

Land of Ben Bella



"Demilitarize the Mediterranean" screamed the poster on the side of the large building. "The Avant-garde of the party leads Algeria" claimed another. As the ship moved alongside the quay, I could see thousands of enthusiastic Algerians waiting.

But they were not the only ones who had waited a long while for this moment. For forty three Canadian Students it marked the beginnings of a long awaited six week seminar in Algeria, sponsored by the World University Service of Canada. The delegates had been preparing for this summer's conference for almost a year. All students, chosen from among thirty-three Canadian universities, had done extensive reading on certain phases of Algerian life. Each had prepared dissertations on given topics as well as book reports. Prior to departure for Paris with two administrators and five professors, the forty-three students had attended a 7-day orientation program in Ste. Adele, P.Q. Until this point, none of us had really known what lay ahead.

The writer of this article, Enid Green, is currently a third year student in the Dalhousie Law School. Born in the Northwest Territories in 1941, she moved to London England at an early age. Enid attended a private school until the age of sixteen when she returned to Canada, settling in Calgary. She received her B.A. in 1961 from the University of British Columbia. Enid is presently both president of WUSC and a "don" at Sherriff Hall. This is the first in a series of articles about her experience as Dal delegate to this summer's WUSC conference in Algeria.

We had seen movies of Algeria and had been given lectures by people who had spent a number of years in the country. However, even this could not possibly prepare us for the sight that was to greet us upon arrival. Only some of the waiting thousands were there to greet relatives returning from France. Most were simply watching the arrival of the ship, for they had nothing else to do. There were no officials waiting for us, and only one bus to transport us to the Cite' Universitaire, the residential section of the University of Algiers. The men, exercising their alleged superiority (as per the Koran) claimed the bus, leaving the women to wait outside

the customs building. The Seminar had commenced.

"Come With Me to the Casbah"

The day after our arrival we were officially welcomed by the representatives of the department of education and taken on a tour of Algiers. Upon our arrival at the Upper Casbah we split into small groups of four or five. Its narrow passage ways and old house exude an atmosphere which cannot be matched by any Hollywood set. No roads run through the Casbah; its passage ways are only ten to twelve feet wide. It is easy to see why

Europeans didn't enter there during the struggle for independence. Unless accompanied by a guide, a stranger could be lost for hours. Although inhabitants often still regard strangers with hostility, there is no longer need to fear a knife in the back in the Casbah. It is a peaceful residential section of Algiers with its own stores, schools and mosques — perhaps one of the most conservative sections of Algiers. On the day Independence was proclaimed the young girls who lived in the Casbah removed their veils and ran around for the day dressed in blue jeans. That evening they were severely chastised by their fathers and locked up until they agreed never to leave the house uncovered by a veil. Thus, a group of unveiled Canadians was the object of a great deal of curiosity.

A City of Contrasts

Algiers itself is a city of contrasts. The buildings along

the waterfront gleam in the sunlight, while only a mile away is Bidonville, the equivalent of a shanty town. The houses there are built from discarded boxes, rubble left from the struggle against the French — anything that in fact will provide privacy. Unlike North Americans, the Algerians were willing to point these things out. They have an extensive slum clearance and rehousing plan that is presently getting rid of the "slums". In the suburbs, high rise apartment blocks are being construct-

From Time to Time

TIME magazine: a periodical designed by Americans for Americans. The Canada edition: designed by Americans to let Canadians know briefly what they are doing.

Taking the publication of September 25, Canada edition (that's the edition with twice as much on "The U. S." than on "Canada") as a typical copy, we find spread throughout its pages a pendant affection, indicative of TIME. They are doubtlessly trying to appeal to the intelligentsia: trying to raise their literary standard above other commonplace journalistic efforts (LIFE, LIBERTY, SECRET ROMANCES, THE MAIL-STAR etc.) by popping in at various inappropos places a multi-syllabic word or phrase.

The cinema reviewers of TIME are out-and-out fastidious; they've hardly recommended a movie to anybody since way back when. It seems that the reviewers would rather write a good pun than a good criticism. The reviewers sit down, pick a movie to pieces, and in the process do little in the way of summarizing it to give the prospective moviegoer a chance to judge for himself. The cinema reviews also afford a chance for TIME to assert its typically dry, subtle humour in its overworked, pointless puns. Take for example the case where they are lightly trying to put forward the fact that a certain Scandinavian movie, "To Love" . . . some will find too explicit. Such drip-dry humour can only leave the reader with a similar drip-dry impression about the organization.

TIME

The "Letter from the Publisher" is an apparently unnecessary exercise in self-justification and not so subtle self-modesty. "We acknowledge the reader's feelings that to be on TIME'S cover is a distinction quite different from being in a newspaper headline. And . . ."

Their American philosophy is simply that they don't like either Johnson or Goldwater, but if forced to they'll pick Johnson. One of the main reasons for this appears to be in the fact that they still have a soft spot for J. F. K., and an express desire to have him back. This is shown most lucidly in the frequent pictures and reports of a defunct First Lady, and her two sugarplums. Surely continued exposure of the one-time First Lady is intended to sell "pay-later subscriptions" rather than to provide responsible coverage of world events.

Time has a basic assumption, upon which much of the magazine is based, that the Russians are rotten evil-doers: an inaccurate, injudicious and immature assumption. This attitude is clearly emphasized in their story of a West Berlin de-wire tapping expert, who was splashed with some acid at a social meeting hall - church. Whoever did it nobody know, nobody, that is, except TIME. The first question they ask is, "Why did the Russians do it?" But TIME can go further: they explain why the Russians would want to acidify this man: ". . . to eliminate West Germany's ace bug expert." Insidious hypotheses such as these do little to help in what so many are striving for - peace. Rash bias, of which TIME has a full share, is bad for the nation as it is bad for the world.

TIME is aware of, and would like to curb, the incipient nuclear clash, but they do nothing in this direction. Instead of eliminating the fear, hate, and superiority they feel as Americans from their pages, they'd rather vote Johnson

and hope he will stop the atomic anxiety. If lines like, "The Russians have taken another jump on the Americans in the race for space . . ." were substituted by, "The Russian skill and craftsmanship have advanced the world's conquest in space another step . . ." the mutual feeling of distrust and fear wouldn't be fostered.

It is not surprising that TIME has few good things to say about Cassius Clay. Their attitude is that better fighters were made in the good old days. Maybe they don't like the difference between Clay and Sullivan? Cassius isn't the same color, and he has no desire to create the "aw shucks, it was nothin'" image. Clay is different, he's not the "All American" portrait, but these are weak qualities to base hate upon.

To summarize, TIME is a biased, arrogant, crafty, and dreadfully American publication, which charges an outrageous price for an outrageous few pages. Unfortunately there are few publications capable of replacing it.



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