



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



LIMITED

A/C.1/PV.913
27 November 1957

ENGLISH

Twelfth Session

FIRST COMMITTEE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 27 November 1957, at 3 p. m.

Chairman:

Mr. ABDOH

(Iran)

The question of Algeria [59]

A statement was made in the general debate on the item by:

Mr. Pineau

(France)

Note:

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AGENDA ITEM 59

THE QUESTION OF ALGERIA (A/3617 and Add.1)

Mr. PINEAU (France) (interpretation from French): Last February, when the Algerian question was brought up before the First Committee, a member of the French delegation was at my side. That man, a French Moslem of Algeria, has now left nothing in that place but a memory. He was the victim of a premeditated murder. I want to pay tribute to his public spirit and to the courage with which, braving the threats of death to which he had been subjected, he chose to risk his life for the cause that he believed to be just.

If today I have brought up the memory of Ali Chekkal, I am sure that you will realize that it is not in order to exploit his memory -- even in the slightest degree -- to help support the French cause in the debate that is to take place, but because of a higher reason that is of concern to all the nations represented here.

Yet Ali Chekkal was killed because, as his murderer said, and as those who stood behind the murder have admitted, he came to the United Nations Assembly, because in the corridors of this building he expressed his attachment to France.

Now I put it to you: Can any of you agree -- despite your views on the substance of the problem -- that any of you, no matter who, may be done away with tomorrow because of the stand he took freely in our Organization?

One single solitary affirmative reply to this would prove that whoever had the courage to give it, refused to adhere to the very spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, and would also prove his unworthiness to sit among us.

I have no right for a moment to doubt the unanimity of your feelings. France will not tolerate that the expression of an opinion be answered by murder. France never has, and never will, place strictures upon anyone who has made use of the most sacred right of every man -- that of giving free expression to his thoughts.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

Scarcely nine months ago our General Assembly carried out a careful and at times impassioned examination of the Algerian question. A certain number of delegations have seen fit to reopen the case, and to reproach France with not having abided by the hope expressed in the resolution (1012 (XI)) adopted on 15 February last for a "peaceful, democratic and just" solution to the Algerian question.

We shall no more refuse this discussion than we did the last, although it appears to us to be neither useful nor timely. Despite important and even decisive progress achieved during this short space of time, one would truly have to be naive -- or be actuated by bad faith -- to believe in the possibility of speedily solving such a delicate problem as that of Algeria.

I shall deal first with France's position on the competence of the United Nations. During the present session of the Assembly, as at the previous session, my delegation raised no objection to the inclusion of the Algerian question in the agenda. This does not in any way mean that our position has changed, or that today we accept, any more than we did then, the interference of the United Nations in a matter which falls squarely within the jurisdiction of our national sovereignty. The French delegation is thus consistent with the stand it has always taken regarding the incompetence of the Assembly to deal with the Algerian problem. In this debate it proposes only to bring the truth of the Algerian question to the knowledge of international opinion, to stress the efforts we are making to bring a peaceful settlement to a drama that has already caused too much bloodshed and too many tears, and to refute the calumnies piled up against us, in order, to turn, to make our own grievances heard.

The reasons behind the French position regarding the question of competence are no doubt uppermost in the minds of most of the members of this Committee. One of the basic Articles of the Charter sets up as a principle the non-intervention of the United Nations in matters falling essentially within the national sovereignty of States. Without the slightest doubt, it applies to the question at present before us. France has been in Algeria since 1830. In 1848, when the Constitution of the Second Republic was adopted, Algeria became integrated within the national territory, that is to say, long before the integration of such authentically French provinces as Savoy and Nice, and also before many States represented here had

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assimilated much of the territory that is today under their legitimate sovereignty. These are historical and de jure facts upon which no one has ever tried to cast the slightest doubt.

Like all other Members of our Organization, France joined the United Nations with the frontiers that had been traditionally recognized as belonging to it -- including Algeria, which is therefore placed under the restriction from intervention mentioned in Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. Perhaps some may regret that this should be the case, and that they did not, at the time, make known the reservations that they feel today. But that still does not give our Assembly the power to exceed its rights and to waive an obligation to which you have all subscribed and without which there could be no international life at all.

I want also to mention that 1,200,000 persons of European origin are settled in Algeria and have been so for numerous generations, representing one eighth of the local population. And on the other hand, more than 300,000 French Moslems from Algeria live and work in France. There they enjoy the same rights as other citizens, without distinction of origin or religion. There is no obstacle to an Algerian Moslem having access to the highest positions in the Republic, as experience has shown.

Therefore, be their nature and complexity what they may, the problems that arise in Algeria fall without doubt within the framework of French sovereignty, and nothing has ever been found in the Charter that might motivate or justify an interference on the part of the General Assembly.

