression and intimidation. Workers' control in industry and peasant control in agriculture was accused of ruining the country and was gravely endangered by influential circles which wished to dissolve it and sell or rent the land to private individuals on the pretext of profitability.

"If this land which today is peasant-managed had been rented out at only two hundredweight (of wheat) per hectare", wrote Malek Bennabi, one of the "thinkers" of Algerian reaction, "the State would have benefited by 25 thousand millions old francs annually. And of course the charge to public funds necessitated by the development programmes would have been reduced by the same sum".<sup>2</sup>

### Period of Confusion

The endeavours of those who wished to destroy the peasant and worker-controlled sectors were not without result. In the provinces of Constantine and Oran, the peasant-run lands were returned to the feudal owners whose possessions had been seized under the previous government for collaborating with the colonialists. In the region of Al-Asnam (formerly Orléanville) for example, the Bouthiba, big dispossessed landowners, regained possession of their lands. The worker-run sections of industry were also affected by this "liberalisation" and various enterprises were given back to the former owners, such as the big "Norcolor" paint and building materials factory.

A period of confusion then followed<sup>3</sup> arising from dissension within the heterogeneous group which had carried through the *coup d'état* which, although united in carrying it through, had done so for various and sometimes contradictory reasons. There were the big property interests, elements of the bourgeoisie linked with foreign neo-colonialism, along with revolutionaries convinced that the removal of Ben Bella was a necessary step towards the further progress of the revolution. Tahar Zbiri, chief of the General Staff and of the "Eastern Group" was the central figure of these forces.

<sup>1</sup> The person referred to here is Kaïd Ahmed, spokesman of the Council of the Revolution at that time and Minister of Finance.

<sup>2</sup> "Révolution Africaine"—November 15th, 1968, No. 287.

<sup>3</sup> During this period the sector of the economy in which there was self-management retrieved possession of certain areas from which it had been removed.

But, of all the elements and groups which shared effective power and between which President Boumédiène tried to maintain a balance, the most influential was the "Oujda Group".

This was led by men like Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Foreign Minister, Ahmed Medeghri, Minister of the Interior and Kaïd Ahmed. Although this group was still far from homogeneous—alliances, splits and new combinations were frequent—it represents more or less the interests of the top levels of the petty bourgeoisie, who joined up with elements of the old bourgeoisie to establish what was called a "bourgeois bureaucracy", which took over all the key positions of the government, the nationalised boards and the army, and whose standard of living bears no comparison with that of the majority of Algerians.

After the failure of Tahar Zbiri's manoeuvre in December 1967, a clearer line emerged as though the diverse trends had found some sort of equilibrium. A complex policy then ensued, having both positive aspects corresponding to the basic interests of the nation and other negative aspects indicating the distrust of the petty bourgeoisie for the masses and basically for the working class.

### Contradictions

On the international level, the Boumédiène Government disappointed the hopes of those who encouraged it to break with the anti-imperialist policy pursued since independence. The objective necessity for any newly-independent country that desires to escape from the grip of foreign monopoly to make an alliance with the world anti-imperialist forces, is clearly the basic reason for the continuation of this policy. However, hesitations, weaknesses, inconsistencies<sup>4</sup> and illusions on the nature of the "aid" which could be had from foreign capitalism were well in evidence, although the anti-imperialist policy was continued.

The same contradictions emerge in the economic field. On the one hand there was considerable nationalisation: banks and a number of foreign companies; and a considerable step forward was taken in industrialising the country. On the other hand the agrarian reform is still shelved more than seven years after independence, although it is impatiently awaited by the mass of the peasants who are still praised for having borne the brunt of the liberation war. This situation where nothing seems final is naturally one which keeps alive the fears of the imperialists lest the country should finally go the wrong way, the way of revolution, and at the same time rouses certain hopes among

<sup>4</sup> Algeria, for example, maintains excellent relations with the German Federal Republic, contrary to other progressive Arab countries, and, unlike them, has not officially recognised the German Democratic Republic.

them. They do not hide their desire to see "a fundamental change"<sup>5</sup> in which they would be involved and which would remove the "danger" for a long time, as happened in Ghana, in Mali and in Indonesia. But neither do they despair of obtaining the same results in the long run by the more subtle methods of economic penetration.

An examination of Algeria's economic structures and trends shows that these dangers are not imaginary and that this is sufficient to explain the renewal of interest by the big financial press, in "socialist" Algeria, as I mentioned earlier.

### **Towards Industrialisation**

Algeria continues her efforts, both to free herself from the former chains of the "colonial pact", which made her a protected market for the French monopolies, and to develop her national economy. It should however be noted that, whatever may be asserted by the supporters of the *coup d'état*, this was no new policy, at least not in this sphere, but a continuation of the policy of the former government including economic projects which the former government had planned. In any event the development of the Algerian economy and in particular the extension of trade and the establishment of an industrial basis is an established fact.

The basic raw material, and the basis for big industrial projects, is clearly oil, which represents about 20 per cent of the gross national product and in 1968 accounted for 70 per cent of exports. In four years oil production has increased from just over 26 million tons to 43 million, while gas has almost trebled from 800 million cubic metres in 1964 to 2,340 million cubic metres in 1968.

On the other hand, the production of wine has dropped as the French market is now closed, from 18 million hectolitres in 1960 to 9.5 million, a decline which will continue as the vineyards are replaced by other crops. The industrialisation programme includes the establishment or the extension of four main complexes.

### **Gas and Petrol-Chemical Industry**

The first at Arzew, the terminus of the gas pipeline from Hassi R'Mel, is already partly in service at a cost of 450 million dinars, including a 20 million dollar loan from the World Bank. The liquid gas plant constructed by Camel<sup>6</sup> sends about two-thirds of its production to Britain. In 1967 this amounted to 610,000 tons of liquid gas

<sup>5</sup> The review "Entreprise" has recently begun to employ this formula.

<sup>6</sup> Algerian Liquid Gas Company, whose capital is made up as follows: 40 per cent Anglo-American of Canadian Shell, Continental Oil and Union Stockyard, 34 per cent French capital and the rest Algerian (SONA-TRACH).

while 340,000 went to France. Included in this plant is a factory producing ammonia and nitrogen-based fertilisers, opened in March 1969. Its purpose is to meet the fertiliser needs of agriculture and also to make a foreign currency saving of nearly 150 million dinars. The work was done by the French companies Technip and Ensa (Schneider, associates of the chemical construction company) and the contract provides for technical co-operation and the training of Algerian personnel subsequent to the works starting production.

