

COMMITTEE TO DEFEND THE FRENCH STUDENTS  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DE GAULLE GOVERNMENT FORCED TO RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS

New York, N.Y. - The Committee to Defend the French Students has just learned that on Aug. 23 the de Gaulle government announced the release of Alain Krivine and the 8 other political prisoners who had been held in jail for as long as six weeks. The nine were held on charges of "reconstituting" the banned Jeunesse Communiste Revolutionnaire (JCR) and if convicted face up to two years in prison. Their release on provisional liberty (comparable to freedom on bail in the U.S.) marks a major victory in the fight against the de Gaulle government's repression of the left in France. Although they have been released from jail, the charges against them have not been dropped.

Alain Krivine, the most prominent figure in the JCR, and the 8 other students had been active in the struggles of May and June in France. Their arrests were part of a campaign of repression against the left in France which began June 12<sup>th</sup> when 11 left-wing student organizations and political parties were ordered to dissolve. The JCR and the other organizations were charged with forming armed militias, a frame-up accusation they immediately denied. The pretext for the banning is a 1936 conspiracy law aimed at disarming right-wing groups.

The French government has singled out the JCR for special attack in an attempt to intimidate the left and prevent further struggles in the fall. Until now all legal moves to secure the provisional release of the alleged JCR members had failed. On

Aug. 10<sup>th</sup> M. Raymond Marcellin, the Minister of the Interior, in a speech at the opening of an industrial exposition, violently denounced the "subversive groups" and the danger they constitute to the government and the Republic. This speech was handled by the press as a major policy address of the government.

The world-wide condemnation of de Gaulle's attempt to crush the left in France was undoubtedly a significant factor in the release of these political prisoners on Aug. 23. Statements against the repression have been made by virtually all the leftist political tendencies in France. Three defense committees with broad support from students, writers, young lawyers, political figures and noted intellectuals including Jean-Paul Sartre and Laurent Schwartz have demanded that the bans be lifted and that Alain Krivine and the other prisoners be released. Solidarity meetings were organized throughout Europe. In the United States the Committee to Defend the French Students has been publicizing the repression and organizing to defend its victims.

The provisional release of the political prisoners marks the first victory in this campaign to end the repression in France. The Committee to Defend the French Students continues to fight this repression and asks support for its four demands:

1. Immediate release of all political prisoners and the dismissal of all charges against them.
2. Immediate repeal of the ban on all the proscribed political organizations.
3. Reaffirmation by the French government of the right of free access for all foreign journalists and all foreign students.

4. An immediate end to the brutal police repression of demonstrations and other attacks on the civil liberties of the French people.

For more information contact: Committee to Defend the French Students, c/o Helena Hermes, Nat'l Sec'y, 148 W. 16 St., New York, N.Y. 10011.