In the last analysis -- and in the course of the last session of the General Assembly it was amply proved -- what is occurring in Algeria is not a national uprising against foreign oppression but a political enterprise, undertaken by a minority, wed to the well-known methods of terrorism and of a war of subversion. It would have foundered long ere this had it not received help from certain countries which supply it with arms, money, directives, and even bases of operations. If the Algerian question did, in fact, contain an international aspect, this would be the only one. So that, according to the Charter, it ought not to be France standing in the dock, but those who thus threaten France's security and sovereignty.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

Next I shall deal with the French proposals for a cease-fire. Before undertaking a recital of the present state of affairs in Algeria, I feel I should correct a reproach too often levelled against France. Acting in either good or bad faith, some have become the echo of the rebel propaganda, expressing amazement that my country has not as yet undertaken negotiations with those fighting against it, and thus has not taken into full account the terms of the resolution of 15 February last. But, the only offers of negotiation were those coming from the French side; and despite the fact that those offers were made without any unacceptable preconditions, they have all been rejected.

As long ago as 9 March 1956, M. Guy Mollet, then Prime Minister, made a public appeal to the rebels to agree to a "cease-fire" that would allow free and honest elections to be held, followed by conversations on the formation of a new Algeria. Later on, and in particular on 9 January 1957, this offer was repeated and further clarified. It has just been solemnly renewed by the new Prime Minister in his declaration of investiture. France is still ready to negotiate a cease-fire with those who have taken up arms against it. As far as we are concerned, these conversations would not be subject to any precondition of a political nature but would be coupled with every legitimate guarantee of security that might be required in a similar case. The only reason for such conversations would be the return of calm and security, without which no honest consultation of the people is possible.

The second panel of this triptych is the holding of elections with a single electoral college, which will allow the populations of Algeria freely to choose the men to whom they want to entrust the renewal of conversations. The French Government will recognize as legitimate representatives of those populations only those nominated by popular will and without constraint. To the French, ballots are the only valid letters of accreditation.

Terror cannot confer authentic titles of representation. No movement, seeking to achieve power by terrorism alone, can expect to be recognized as the sole valid negotiator in a country where, as I shall show later, it has the support of only a fraction of the population -- a fraction, active no doubt, but in the minority.

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(Mr. Pineau, France)

The French Government feels that no one should be given ground to doubt the sincerity of the popular consultation. As it has already promised, it will itself take the initiative of inviting Governments of countries which are accustomed to democratic procedures to send as many observers as necessary.

The third stage will begin when, the will of the people having been ascertained, the Algerian assemblies will have been set up. Thereupon, discussions will be held to decide upon the definitive institutions of Algeria, taking into due account the aspirations and the at times divergent interests of the various communities, thus permitting individual rights and freedoms for all to be fully assured.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

The method I have just outlined was already put before the First Committee at the last session; at the time, it seemed logical to all those who truly wanted a settlement to be arrived at.

On 15 February last, the Assembly unanimously expressed the hope that the Algerian question would be peacefully, democratically and justly solved. It is not entirely by chance that these terms coincide with the three panels of our triptych: cease-fire, elections, negotiations.

France is determined to continue this policy, of which the loi-cadre (enabling legislation), at present before the French Parliament, is one of the instruments. This legislation, the terms of which I shall analyse in due course, is only intended to bring closer the moment when the peoples of Algeria will be able to express their desires with complete freedom and without fear of reprisals.

Why did the French proposals for a cease-fire remain unanswered? It is because those who head the rebellion put forward preconditions that were unacceptable.

In its desire to end bloodshed as soon as possible, the French Government did not hesitate last year, nor again this year, to enter into unofficial contact with certain of its adversaries.

Thus, on 24 July last, when interrogated after an Anglo-American press luncheon, Mr. Bourguès-Maunoury declared quite clearly that:

"contacts are being made on a permanent basis by all sorts of persons with the rebels, and they will continue."

In the course of the previous session, I submitted a brief account of the background of these contacts, in order to strip the fiction from some novelesque versions that were being bruited about. I can state today that no noticeable changes have been registered among the heads of the rebellion. Recent, as well as the earliest, experience has proved that they refuse any negotiations on a cease-fire until all their own demands are met by the French: "Prior independence" -- that is the blind alley which our good will is up against.

Everyone can find confirmation of this in public documents and statements. Here are some examples:

On 10 July 1957, a representative of the F.L.N. stated in New York that:

"Our position has not changed -- and will not change. We will not enter into negotiations with the French until they have recognized the independence of Algeria."

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On 22 July, in a letter to Mr. Hammarskjold, with which all the delegations present are familiar, the same spokesman wrote that the F.L.N. set as a condition for the opening of negotiations:

"the announcement by the French Government of an official policy recognizing the independence of Algeria."

He was to say later that same day to the press that this recognition of Algerian independence would be only the starting point of fruitful negotiations for a cease-fire. He added:

"At present we see no possibility of negotiations, nor even of Franco-Algerian contacts."

Finally, quite recently, on 30 October, a communiqué from the Executive Committee of the F.L.N. was published in Tunis, and it solemnly reaffirmed:

"that there would be no negotiations without the prior recognition of the independence of Algeria."

It is difficult to imagine a more brutal slamming of a door that we have always tried to keep ajar.

While the emissaries sent by the F.L.N. to different member countries of the United Nations declare -- for the benefit of the local press -- that it is France that refuses to negotiate, they simply omit mention of the fact that their attitude is the real obstacle to negotiations.