A further section, of enormous proportions, of this petrol-chemical complex is to be started soon. With the signing of a contract between the American El Paso company and Sona-Trach, a new liquid gas plant will be built, followed by a 2.5 million ton oil refinery scheduled for 1972 as the last stage of the complex. Construction of the latter is in the hands of two Japanese companies, C. Itoh and Japan Gasoline.

The second petrol-chemical complex will be at Skikda (formerly Philippeville). A second gas pipeline (the Hassi R'Mel-Arzew is the only one so far in existence) will take the gas from its source to Skikda. Three foreign companies will supply the 190,000 tons of piping needed: Vallourec and Pont-a-Mousson (France), C. Itoh Nippon Kokon and Sumitomo Metao (Japan) and Snam Progetti, subsidiary of Eni (Italy). Construction costs are estimated at 450 million dinars and the work should be completed by the end of 1970. The liquid gas plant which is being built by Technip at a cost of 700 million dinars will be the world's biggest and most modern in this field. It will be financed and operated by the joint Franco-Algerian consortium Somalgaz, consisting of Sona-Trach and Erap on a 50-50 basis. By 1972 it will be possible to produce ethylene and plastics from liquid gas and there will also be an ammonia plant built at Skikda.

### **Steel**

The third industrial plant, and undoubtedly the most important as the first stage of an independent engineering industry, is the steel works at El Hadjar (Annaba). It is also proof of the value of co-operation between a newly independent country and the socialist world because a very substantial contribution to its construction is being made by the USSR. Initially, this works was envisaged in the Constantine Plan, but only for the production of pig-iron and in any case was going to be abandoned by the French once independence had been achieved. With Soviet help, Algeria took over and the first flow of pig-iron took place in August 1969. Until the steel-works goes into operation in 1972, the pig-iron production will be wholly exported to the USSR and also to Japan, with whom Algeria has recently signed an agreement. Initial production

would amount to between 350 and 400 thousand tons of steel per annum, but eventually, with the plant in full production, it will reach 1.4 million tons.

The National Steel Board (SNS), founded in 1964, has directed the overall construction. Alongside the Russians who are responsible for constructing the steel works, there are several capitalist firms: Sofresip, a French company for the pig-iron section, Innocenti, an Italian firm for the rolling-mills and Hoesch-Export, the West German trust, for the piping, which is already in operation, producing the pipes for the fourth Algerian pipeline, the 700 kilometre link from Mesdar-Haoud-El Hamar to Skikda.<sup>7</sup>

Again in Annaba, a plant is envisaged to produce phosphates and other fertilisers at a rate of 500,000 tons a year from the deposits at Kouif and Djebel Ouk. Sona-Trach has given the contract for this plant to the French company Krebs.

### Tractors and Diesel Engines

The fourth main centre of Algeria's future industry will be at Constantine. The first step was the signing last April of an agreement between the industrial construction board (Sonacome) and the West German companies Klockner-Humbolt-Deutz of Cologne and the Deutsche Industrienlagen Gesellschaft of Berlin to build a tractor and diesel-engine factory. This will cost 400 million dinars and will produce 10,000 diesel engines (25 to 200 h.p.), 4,600 tractors (35 to 60 h.p.) and 10,000 75 h.p. Tracked vehicles per annum. (N.B. French h.p. is *not* the same as English, Translator).

In addition to these four main plants, other industrial undertakings are being or will be built for various purposes: foodstuffs, textiles, pharmaceutical products, paper, cellulose, etc.<sup>8</sup> In November 1968 the Algerian Government decided to build or extend 80 factories in 1969 alone.

As a last example of the progress of Algerian industrialisation, the following figures show the continuous growth of industrial investment: 1966, 450 million dinars; 1967, 750 million dinars; 1968, 1,400 million dinars.<sup>9</sup>

### Diversification of Trade

Prior to independence, Algeria's foreign trade was mainly limited to trade with the metropolitan country. The new Algeria immediately set about

<sup>7</sup> There are now three pipelines functioning.

<sup>8</sup> A cellulose and paper factory is to be set up at Mostaganem, in which the French firm (including ENSA of the Schneider Group) will participate.

<sup>9</sup> The aim for 1969 is to pass the peak of two thousand million dinars. It is aimed to invest in all (apart from amortisation) 15 milliard dinars between 1967 and 1975 in the industry.

freeing itself from colonial monopoly by diversifying its trade. The present day picture of Algerian trade shows that oil amounts to 70 per cent of exports, while wine exports have diminished in such a way as to completely change the previous export picture. As for imports, consumer goods, while decreasing still account for a substantial proportion, more than a third of the total value, while capital goods, raw materials and partly finished goods, have increased to account for more than half of total imports. The following table (A) (see p. 80) gives a clear picture of the trend and of the breakdown of Algerian trade and also shows the present trade policies of the government.

A further table (B)<sup>10</sup> (see p. 80) shows the breakdown of trade between the various foreign countries.

### Algerian-Soviet Co-operation

These figures call for some comment. First of all, they do not take into account the new and particularly important agreements signed in July 1968 with the Soviet Union. They do not, therefore, take into account the intense development of Algerian-Soviet co-operation. The comments of the Soviet deputy-minister for Foreign Trade after the signing of a new protocol with Algeria in July 1968 give an idea of the speed with which trade between the two countries has increased:

“The volume of Algeria-USSR trade has increased by 250 per cent between 1965 and 1967 and following the recent agreements a further increase is to be anticipated”.

The agreement referred to here is that by which the USSR undertakes to buy 5 million hectolitres of wine annually from 1969 to 1975 along with 500,000 tons of crude oil, payment for which to be used to offset Soviet construction costs in Algeria as well as the salaries of Soviet technicians working in the country. The balance will be set against Soviet loans to Algeria. According to Algerian estimates the total volume of trade could reach 500 million dinars in each direction, which would thus be the equivalent of 13 per cent of the total volume of Algerian trade. But it is clear that this percentage does not wholly convey the appreciable help which Algeria has received from the USSR in a wide variety of fields.