The question must be correctly put in order to understand it.

Can anyone imagine the opening of negotiations -- of any sort -- being made contingent upon the acceptance of all the claims put forward by some of the possible spokesmen? For France to be willing to recognize the independence of Algeria tomorrow, even without knowing if that is the true will of all the populations concerned, would mean that there would really be no negotiations, properly speaking, except on the relatively secondary questions of the modalities of implementation.

Thus, the fact that our offer of a cease-fire, coupled with all legitimate safeguards, is met by the rebels with an unacceptable political precondition, which is tantamount to a rejection, is something for which France can in no way be held responsible.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

The position of the French Government can be summed up in two sentences: First, representation is the result of free elections, and not of terrorism. Second, the political preconditions constantly raised in opposition to opening negotiations only make the latter pointless.

That is one of the basic reasons why we have felt unable to follow through with the offers of good offices recently made by two heads of friendly States: His Majesty the King of Morocco, and the President of the Republic of Tunisia. The joint communiqué issued in Rabat, on 21 November, appoints, as the only spokesman, the F.L.N.

No more than any other party or organization can this group claim for itself the title of exclusive representative of the Algerian populations. Only free elections, held without any constraint, can, I repeat, appoint undisputed spokesmen.

Though the communiqué no longer contains the precondition of independence, it replaces it by the precondition of recognition of the sovereignty of Algeria, a less precise term than the other, perhaps, but bearing absolutely identical juridical meaning.

Furthermore, we do not see the way clear to bringing into conversations to settle the Algerian problem, Governments whose freedom of action regarding the F.L.N. is, as we shall see further on, more than dubious. Mediation always pre-supposes the neutrality of the mediator. Finally, we would not want to run the risk of jeopardizing, perhaps definitively, the chances of a Franco-North African community which we, too, desire to create when the moment for it is ripe.

Anyway, to the proposals of Rabat, the F.L.N. has replied by reiterating its intransigence. The communiqué which the F.L.N. itself published on 23 November repeats all its previous ideas, without the slightest progress having been achieved; and in it we can specifically find the following words:

"straightforward, official negotiations on the basis of independence will end the shedding of blood and the ravages of a colonialist war."

(Mr. Pineau, France)

Next, I shall deal with the conflicts between rebel groups.

The heads of the FLN regularly state that France is wasting time demanding free elections before entering into discussions on the future institutions of Algeria.

In fact, they contend that they are the real representatives of the peoples concerned, simply because they kill more people than the others -- which everyone is willing to admit. In order to ensure themselves of this monopoly, they have undertaken the destruction of other parties in the purest totalitarian tradition. Last February, I answered that contention of the FLN. But have the events of the last nine months been such as to justify a reappraisal? That is the question which I should now like to answer. It is sufficient for me to analyse the behaviour of the rebels -- which is there for all to see.

Outside of Algeria, there are groups, committees, which, calling themselves the only accredited spokesmen of the rebellion, claim military and diplomatic responsibilities. It is difficult to gauge the exact scope of their authority, but it is easy to see that harmony does not reign among them and that they make mutual accusations of the most heinous treacheries.

In Algeria itself, the situation is even more confused. The forces of pacification do not find anything in the nature of a unified army opposing them. On the contrary, independent bands of widely varied strength, at times showing open hostility towards one another, are all that they meet. A report that appeared last June in the Austrian journal Die Presse sums up the situation in the following terms:

"In the Aurès Mountains and in the coastal cities, terrorists take the law into their own hands, and, generally speaking, do not follow the instructions sent them from Tunis, especially if such instructions displease them. In the mountains, the partisans lead an adventurous life, full of variety, which they would not be willing to exchange for the toilsome existence that is the normal lot of the Arab peasant and the underemployed proletarian. The Emigré leaders would obviously have dealt with Mr. Guy Mollet, but they lack unity, and, especially, they are unsure of their authority over the 'activists.' They have few illusions regarding their own influence."

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At the present time calm has been restored in most of Algeria, but -- alongside the normal life of most -- the quarrels and acts of revenge of rival factions continue.

Two political groups are the main contenders in the Algerian rebellion: the MNA (Algerian National Movement), and the FLN (National Liberation Front). The relations existing between the two groups are marked by a cruel competition for a monopoly of the Algerian nationalist movement. First of all, they are waging a propaganda war, but, since the very beginning of the rebellion, it has been a military war as well. Each of the groups tries by every means to lure away the other's men; when persuasion fails, intimidation occurs, and even murder. For example, the FLN is responsible for the assassination of numerous MNA chiefs, such as Moustafa Ben Boulaid, one of the most important rebel chiefs in the Aurès, and of Chihani Bechir, who operated in the Constantinois region.

Probably out of regard for its hosts, the FLN itself did not liquidate the two representatives of the rival party in Cairo: Ahmed Mezerna and Chadli Mekki; instead, it had them interned, and for almost two years now, no news of these men has been received.

In the interior of the country, the bands fight at gun point over control of the sectors that bring in the fattest dividends in pillage and gun-running. The FLN has achieved obvious military successes over its adversaries, since in 1957 it destroyed many groups of the MNA in the south of Algeria. The prisoners taken were slaughtered unless they were willing to go over to the victors. But the fortune of arms changed in that region, where the MNA is now revenging itself on its enemies.

Added to these political rivalries -- if one can call them that -- are the antagonisms created by differences in race and language.

At present, within the FLN itself, the relations between the Kabyles, Chaouias and Arabs are anything but cordial. Recent clashes, claiming more than a hundred victims, have taken place in the Médea region, between Kabyle and Arab partisans, both belonging to the same movement.

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As for the Chaouia rebels of the Aurès, they reject any Arab or Kabyle authority over them, whether it be under the banner of the FLN or of the MNA. Operating as they do in one of the sectors of Algerian territory which is best suited to gun-running, they refuse to share the military, and especially the financial, advantage with anyone. A few months ago, the FLN chiefs, who have settled in Tunisia, tried to get these dissidents back in hand, but their emissaries were met with open gunfire.

Such dissension, however, is not restricted to the bands who are carrying on guerrilla warfare in Algeria. They can be found also among those whom the above-mentioned Austrian journal calls the "Emigrés".

In Metropolitan France -- where it is not a question of fighting against French control -- the struggle between tendencies is characterized by attacks and assassinations, which are reaching numbers unprecedented in the history of conflict between rival groups.

The FLN, in particular, undertook to decapitate the trade union organization which is dependent on the MNA, the Federation of Labour Unions of Algerian Workers (USTA), by having a number of its chiefs murdered, especially the President, Ahmed Bekhat, who was killed in a Parisian suburb on 27 October. These crimes have brought indignant protests from organized labour in France and outside the country, and even from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which had believed itself in duty bound to admit the so-called trade union organization of the FLN.

In France, during the first ten months of 1957 alone, about 600 Algerian Moslems have been killed and more than 2,000 have been wounded -- all victims of other Algerian Moslems. In point of fact, it is a question here not merely of a struggle for political preponderance but of a struggle to obtain the benefits of a racket, organized to tap the income and wages received by Algerians working in France. Banditry has, in this case, the upper hand over nationalism. Even in Belgium and Tunisia, similar settlements of accounts have occurred.

All over the country, the working population, eager to work in peace, is being made the victim of these methods, against which it is constantly protesting. In fact, if one forgets the rivalries that I have just described between factions or leaders and tries to deduce the true aspirations of the

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fellah and the Algerian worker, things become much clearer. And there can be no doubt that the Algerian people are "fed up" with this tyranny that they are forced to endure because of the desires of the Lords of Civil War.

Anyway, it is pointless to discuss endlessly the representative character of this or that rebel movement, when the question can be readily settled by free elections. Why does the FLN shrink from the verdict of public opinion? Doubtless because it relies more on totalitarian methods than on the support it might get from that opinion.

I turn now to the methods of terrorism.

Last February, I painted a picture for you of Algerian terrorism. Having no taste for horror, I shall spare you certain descriptions.

The final result of the methods used by the rebels has been to underline the resistance, active or passive, offered them by the Algerian population. Every passing day confirms this fact. The disgust aroused by certain methods used is now alienating the majority of those who, abused or under duress, had at one time supported the rebellion. Practically all over Algeria, life has returned to normal. The cities that a few months ago paid the heaviest tribute to terrorism have now been freed from its threat; last June, more than a hundred victims fell in Algiers; no attacks occurred in September, and only one in October.

The immediate objectives of the rebels were, if I may recall them for you:

- (1) To spread terror, at all costs, so as to create the myth of their being all-powerful;
- (2) To impose on the Moslem population a blind obedience to their orders;
- (3) To create an ineradicable hatred between the Moslem and the European communities.

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Between 1 November 1954 and 1 November 1957 the rebels murdered 8,429 civilians, of whom 310 were women and 120 children. This tragic picture includes 1,126 European victims, and 7,303 Moslems, of which 222 were women and 84 children. The proportion of Moslems killed by those who claim that they are fighting on behalf of the Algerian people is, therefore, approximately seven Moslems to one European. If any conclusion is to be drawn from these figures, it is that the rebellion does not enjoy the spontaneous support of the Moslems any more than of the Europeans.

The most spectacular attacks were generally blindly made; their aim was to sow fear and disorder everywhere and in the minds of everyone. Bombs thrown into crowds, machine guns fired on passers-by, in schools and in cafes; murderous devices hidden in public places or in public transportation vehicles. Moslem and European victims were cut down indiscriminately. We trust that this ordeal has now ended. The network that organized urban terrorism has been dismantled everywhere, thanks to the co-operation given to the authorities by the population.

To the collective murders must be added the individual executions that have taken place and that were intended to impose, by terror, the most outrageous instructions and thus force villagers and city dwellers to aid subversion. These efforts failed.

The traditional family and religious celebrations had been prohibited on the pain of death by the FLN. Yet, peace was the keynote of the last commemoration of the birth of the Prophet, the Mouloud. Patronizing public places, smoking, and even owning a dog were so many crimes that were cruelly punished. Yet, streets and public buildings have now taken on their usual look; men smoke there openly, and although this may seem a negligible detail to us, it is in the nature of a symbol to the population.