An initial general agreement on Algeria-USSR co-operation was signed by the Ben Bella Government on December 27th, 1963. Since then, and as a result, 19 partial agreements have been concluded between the two countries. Sixty-one undertakings of all kinds are being or will be established thanks to Soviet help. Sixteen are already in operation.

<sup>10</sup> These two tables, calculated on the basis of figures provided from Algerian sources, were published by *Marchés Tropicaux* of June 14th, 1969.

**Table A**  
**ANALYSIS OF ALGERIA'S EXTERNAL TRADE**  
since 1966 (in millions of dinars)

	1966	1967	1968
<b>(1) Imports</b>			
Food, drink, tobacco	712.5	827.2	575.8 (16.5%)
Fuel and lubricants	33.1	50.0	42.6 ( 1.4%)
Raw materials	212.0	214.9	211.7 ( 6.0%)
Semi-manufactured goods	522.6	594.6	824.1 (23.6%)
Finished products for agriculture	58.3	102.8	102.1 ( 2.9%)
Manufactured goods for industry	557.4	557.7	924.8 (28.2%)
Consumer goods	1,056.8	806.7	747.0 (21.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,152.7</b>	<b>3,153.9</b>	<b>3,428.1</b>
<b>(2) Exports</b>			
Food, drink, tobacco	930.7	579.4	623.8 (16.3%)
Fuel and lubricants	1,818.6	2,605.4	2,669.6 (69.0%)
Raw materials	142.0	63.8	206.2 ( 5.4%)
Semi-manufactured goods	72.5	192.5	194.5 ( 5.1%)
Finished products for agriculture	0.5	0.1	7.9 ( 0.2%)
Manufactured goods for industry	89.7	56.5	115.0 ( 3.0%)
Consumer goods	15.3	30.3	55.6 ( 1.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,069.3</b>	<b>3,528.0</b>	<b>3,872.6</b>

**Table B**  
**GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF ALGERIAN TRADE**  
since 1966 (in millions of dinars)

	1966	1967	1968
<b>(1) Algerian imports</b>			
France	2,166.7	1,877.6	1,989.0 (57.0%)
Common Market except France	216.4	278.5	533.0 (15.2%)
USA	302.5	251.5	303.4 ( 8.7%)
Socialist countries of Europe	89.2	262.3	192.3 ( 5.5%)
Others	377.9	484.0	410.4 (13.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,152.7</b>	<b>3,153.9</b>	<b>3,428.1</b>
<b>Of these totals, note</b>			
West Germany	70.1	96.6	195.8 ( 5.6%)
Italy	91.3	102.5	204.8 ( 5.8%)
USSR	39.4	141.9	77.2 ( 2.2%)
<b>(2) Algerian exports</b>			
France	2,070.5	2,118.0	2,075.6 (53.6%)
Common Market except France	502.5	731.6	887.6 (22.9%)
USA	16.0	67.9	21.7 ( 0.5%)
Socialist countries of Europe	27.5	105.5	202.9 ( 5.3%)
Others	452.6	505.0	684.8 (17.7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,069.3</b>	<b>3,528.0</b>	<b>3,872.6</b>
<b>Of these totals, note</b>			
West Germany	252.6	447.5	506.2 (13.2%)
Italy	106.0	124.6	210.6 ( 5.6%)
USSR	15.3	48.9	102.8 ( 2.7%)

The new projects include a lead and zinc refinery for the El Abecq mine, a power station in the Annaba region, a distillery for alcohol and brandy with a capacity of between 1.5 and 2 million hectolitres of wine and a factory for plate glass (10,000 tons per annum) in Oran. Moreover, to have a complete idea of Soviet help, one must take into account the technicians, experts and instructors of all kinds that the Soviet Union sends to Algeria and the help given in training young managers either on the spot (at the Algerian-Soviet Institute of Bou-Merdes formerly Rocher Noir in the case of textile and oil technicians) or in the USSR, thanks to the award of government grants to Algerian students.

Such agreements, not only with the USSR but also with Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and other Socialist countries are of great importance in building an independent national economy. Even if Algerian trade with the socialist countries remains still relatively limited, this co-operation has its significance for Algeria in her relations with the capitalist countries. The socialist countries obviously provide direct help for the country's development but also an indirect help in the sense that the capitalist countries are obliged to take them into account and cannot deal with the young independent state as though they had a monopoly of trade. Emphasising the part played by Algeria-USSR agreements in helping the country to resist imperialist and neo-colonialist pressure and blackmail, M. Yaker, Algeria's Trade Minister, remarked:

"Outside forces have sought to dangerously undermine our national economic progress and frustrate the policy which the Algerian people have chosen for its development. There is scarcely need to stress how the agreements signed today exemplify the failure of these attempts. In fact these agreements are in the tradition of the Soviet government's and Soviet people's firm support for the strengthening of economic independence and the struggle against colonialism in all its forms and against imperialism." (*El Moudjahid*, December 30th 1968).

It is known for example that the contract signed with the USSR for the sale of wine enabled Algeria to resist the pressure which the de Gaulle government was seeking to exert upon her, especially after the Algerian decision to nationalise 17 French companies in June 1968, by exploiting the fact that France had been hitherto the only outlet for Algerian wine.

### **The French Monopolies in Algeria**

But the fact remains that in spite of this trend to diversification, which is not solely or even mainly with the socialist countries, the dangers of which situation we shall see later, France is still by far

the leading buyer and the leading seller. The French market takes nearly 60 per cent of all Algerian exports, and of this total, oil products account for more than three-quarters. France is still a big customer for wine, which still accounts for a little over 10 per cent of all Algerian exports to France according to 1968 figures, and the chief customer for fruit and vegetables (5 per cent of the total). France is also Algeria's primary supplier, especially for engineering and electrical goods and metals.

These facts indicate sufficiently the extent to which the young state is still weighed down by the heritage of the past and the possibilities which the French monopolies still have of hindering our economic freedom. The fact that Algeria belongs to the franc area provides the French monopolies with other opportunities for interfering. A system of inflated prices is practised between the two countries: French goods are sold in Algeria at prices above those prevailing on the world market. Similarly, Algerian goods are sold dear in France. But the biggest increase is in the price of French products as these are manufactured goods whereas Algeria supplies raw materials and agricultural products. The fact that Algeria belongs to the franc area "naturally" encourages the Algerian economy to maintain the traditional level of trade in spite of the high prices. Moreover, the difference between these prices and world market prices is not directly felt by the Algerian consumer, whether a private undertaking or the State, because the taxes on French goods are one-third lower than those on goods imported from Common Market countries and only half of the taxes levied on imports from other countries.

Some significant decisions have been taken with a view to freeing Algeria from the consequences of the colonial period: Algeria today issues its own money; the dinar is based on gold and no longer on the franc.<sup>11</sup> Since the oil agreements of August 1965, Algeria has been able to buy foreign currency on the market of the franc area subject only to the franc holdings of the Algerian Central Bank. Modifications have been introduced in the scale of import duties to give better protection to the domestic market, while bringing foreign trade more into line with the needs of the economy.

### **Nationalised Corporations and Mixed Companies**

One feature of Algeria's economy is the increasing part played by nationalised corporations. These are not the big public undertakings such as the railways, post office etc. but large groupings which direct

<sup>11</sup> It should be noted that the devaluation of the franc has not as yet affected the value of the dinar. Its exchange rate as compared with that at the time of devaluation is now 12.5 per cent higher.

a sector of the economy without having an absolute monopoly. In addition to Sona-Trach which, because of the importance of oil, is becoming a state within a state, there is the Nationalised Steel Board (SNS) responsible for building the Annaba complex and which runs various lesser engineering factories; the National Research and Mining Board (Sonarem) which directs the nationalised mines; the National Sugar Development Board (Sogedis); the National Glass Industry Board (VAN); the Canning Industry Board (Soalco); the National Textile Board (Sonitex); the National Cereal and Preserves Board (Sempac); etc.

Originally, the task of a number of these bodies was to take over the running of foreign undertakings which were nationalised. They often extended their activity by bringing into their field industrial undertakings which had hitherto been worker-managed. Indeed this development became so widespread that the worker-managed section of industry today includes only the medium and small undertakings (just over 200) whose importance is diminishing. This is not the result of technical decisions, but rather of a particular policy: those who run the country today have only a limited confidence in the possibilities of worker-management, just as they are suspicious of, and for the same class reasons, the participation of the workers in the political and economic running of the country.

The national boards are very suitable for dealing with foreign companies. In the recent period, as we have already seen, very many contracts have been signed with American, French and West German firms. These agreements with capitalist firms go well beyond a simple contract between buyer and supplier. It is becoming increasingly common to set up mixed companies, especially in the field of oil products, which, because of the immediate profits which it produces tempts foreign capital more than any other. Sona-Trach has greatly increased this sort of agreement. In May 1969 the Alcore company was set up, the shares being 51 per cent Sona-Trach and 49 per cent the American firm Core Laboratories. A similar arrangement was made with Davis Mud & Chemical Inc. to establish Alfluid. Three further mixed Algerian-American companies established on the same basis by Sona-Trach with the Paul Getty Trust are Algeo, Alreg and Alfor, all concerned with oil and its derivatives.

On July 24th last, Sona-Trach concluded its biggest agreement yet with the American company El Paso Natural Gas. This provides for the delivery of 10,000 million cubic metres of natural gas annually for a period of 25 years.<sup>12</sup> The estimated investment

total for this operation amounts to more than 900 million dollars. The fact that an American firm has signed a contract for such a long period is indicative of the hopes that American monopolies harbour, concerning the political future of Algeria. Their penetration also takes other forms, in the key ministries as in the many nationalised boards.

"If one meets a good many Americans in the corridors of government offices, they are individually recruited technicians whose role is not to be underestimated. The same applies to the Germans"<sup>13</sup> wrote the American journalist Robert E. Farrell.<sup>13</sup> In fact they are not only "individually recruited" technicians, but specialists from American research departments with which high Algerian officials have negotiated. The Minister of Power and Industry, M. Belaid Abdesselam, pays the American consultants Booz, Allen & Hamilton of Chicago one million dollars annually to study the "re-organisation of the socialised industrial sector". The advice of Booz-Allen was to open negotiations with the West German companies Klockner Humboldt-Deutz and Deutsche Industrienlagen Gesellschaft for the construction of the first tractor and diesel engine factory, while a contract was signed with Krupps for the running of certain mines and a zinc factory in the Colomb-Bechar region. In the same way, various other American companies, Atcheson, Arthur D. Little, Schuman & Staling, etc. are under contract to other ministries to study a variety of projects.

#### Nationalised Boards and the "Private Sector"

British, Italian, Japanese and Spanish firms are also working in association with the Algerian nationalised boards.

The range of operations of these nationalised boards has still left open an expanding field of activity in the "private sector", as the editor of *Marchés Tropicaux*<sup>14</sup> is pleased to note:

"These groupings (the nationalised boards) are not exclusive in the sense that they still leave an area of initiative to private enterprise above, below and to the side."

Naturally, the international trusts seek to control the range "above", while not ignoring the other possibilities. Thus Berliet, Michelin, Phillips, Air-Liquide, etc. all have a footing in Algeria. The new policy on investments gives guarantees and advantages to foreign and indigenous "private enterprise" which seem to have dissipated the fears and apprehensions of both foreign and indigenous capitalists, hitherto reluctant. This is illustrated by the following data.

<sup>12</sup> See *Le Monde*—"The relations between Washington and Algeria are improving". Oct. 12th, 1969.

<sup>13</sup> "Algeria, 7 Years After"—*Expansion*, April 1969.

<sup>14</sup> See the issue already quoted of June 14th, 1969.

By March 31st 1968, the National Investment Commission, responsible for undertakings costing more than 500,000 dinars, had only dealt with 28 plans, of which 11 involved foreign participation, while the Regional Investment Commissions in Algiers, Oran and Constantine had dealt with 41 proposals for undertakings costing less than 500,000 dinars. The rate of investment has increased considerably since then. In September 1968 the total of authorised investment rose from 53 million dinars to 161 million. Between October 1968 and February 1969, 86 new undertakings were approved. Some of these, based especially on light industry, could employ several hundred workers. This gives some indication of the opportunities still open to the Algerian bourgeoisie, hitherto concerned essentially with commerce and non-productive investment, to extend its activities and strengthen its means and influence.<sup>15</sup>

### Towards Socialism?

The important part played by the Algerian state in the industrialisation of the country and especially in the establishment of heavy industry, is helped by the relative wealth of Algeria, arising mainly from its oil and gas. Its budget, and this is rare among the countries of the Third World, has always had a favourable balance since independence, except in 1965, and for 1969 the investment budget is higher than the current national budget (6,110 million dinars as compared with 4,550 million). Gold and currency reserves have increased from 925 million francs in 1965 to 2,215 millions in 1967 and 2,305 millions in 1968. Of this sum, 1,010 are in gold, which means that Algeria's reserves are four times those of Morocco (600 million francs) and Tunisia (200 million) combined.