We know, furthermore, of the failure of the order to boycott the schools. Our schools have never been as well attended as they are this year; about 400,000 Moslem children now attend classes, compared to approximately 300,000 on 1 October 1954, the eve of the rebellion. At the same time, the Moslem students in France have gone back to the universities, spontaneously, without paying any attention to the still-standing order to strike. These facts prove that, although the rebels have not renounced these methods, today they no longer have the means of imposing themselves by them.

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I cannot better illustrate the reversal of the situation than by the statements of certain responsible leaders of the rebellion itself. In the Constantine area, a political commissar, signing himself Abdel Krim, last October wrote:

"The people of the sector no longer abide by our orders... particularly, the inhabitants of Ouled-Driss refuse to recognize our authority. Far worse, they challenge it outright."

I have at the disposal of the members of the Committee photostatic copies of this document and of others to which I shall refer in due course.

In Algiers itself where, I repeat, terrorism has practically disappeared in the last few months, one of the rebel chiefs, recently arrested, on 21 September wrote:

"To mark the United Nations debates on the Algerian question, a strike, however short, would be a failure here."

What he meant to say by that was that the FLN no longer has the strength to force obedience, by its usual methods, to an order for a political strike.

In passing, I want to point out that the rebels have not hesitated to turn to the services of paid professionals. Twenty of the chiefs of the FLN terrorist cells arrested in the last three years were ex-convicts. In France, the MNA killers receive a fixed fee of 20,000 to 25,000 francs per month, plus 15,000 to 20,000 francs for each co-religionist executed.

One of the main orders was also to prevent any form of co-operation between Moslems and Europeans, as well as any participation by Moslems in public life, by means of the suppression of any of those who help to ensure its continuity, whether politically elected or appointed officials. Here, too, the rebellion has miscarried, despite the murders. For each municipal, departmental or regional delegate who paid for his life for enlisting voluntarily in the effort to build up a new Algeria, a volunteer has come forward to replace him. Amongst these are more and more new men whom the events have caused to emerge from the bulk of the masses; militant labour-unionists nominated by their organizations; heads of municipal delegations elected by their peers; and -- a most important innovation -- young Moslems.

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Religious chiefs themselves have not been spared, be they priests, rabbis, imams of mosques or sheikhs of brotherhoods. On 22 August last, one of the most highly revered personalities of Moslem Algeria, the old Sheikh Ben Tekkouk, was murdered at the same time as his son. Two days later, the FLN spokesman for Radio Tunis rejoiced over this feat of arms. Despite the FLN prohibition, however, thousands of Algerians were present at the funeral of the Sheikh, whose prestige extended even to Libya.

The violence that has struck the notables has not spared the people. Thus, the rebels tried, and in parts are still trying, to stop the villagers from attending regional markets, for fear that they should come into contact with the administration or seek the free assistance of hospital services. But, in one year, free medical consultations have increased from 250,000 per month to 610,000.

An FLN official in the Oran region wrote on 28 May 1957 to one of his lieutenants:

"I have noted that many people give information, and about eighty or ninety of them go daily to see the SAS officer." -- the SAS officer is a specialized administration officer, to whom I shall refer in a moment -- "It would be appropriate to send armed men to execute all the men and women who present themselves there, so that not one is left."

Alas, such orders have only too often been carried out. The rebels have resorted to the wiping out of entire villages. The FLN orders, dated 17 April last, contained the following passage:

"Orders are given to burn all villages having requested protection of France, and to cut down all men more than twenty years old inhabiting such villages."

It is thus that Ain Manas, Wagram, Sédoui, Bouandas, and especially Melouza, became such sadly celebrated names.

On 4 June last, the Washington Post contained the following:

"The pitiless massacre of Melouza has filled with horror and disgust even our own blasé and hardened generation.... The words 'liberty' and 'independence' cannot be invoked to excuse such crimes.... Such a brutal, such a cruel massacre will be neither understood nor forgiven in any civilized country whatever."

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These crimes against humanity have had a contrary effect from that sought by their authors. The Moslem population has learned to accept them meekly no longer. Sporadically, all over the territory, village communities have spontaneously set up self-defence groups, and they demand weapons to ensure protection for their villages. The number of these groups has not ceased to grow, and the rebels have been powerless to hinder their actions. The same applies to the harkas, and to groups of rural police, auxiliary units composed of civilian volunteers.

Ever more numerous Moslem groups of this type now take an active part alongside the regular forces to destroy the rebel bands. Since the beginning of this year, their strength has tripled. On 1 November they amounted to 57,000 men. This group must be linked to the surrenders which have become more and more numerous among the rebel bands.

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Thus, despite the use of the most violent means, despite recourse to the most effective revolutionary techniques, and thanks to the reactions of the Moslem masses themselves, the rebellion has failed to carry out the main objectives which it had set for itself.

With regard to the attacks perpetrated against the population of European origin, the majority of them were intended to give rise to the most violent reactions, in order to feed hatred on both sides. True, faced with so much horror and so many excesses, the soldiers charged with maintaining order, and even civilians themselves, must have been sorely tempted to start reprisals, and, indeed, a systematic counter-terrorism. The instructions given by the Government to those vested with its authority, and their psychological effect on European opinion, have constantly tended to avoid such aberrations.