We may therefore conclude that, unlike most countries of the Third World, Algeria is "well on its way". But do these figures guarantee an independent economic future, our "detachment from the imperialist sphere"<sup>16</sup> and progress towards socialism?

Those in charge of the country's economic policy say yes to this question and appear convinced of the correctness of the equation which emerges: diversification of trade plus nationalisation and nationalised boards equals independence plus socialism. However attractive this formula may be, its truth is unfortunately not apparent.

The value of diversification of trade which allows Algeria to free herself from the conditions of economic subordination inherited from the colonial period is not in question. But one must be wary

of accepting any diversification as being beneficial *a priori*. But this would seem to be the belief of the Minister of Industry Belaid Abdesselam when he puts forward as a basic principle for ensuring the country's independence "seeking the most varied foreign contacts possible".<sup>17</sup>

The Vanguard Socialist Party of Algeria, while supporting the policy of industrialisation and nationalisation and while not refuting the value of a degree of trade diversification, raises the following question:<sup>18</sup>

"What will Algeria gain if, while nationalising and taking over the French undertakings on the one hand, we give innumerable concessions and facilities to American capital on the other hand, or, what amounts almost to the same thing, West German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish etc. capital, which lead to a continuing or increasing dependence of Algeria's economy on US monopoly dominated neo-colonialism?"<sup>19</sup>

"We consider that no possibility arising from inter-imperialist contradictions should be neglected. But we must never lose sight of the fact that these possibilities are firstly limited and secondly, involve great dangers for a country which is vulnerable by being a recently liberated country since, although dealing with different partners, they are all nonetheless directed by the same inexorable laws of neo-colonialism. We can only benefit from these opportunities through a resolute and consistent anti-imperialist policy, always keeping in view our final aim which is the earliest possible liquidation of all subordinate links with capitalism and neo-colonialism."

### The Working of the Nationalised Boards

Likewise, if the nationalised boards have given the State a preponderance in building the economy and reflect the clear intention to limit or prevent foreign monopoly from continuing to exploit our national wealth, they still do not guarantee an "automatic" path to economic independence and socialism. They can even become a field of activity for those, both at home and abroad, who seek to divert the country towards capitalism, which could only be a third-class capitalism with no real possibility of achieving greatness and ultimately tied to the imperialist powers.

"The nationalised boards having all the characteristics of the limited companies of capitalist countries could open the way for the extension of private capital in these boards. Only public bodies with autonomous management can offer all the

<sup>17</sup> *El-Moudjahid*, September 29th, 1969.

<sup>18</sup> "Algeria after Six Years of Independence—The Vanguard Socialist Party of Algeria Answers Five Questions".

<sup>19</sup> One might also question whether Algeria would benefit from association with the Common Market.

<sup>15</sup> See *El-Moudjahid*, an official Algerian daily paper, of November 5th, 1969.

<sup>16</sup> The Charter of Algiers.



necessary guarantees", noted the Algiers Charter.<sup>20</sup>

But the Algerian nationalised boards do function along lines not very different from those of capitalist companies. Their constitutions, so far from bearing the hallmark of a revolutionary determination to make them the weapons of the socialist choice, instead have the characteristics and outlook of foreign bourgeois economists, "specialists in the Third World" and ideological agents for neo-colonialism. Thus it is that these boards can buy shares in other boards and pay dividends. When it is also realised that representatives of the private sector can sit on their directing bodies, one cannot but be uneasy for the future, regarding the ways thus opened for the bourgeoisie to make use of the nationalised boards for its own benefit.

Like the directors of capitalist companies, those of the nationalised bodies are all powerful, taking decisions not only on matters of policy and of management, but also in deciding how many workers are needed, who should be hired and who should be fired. If the workers have any sort of representation, which is not always the case, it is purely symbolic. In this connection the attitude of the directors is generally the same as that of the capitalist employer, combining the authoritarian approach with social paternalism. For example, the directors of the nationalised boards have been known to refuse to apply the law regarding Works Committees, to forbid trade unions or even dismiss their active members. In such a situation it is not surprising that the worker does not feel any great concern regarding the running of the undertaking or for a system whose anti-democratic and bureaucratic nature makes him a mere cog in the machinery of production. This is not one of the least of the weaknesses of the Algerian revolution.

One can have similar misgivings about the mixed companies. These links with foreign capitalist firms are in fact an ideal field for neo-colonialist penetration. The Algiers Charter does contain a warning against this tendency already observed in various countries of the Third World, and noted that to be on one's guard against the dangers of such links with foreign capital one had to take care that "the field of activity of the mixed company should not be in the key spheres of the national economy".

It seems that the present leaders of Algeria's economy have forgotten this warning.

"The economic and political dangers of such 'co-operation'" wrote Saout Ech Chaab<sup>21</sup> "are all the more real when they take place in the key sectors

<sup>20</sup> Full Text and Resolutions of the Congress of the FLN, April, 1964.

<sup>21</sup> *Saout Ech Chaab* (The Voice of the People), underground newspaper of the Vanguard Socialist Party of Algeria (September 28th, 1969).

of the economy. Through pressure and blackmail, or by the simple working of the economic laws of capitalism, the imperialist countries succeed in influencing the policies of the country to which they give their 'aid'.

"Although the Algerian State holds 51 per cent of the shares in the mixed companies, they are effectively controlled by American firms. It is not necessary for the Americans to have a controlling interest in terms of shares; they are in control because they have the technical know-how, because they supply the majority of managers, technicians and engineers, and above all because they train the indigenous managers in the spirit of capitalist management."

The possibilities open for capitalist expansion through mixed companies and the structure of the nationalised boards, not to mention the existence of the developing private sector of the economy, are made even more serious by certain trends emerging from the recommendations of the National Economic and Social Council (CNES) for the four year plan 1969-1973. Asserting that "the State cannot support the full burden of industrialisation and that the nationalised sector is in a difficult position", the CNES puts forward as remedies resort to private enterprise on a wider scale and to competition by setting up two nationalised boards for the same sector of the economy. It further proposes to reconsider the priority given to heavy industry so as "not to compromise the overall industrial development of the country".<sup>22</sup>

Can the dangers which threaten the development of progressive Algeria be averted? Firstly the technical methods of industrialisation, of management and of development must not be considered as miraculous solutions which alone will make possible the advance to socialism. The nationalised boards and in general the state capitalist bodies which are taking shape, can lead to capitalism just as easily as to socialism, since the final destiny of the country is decided on a different basis, namely the class struggle both within and without.

### Increasing Social Differentiations

"In the new countries," states the main resolution adopted at the Moscow Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties last June, "social differentiation is increasing. The conflict is sharpening between the working class, the peasantry and the other democratic forces, including patriotic sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, and imperialism and international reactionary forces, especially those sections of the bourgeoisie whose collaboration with imperialism goes more and more deeply".

This observation is especially valid for Algeria, where class struggles in various forms have grown

<sup>22</sup> Quoted by *Saout Ech Chaab* (August 1969).

deeper since independence in spite of the repeated affirmations of certain leaders, according to which classes do not exist in this country. It is true that during the war of independence every section of society except the big landowners who supported the colonialists to the finish, united under the leadership of the FLN in a single movement against colonial domination and class contradictions were somewhat submerged during this period. A further factor helped to make class differences less noticeable: by bringing in a substantial European minority, French colonialism had held back the development of an indigenous bourgeoisie. Because of its relative weakness, it was thus not able, politically or economically, to play an important part before independence. At the time of the insurrection, it was not strong enough to take the lead. As in other countries of the Third World, it was thus the petty-bourgeoisie which became the leading force of the national liberation movement, while the intelligentsia, which arose from it, provided the leading figures.

The contradictory aspects of Algerian politics arise from this class basis. They reflect the heterogeneous nature of the petty-bourgeoisie, seeking to free itself from the former colonial subservience, struggling for economic independence in the face of reaction and imperialism, but at the same time held back by the fear of being "overtaken by the revolutionary workers and peasants". The hybrid nature of the petty-bourgeoisie is also seen in the efforts to work out "a middle way" between capitalism and socialism, a sort of "different socialism", rejecting scientific socialism and seeking to ignore the existence of classes. But although softened by the existence of the FLN as the sole party and the absence of free expression or public debate, class struggles existed nonetheless and were sharpened as social differences grew more apparent.<sup>23</sup>

The big landowners are still the most dangerous threat to the Algerian revolution, not only because of their power in the countryside, but also through their influence on the government, and this will remain the case as long as no substantial agrarian reform has been carried through.<sup>24</sup> Eight million poor peasants, dependents included, continue to swell the army of unemployed and unskilled workers in the towns, while waiting for the land for which they fought and which independence should have given them. But so far, thanks to their influential friends in the State apparatus, the administration,

<sup>23</sup> According to a Polish economist, 8,000 Algerian families owned 35 per cent to 40 per cent of the national revenue in 1965.

<sup>24</sup> According to figures in documents presented to the Congress of the FLN in 1964—"In Algeria, 8,500 private landowners each owned more than 100 hectares and 15,000 more than 50 hectares".

the police, the army<sup>25</sup> and even the FLN, the 8,500 big landowners have succeeded in thwarting the aspirations of the peasants.<sup>26</sup>

### Strengthened Position of Bourgeoisie

Since independence, and especially since January 1965, the bourgeoisie has strengthened its position, although the seizure by the workers of the big factories abandoned by the Europeans prevented it from achieving its great ambition, which was to take over from the European bourgeoisie.

Alongside the present State sector, in private industry and in business, in its business relations with foreign companies (by which some of them are in fact "bought") but also by the influence which they have through those of their number in important positions in the state apparatus and the nationalised boards, the bourgeoisie has substantially strengthened its position. Social differences have sharpened between various sections of the petty-bourgeoisie itself. There are those elements who now have important administrative positions and have thus merged with the executives of the bourgeoisie and those trained by the colonial administration. In this way a new class of bourgeois-bureaucrats has been created. A warning about this development was given by the April 1964 Conference of the FLN<sup>27</sup> which denounced:

"instinctive anti-socialist activities of the bourgeois-bureaucracy which is establishing itself in the apparatus of the State and the economy. It is through this strata", continued the resolution, "that not only imperialist influence but that of national bourgeois elements seeking to thwart and misdirect socialist policies, can be transmitted."

It is clear that this danger has not lessened.

Another part of the petty-bourgeoisie, along with certain representatives in leading state positions, often men from the interior who fought in the liberation movement and retain their links with the poor peasants, adhere to the principles of the revolution but at the same time retain their prejudices and their fears concerning the emergence on the political scene of organised and class-conscious workers. Many of these leaders, such as Houari Boumédiène himself, affirm their attachment to the anti-imperialist and progressive aims of the Algerian revolution, recognise the validity of popular demands and particularly the demand for agrarian reform, pay tribute to the role of the nation's worker-producers, but in practice give the impression of wanting to work for the good of the

<sup>25</sup> The case referred to is that of Captain Slimane, a big landowner in the valley of Cheliff.

<sup>26</sup> The most typical example is that of Kaïd Ahmed, a leading figure of the FLN.

<sup>27</sup> The Charter of Algiers.

people without involving the people and above all without the participation of the workers and their political and trade union organisations.

### The Working Class

Such a policy is made possible by the weakness of the working class itself; probably as a result of industrialisation, the working class will grow in the coming years; its influence in the political life of the country will increase as it becomes more authoritative and class-conscious. But its present relative weakness is real. It was recruited essentially from the 800,000 agricultural workers and landless peasants who came into the towns at the very beginning of independence to "replace" the Europeans who had left Algeria.

This working class has thus only just left the countryside, and has thus somewhat diluted the old working class from which, thanks to independence, many leading elements have moved into other jobs, in the administration especially, and which had a rich experience of class struggle and a developed class consciousness.

The anti-colonial struggle carried through on the basis of national unity but dominated by petty-bourgeois ideology probably helped to hold back the class consciousness of the workers, but the need for daily struggles around their demands, in defence of the worker-managed undertakings threatened with suppression, against the restrictions on trade union rights and the State's influence on the UGTA (Algerian Workers' Union—Trans.) push them to reorganise and take action on a clearer class basis.