Generally speaking, these instructions were obeyed, as is testified by the reports of a number of international commissions; and if individual mistakes were unfortunately committed, investigations were held and sanctions applied.

At present, although terrorism is still perpetrated -- but in a sporadic manner -- Algeria is on the road to the recovery of peace. Everywhere, in the country as well as in the cities, people are at work; cars travel on the roads; children crowd into schools; and -- this detail is important for a country which we are supposed to believe is in the throes of an insurrection -- taxes are collected normally.

This re-establishment of normalcy, this return to trust, the friendliness that is once again apparent in the daily contacts between Algerians of the different communities, would, I assure you, never have been possible if, even in its worst moments, the Moslem population as a whole had not preserved its attachment to France and spontaneously co-operated in the restoration of order.

I come now to the role of Algerian communism.

After analysing the different factors in the rebellion, and their methods, I wish to call attention to the activities of the Algerian Communist Party. I do not intend to identify Algerian nationalism with international communism, but rather to note facts. But they show the specific character of the aid given the rebellion by the Algerian Communist Party. I dwelt on this problem at great

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length in the course of the last debate. For the benefit of those of our colleagues who were not here at that time, I shall limit myself to a brief resumé of Communist activity, and of its doings since last February.

I wish to recall for you that, in 1935, the Algerian Communist Party, originally affiliated with the French Communist Party, became autonomous. Immediately after the war, when the French Communists were part of the French Government, the Communist parties of North Africa -- Algerian and Tunisian -- promoted a campaign for complete integration within a French entity. It is since 1950, and in obedience to orders received from outside, that the Algerian Communist Party has adopted the idea of independence and, ever since, it has supported this idea with whatever means were at its disposal.

On 31 October 1954, on the eve of the day when the Algerian tragedy broke out, in the course of a secret meeting held in Algiers, Mr. Frachon and Mr. Dufriche, speaking on behalf of the French Communist Labor Union Federation and the World Federation of Trade Unions, offered the nationalists their unconditional support in their struggle for independence. From the very beginning of the rebellion, in the Aurès, militant Communists fought in the nationalist bands.

In the course of the previous session, I emphasized the close contacts established between nationalist leaders and Communists during 1954 and 1955, as well as the terrorist action carried out by certain Communist cells. The statement of these facts, and their dates, can be found in the records of this Committee. Now I shall merely mention the fact that, in January 1957, the arrest of a militant Communist has made it possible for us to establish that the Communist terrorist organizations of Algeria had merged with those of F.L.N., and formed joint groups.

The participation of the Algerian Communist Party in the active rebellion takes two forms.

First of all, the Algerian Communist Party has specialized in the organization of urban terrorism, which is more striking, requires fewer people for perpetration, and for which its members are technically better prepared than those of the F.L.N.; in particular, the Communist Party has supplied specialists in explosives and also men to carry out mass attacks. The

(Mr. Pineau, France)

Algerian Communist Party is directly responsible for a major portion of the explosions of infernal machines which, in the city of Algiers, claimed hundreds of victims, both European and Moslem, and mainly, women and children.

What gives us food for thought, regarding the aims sought by the Algerian Communist Party, is that it not only uses Moslem members, but especially members of European origin, who have certainly not entered the fray to support the cause of Algerian nationalism, but rather with the hope that the triumph of the rebellion will permit the setting up of a regime of their choice, in Algeria. To give an example: On 14 November 1956, it was a European Communist, named Yveton, who placed a time bomb in the gas plant in Algiers, which would have claimed many hundreds of victims had the author not been caught red-handed.

Secondly, the Algerian Communist Party has successfully attempted to get its members into the F.L.N bands. This, perhaps, is the most disturbing aspect of its participation in the rebellion. We know, furthermore, that numerous Moslem Communists, trained outside Algeria in underground centres, have been given the task of infiltrating the rebel bands.

Were France to withdraw from Algeria, it would be these Communist elements that would be in the best position to assume power. They are the only truly disciplined forces involved in the rebellion. They are the only ones who have a real doctrine taught them, and who may rely on powerful aid from foreign countries when they are ready to carry out their schemes.

To avoid any misunderstanding, I must repeat: I do not contend that the Algerian rebels obey Communist orders alone. I only wish to draw your attention to the grave danger for the future inherent in Communist participation in the Algerian subversion. Even were the rebellion to be sincerely opposed to the setting up of a Communist regime in Algeria, it may, one day, even unwillingly, turn out to be the Trojan Horse of Communism in North Africa.

I wish to make a few remarks regarding foreign assistance to the rebellion.

It is conceivable that some might have an interest in maintaining insecurity in North Africa. It is less easy to understand how the interests of certain countries could be served by prolonging the Algerian conflict through the moral and material support that they are giving the rebellion.

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(Mr. Pineau, France)

As the French delegation showed at the last session of the General Assembly, much of the assistance given the rebellion comes from countries of the Near East. The first orders came from Cairo and, on 1 November 1954, they unleashed the first uprisings in the Aurès. It was in Cairo that the F.L.N. was set up, with the encouragement of the authorities and, to a large extent, on the orders and with the moneys of the Egyptian Secret Services. And it was also in Cairo that the sham National Committee for Algerian Resistance held its latest full-dress meeting last August.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

The official radio stations of Cairo, the Voice of the Arabs, and the radio stations of Damascus daily launched crazed appeals beamed to Algeria, calling for a holy war, calling for murder and violence, and also broadcasting extravagant false news bulletins.

The Arab League, for its part, has, since January 1954, included yearly in its budget a "North African Fund" intended to support subversion. In certain member States of the League, public fund-raising campaigns are periodically carried out under the patronage of local authorities to aid the rebellion. One of the Arab leaders, who is among the most zealous defenders of the cause of the FLN before the United Nations, took upon himself recently, in his own country, the initiative of starting a money-raising campaign to help that organization.

But all of this is a relatively minor matter. Much more serious are the constantly increasing shipments of weapons. The investigation following the boarding, off the Algerian coast, in October 1956, of a ship flying no flag and carrying no papers, made it possible to establish the grave responsibility incurred by Egypt in this matter. The ship in question, the Athos, carried hundreds of tons of arms and ammunition intended for the rebel bands in West Algeria. As the investigation showed, the ship was chartered by the Egyptian Special Services, and the matériel discovered on board had been supplied by Egypt. Prior to this, numerous clandestine deliveries of arms had already been made in North Africa, always by sea, and always coming from Alexandria. As you know, France submitted a complaint to the Security Council on this serious violation of international obligations.

Egypt, however, has not given up, and we have proof of other shipments of arms intended for the Algerian rebels. Thus on 13 June last, the Spanish authorities in Ceuta seized, aboard a ship flying their flag, the Juan Illueca, a cargo three times larger than the one of the Athos. It had also been loaded at Alexandria under the supervision of an Egyptian military detachment. Furthermore, other large shipments are made, under less hazardous conditions, to other ports -- mainly Tunisian ports -- from which they are secretly forwarded to Algeria.

There is nothing difficult for us to understand about the fact that the situation in Algeria concerns Tunisia and Morocco, as neighbouring States. We fully understand that the Governments of these two countries wish for an early and peaceful settlement of this strife. Unfortunately, the various forms of assistance, which they more or less willingly and voluntarily give to the rebels, lead to the opposite end.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

The most serious question is that the very sovereignty of these two States is being threatened in the end, because of the pressure that the Algerian rebels exert on them.

In Morocco, in the province of Cudjda, the FLN is so firmly entrenched that it levies its own taxes, recruits young men, runs camps for training and regroupment. With all this, for several months, it has been able to carry out incursions into West Agleria in relative security. This situation led the French Command to set up a line of permanent field fortifications along the frontier, and, for the last few months this has fortunately contributed to limiting the number and the impact of these raids.

In Nador, in eastern Morocco, is one of the largest reception and dispatch centres for arms sent to the rebels from foreign countries.

The situation in Tunisia is even more serious. Until the beginning of this year, assistance to the rebels was kept relatively secret or discrete, but lately it has become more and more overt, until it has become as disturbing for Tunisia as it is for France. Thus, in Tunis, under the orders of Mr. Ouamrane, a military headquarters of sorts has been set up that claims to direct the operations all over eastern Algeria. This Mr. Ouamrane has at his disposal facilities the use of which runs beyond and counter to international law. His equipment and men are at times transported in Tunisian military vehicles. Barracks of the Tunisian National Guard have been placed at his disposal, for example, in Tunis and in Souk-el-Arba. Furthermore, he has been able to set up real logistic bases in Souk-el-Arba, Tadjerouine and Tozeur, and camps in Teboursouk, Ain-Draham and Thelepte, etc. From these centres, the commandos leave to infiltrate Algeria and there to regroup so as to carry out their surprise attacks. No sooner do they feel threatened than they scurry back to the sanctuary of Tunisian soil.

The tension that exists on the Algerian-Tunisian frontier, and the incidents that have taken place there, have no other cause. They cannot therefore be imputed to France, which cannot renounce its right of legitimate self defence.

No doubt the position of Tunisia, partially occupied by the fellaghas, is not a comfortable one. That country could at least avail itself of the rules of international law to put an end to this situation or, at any rate, to limit its embarassments.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

It was to these facts that I referred a few moments ago in emphasizing that Morocco and Tunisia are not sufficiently free to determine their own attitude toward the FLN for their good offices to be used to good advantage, as between the FLN and France.

Wherever they come from, these moral and material encouragements given the Algerian rebellion are so many violations of the most established principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Need I recall that the Charter imposes on Members the obligation to "live together in peace with one another as good neighbours"; and, according to Article 4, paragraph 2, the Members are enjoined to refrain from threats to the territorial integrity of other States. General Assembly resolution 290 (IV) entitled "Essentials of Peace", adopted in the course of the fourth session of the General Assembly, furthermore invites all States:

"To refrain from any threats or acts, direct or indirect, aimed at impairing the freedom, independence or integrity of any State, or at fomenting civil strife... in any State..."