### Society in Ferment

Algerian society is thus still in a ferment. Social differentiations and class contradictions are inevitably increasing, finding expression in political conflict even at top level. The major conflict is still about agrarian reform, the immediate demand of the peasant masses which is also needed by the developing industries which need a much bigger home market.

Various sections of society, including some of the bourgeoisie, are involved in industrialisation and their efforts link up with those of the poor peasants to overcome the resistance of the big landowners. The very nature of industrialisation gives rise to other areas of confrontation. Those of the "bought" bourgeoisie whose interests are linked with neo-colonialist penetration are already agitating for the abandonment of the attempts to create a heavy industry which is essential to give the nation real economic independence. These are just some of the different aspects of the struggle around the basic question of which way for Algeria.

Amongst those in power, there are men sincerely attached to the socialist ideal, even if envisaged in

confused terms, while others are agents of reaction and neo-colonialism. Moreover, we still have the heritage of old conflicts, which broke out during the liberation struggle between "willayas" of the interior and the frontier forces, rivalries between clans and regions, which make for a highly complicated tangle of relationships and very often hide basic contradictions. As the situation becomes clearer, however, new groups based on class interests and thus being more political, will require from everyone a less ambiguous answer to the question "Towards socialism or towards capitalism?". And the answer to this fundamental question will ultimately depend on the balance of forces of these different social classes and strata.

### The FLN

Aware of the need to base itself on other organised forces than the army, the group in power have thought to revive the FLN, that extraordinary instrument of struggle of the days of the liberation war, and the mass organisations. But it must be said that no progress has been made with the reorganisation of the FLN:

"1968 was to be the year of the Party . . . so far this Party has not found the necessary unity and this is a matter of shame . . ."

This was said by Colonel Boumédiène recently, following the months and months of effort devoted to "organising the Party" first of all by Chérif Belkacem and then Kaïd Ahmed. The attempts to organise, the propaganda put out, the additional appointment of full-time workers and, it must be said, the renewed efforts to bring every kind of pressure and intimidation to bear on the former militants who have given up their activity since the *coup d'état* and have little desire to resume it in the present circumstances, all this has achieved nothing. What the present leaders refuse to recognise is that no reorganisation can revive the FLN. Its problem is much more serious, it is of a political nature.

During the war of liberation the FLN was a broad grouping of all sections of the nation against the colonial enemy. With independence, it was inevitable that divergent interests, submerged during the common struggle against oppression, should re-emerge within the FLN. To make this body a party of the workers and the poor revolutionary peasants, as its most thoroughgoing members wished, and to lay down its ideology, meant that it would be necessary to have a thorough purge of the organisation which had hitherto brought together the urban middle-class, the rich peasants (clearly opposed to any real socialist policy) and the poor workers and the fellas who, for their part, wanted no let up in the reorganisation of society which had been commenced.

Ignoring the point of view agreed by the FLN congress in April 1964, whose constitution stipulated that employers could not be members of the Party, there is talk nowadays of reverting to first principles and setting up an organisation uniting all sections of the nation, open to all except the "subversive wealthy" as Kaïd Ahmed put it! This approach again shows the desire of the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie to deny, to distort and to minimise the class struggle and all the social contradictions. In the same spirit, socialism becomes a vague and idyllic aspiration shared by all social classes, supported by everyone who took part in the war from the first insurrection on November 1st 1954.

There is no other explanation for the crisis in the FLN. The workers who understand the need for a real revolutionary party cannot accept the attitude and aims of the FLN of today which describes itself as the one party of the Algerian revolution. Discussing this failure, the Vanguard Socialist Party of Algeria wrote:

"Experience and life have shown what has happened to this one party, and the interests for which it has been used by the various groupings of reactionaries, bourgeois-bureaucrats and the petty-bourgeoisie, which manoeuvre for a dominating role. Far from carrying on an effective struggle against reactionary ideology and policies, this situation only serves to discredit socialism still further . . .

"The FLN plays no leading role in the nation and has no independent existence. It no longer involves the broad progressive forces of society. It is today a mere instrument, entirely dependent on the strength of the different groups which divide or contend for the control of the State."<sup>28</sup>

### Mass Organisations

The trade unions (UGTA) and the other mass organisations, the National Union of Algerian Students, the FLN Youth Section and the National Union of Algerian Women suffer the results of this situation. Tens of thousands of workers have left their trade unions. Its membership has never been weaker, and this is not surprising when the UGTA is used as part of the government apparatus, its officials being imposed on the membership while the elected leaders who have the confidence of the workers are removed from office and replaced by yes-men.

In a similar way, the FLN has sought to undermine the National Union of Algerian Students, not hesitating to imprison some of its leaders, but the students are resolute in the defence of their organisation.

This policy explains the indifference of the masses

<sup>28</sup> "Algeria, Six Years After Independence—the VSPA Answers Five Questions".

towards the FLN and the dangerous isolation of a government which has nonetheless taken some essential decisions of an anti-imperialist character and which corresponds to the fundamental interests of Algeria. It is clear that by approving measures which can only widen the gap which cuts them off so dangerously from the masses, the anti-imperialists who hold responsible offices under the new government are helping to strengthen the State apparatus at every level and also helping on all sides the worst enemies of the Algerian revolution.

By associating themselves, as a result of anti-communist prejudice, with the prosecutions of the best militants of the working class and socialist movement,<sup>29</sup> or by being the tacit accomplices of repression, they not only helped to weaken all the progressive forces in the face of the imperialist danger, but are likely also, in the long run, to pave the way for their own defeat. It is in fact obvious that the reactionaries, with a foot in the government, are impatient to put an end to uncertainties and ambiguities as soon as they feel strong enough to impose their own policy in full.

In such a situation it is certain that they would not tolerate for long the "left-over" supporters of a real national and democratic revolution, whether they were opponents or associates of Ben Bella.

Imperialist hopes are based on basic changes of this sort, whether brought about by a sudden change or by a leisurely drift to the right. The renewed attention which the monopolies and their publications are giving to Algeria are a clear indication that they have some justification for taking their hopes seriously.

### Towards the Regrouping of the Progressive Forces

Amongst the people at large and particularly in the ranks of the workers but also in the FLN, in the army, and in the police, those who are concerned at the delay in carrying through the agrarian reform, at the facilities enjoyed by the agents of neo-colonialism, at the increasing power and luxury living of the bourgeois-bureaucracy, at the destruction of democratic and trade union rights, are becoming increasingly numerous, sharing the same fears and the same hopes as the militant socialists of the Vanguard Socialist Party who have been driven underground. However they do not yet respond to the appeal of the Party for unity which would bar the way to reaction. To sum up, the forces exist which could defend the Algerian revolution, but they still remain dispersed and so temporarily powerless.

<sup>29</sup> Trade union militants remain imprisoned at El Harrach, while a number of other militants of the VSPA have been deported to the South, where they are under house arrest.

The Vanguard Socialist Party of Algeria, created by the merger of the former members of the Algerian Communist Party<sup>30</sup> with the Marxist-Leninist militants of the FLN is working to bring about the widest possible unity of all the anti-imperialists and of all the progressives, whatever may have been their attitude to the 19th June *coup d'état* and their position with regard to the new government. Rejecting hasty over-simplifications, the Vanguard Socialist Party does not accept the dividing line which some would like to draw between the opposition seen as a whole, on the one side, and the government, also seen as a whole, on the other.

"In January 1966," wrote the Party,<sup>31</sup> "we suggested setting up a Democratic Popular Front to stimulate and organise the carrying through of a joint programme . . . We said then that this Front, in our view, must include all the progressive forces without exception, organised or not, both among the supporters and among the opponents of the government established on June 19th 1965. Why did we not call for 'an Opposition Front'? The reasons are inter-related. First we wish to emphasise the progressive and anti-imperialist character of such a Front. Now, even if they are in different proportions, both the supporters and the opponents of the present regime include some progressives and some reactionaries. Moreover, we do not wish to fix or crystallise the artificial differences which are based on partisan feelings, associations or antagonisms between clans or between personalities, which have marked the struggle for power only too deeply since independence."

### Vanguard Socialist Party

As a Marxist-Leninist party, the Vanguard Socialist adopts the aim of a radical transformation of Algerian society, but, contrary to the statements of FLN leaders, does not consider that Algeria has already reached the stage of the socialist revolution and still less the stage of building socialism. It observes that:

"at the present time, a number of conditions, including the agrarian reform, are lacking to enable socialist revolution to take place. These conditions must be achieved as soon as possible and as vigorously as possible through the development of the present national and democratic revolution. The success of this revolution must be assured by a broad coalition of political and social forces giving rise to and supporting an anti-imperialist government of progressive unity".

<sup>30</sup> The Communist Party of Algeria which decided to integrate its members in the FLN after the Congress of April 1964, resumed its activities following the *coup d'état*, after the break-up of the FLN and the defeat of the efforts made to transform it into a revolutionary workers party.

<sup>31</sup> "Algeria, Six Years After Independence—The VSPA Replies to Five Questions".

### For Unity of Action

Unlike certain opponents, either irresponsible or inspired by foreign agencies, who dream of new *coups d'état* which could result in fresh bloody adventures to the advantage of the imperialists, the Vanguard Socialist Party is firmly committed to a peaceful and constructive solution to the crisis produced by the *coup d'état* of June 19th. Such a solution would be greatly helped by a less tense atmosphere in the political life of the country, and especially by the freeing of the imprisoned progressive politicians, including Ahmed Ben Bella, and a cessation of all repression and prosecution of the anti-imperialist and socialist militants. To all the anti-imperialist and democratic forces the Vanguard Socialist Party puts forward the following immediate aims as a basis for unity of action. These are the aims as laid down in the Appeal of October 15th, 1969:

satisfaction of workers' demands (wages, family allowances, social security, security of employment), fulfillment of the promises made at the Third Congress of the UGTA by the representatives of the regime.

- implementation and improvement of the positive decisions of the regime and respect for the law especially in the present controlled sector;
- trade union and democratic rights to be respected: progressive detainees to be freed and house arrest to be lifted, death sentences to be commuted and an amnesty for the civil and military anti-imperialists sentenced at Oran, respect for the dignity of citizens and their legal rights, freedom of expression for the workers and the anti-imperialists, legal status for trade union organisation at the place of employment;
- establishment of a basic four year plan to build the economy along non-capitalist lines; the workers playing their part in working out this plan and in the management of the nationalised boards;
- implementation of a real agrarian reform restricting the holdings of the big landowners; adequate help as a priority for the poor peasants and the victims of floods and natural disasters;
- democratic reform of education, the development of a national democratic and scientific culture related to the ideals of our youth, the workers and the people.
- to maintain and extend the anti-imperialist position of Algeria, the mass support for the struggles of the Vietnamese, Arab and African peoples, to develop co-operation with the socialist countries and sharpen vigilance against imperialist moves.

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The actions taken to achieve these hopes and demands, states the same appeal, will help to thwart reactionary manoeuvres and overcome the passions born of the crises of the past. They will help to unite all the anti-imperialists, wherever they may be, in a united front on the basis of a minimum joint programme:

“The factors which objectively now make the unity of their efforts indispensable are stronger than their divergences on political and ideological problems. They must work together for the development of the national and democratic revolution whose achievement will create the many conditions necessary for the success of the socialist revolution. The enemies of our people at the present time are still imperialism and its ally, internal reaction. The answer to these is a united front of all the anti-imperialist and progressive forces”.

### **Effective Democracy**

The Vanguard Socialist Party also stresses the absolute necessity for mass mobilisation and action to defend and extend the gains of the revolution,

which means, first and foremost, effective democracy, defined as follows:

“Effective democracy means that the masses, the progressive forces, the anti-imperialist forces have the free and full use of democratic rights and freedom which will help them to struggle more effectively against the conservative and reactionary forces opposed to progress in Algeria, and to achieve the more fully the tasks of the present stage of our national and democratic revolution . . . In the absence of such a democracy, the most reactionary elements will inevitably block the development of the revolution by keeping the masses out of action”.

It is difficult to see any alternative way to this linking of forces by which the Algerian revolutionaries and patriots can thwart the imperialist threats of subversion, bar the way to neo-colonialist penetration and internal reaction and save the Algerian revolution from the impasse into which it is in danger of slipping.

Seven years after independence the harshest struggle is still to come, but the goal will become daily clearer to every Algerian.

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