Permit me also, in conclusion, to refer to two of the five famous principles of peaceful coexistence, adopted at the Bandung Conference in 1954, and which certain Members of this Assembly bring up in other circumstances: they are those bearing on the respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, and on non-intervention and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries.

I come now to the second part of my statement: Reforms in progress.

As I have shown in the first part of this statement, the Algerian rebellion, led and supported from outside the country, could not have lasted until the middle of 1957 without the reign of terror which it made every effort to bring about. It continues, with more and more difficulty, thanks to the help it receives from abroad. In view of the intransigence with which its leaders have always objected to and rejected all offers of negotiations for a "cease-fire", the French Government found itself placed in the following dilemma: either to use only force, or else, on the contrary, without delay, to undertake reforms in all fields intended to assure the renewal, in mutual trust, of conversations with the Moslem populations. In the darkest hours, France chose the second alternative, proving the sincerity of its intentions and its confidence in the future.

At the last session of the General Assembly, I explained in detail the complexity of the economic and human problems that beset a country, poor in natural resources,

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lacking in power potential, and that sees its population growing at one of the fastest rates in the world. I also described the efforts deployed by France, in the fields of equipment, public instruction, social services and education, in order to protect the Algerians from want, and to ensure their children a better future. I shall limit myself, in order not to repeat myself, to pointing out that the implementation of our plans continues methodically, and that basic reforms as important as that of the civil service, the agrarian reform or increased school enrollments, are giving us daily more encouraging results. Thus, for example, the number of Moslems recruited to the public services has increased by 3,000 in a single year. As far as schools are concerned, the number of opened elementary classes has risen from 11,000 in October 1956, to 13,230 in October of this year.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

But what I should like to stress are the political reforms in progress. France's objective in Algeria is not only to carry out a task of human solidarity, but also, as soon as possible, to transfer to populations grappling with the obligations of modern life responsibility for administering their own affairs. Social and economic improvements would be incomplete without profound political changes.

Without waiting until the restoration of order makes an electoral consultation possible, as well as the free discussions that we want, some changes -- which may, to those who wish to see things from afar, appear unimportant, but in reality are of vital interest -- have already been made in the administrative and political structure of the country.

The most important of these changes has been to take from the central administration of Algiers part of the wide powers that it enjoyed before and to give them to the local authorities. The number of services and departments of the central administration has been reduced from twenty-four to nine.

The powers thus withdrawn have been delegated to the local administration: the three regions, the departments whose number has risen from four to twelve, the public agencies, the Specialized Administrative Sections and, especially, the communes.

I should like to stress the importance surrounding the creation of the Specialized Administrative Sections that I have mentioned before and the putting into practice of the communal reform.

As long ago as the end of 1955, within the framework of the existing circumscriptions, Specialized Administrative Sections (SAS) were organized to permit increased personal contacts through a very flexible administrative system, adapted to local characteristics. Working in the very heart of the territory assigned them, involved in the daily life of the populations, the Officers of Algerian Affairs at their head have been given the task of extending administrative action in all fields. Their initiative is given the widest play: they administer and give advice to the population. They are assisted by doctors, teachers, specialized personnel, medical social workers etc. Their work, which calls for a dedication close to abnegation, has everywhere met with an enthusiastic reception from the populations. The number of SAS units, which on 1 January 1956 was 180, is, at present, more than 600.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

The principles of the municipal reform were decided upon in June 1956. It was just beginning to be applied when I last spoke in February of this year. Since then, thanks to the co-operation of the Moslem populations, it has gone even farther than we had expected. The idea was to substitute for direct administration a municipal administration run by the representatives of the population under the same conditions as obtain in metropolitan France. While waiting for the single-college elections to the Municipal Councils to take place, provisional assemblies were created by the appointment of qualified persons, after oral consultations between chiefs of families, in accordance with local traditions. Their membership reflects accurately the ethnic composition of the administrative circumscriptions. About 80 per cent of these assemblies at present consist of Moslems enjoying personal Koranic status, and 20 per cent have French civil status. A total of 3,400 Moslems sit in the Municipal Assemblies, compared with less than 800 Europeans.

This reform of the communes has received wide support from the populations. That is why, encouraged by the results obtained, the Government has extended the same system to larger administrative circumscriptions, and set up Provisional Departmental Assemblies. There are twelve of these, and also three Regional Assemblies.

Candidates for the posts to be filled have been numerous. Members of the Municipal Councils and Assemblies everywhere bring to the exercise of their functions the maximum of initiative and zeal.

Of course the rebels have assessed quite correctly the danger of such co-operation. The Moslems who have contributed to the application of these reforms have received threatening letters enjoining them to choose between resignation and death. But few have given in. Practically all have persevered, at the risk of their lives, in the direction which they feel to be in keeping with their civic duties. Dozens of them have been butchered. But every time, in their cities or villages, others have immediately risen to carry on their work. Such facts illustrate the attitude of the Moslem population of Algeria with regard to the French initiatives, and are a resounding rebuttal to certain affirmations of the rebels.

I come now to the loi-cadre. The important reforms to which I have just alluded do not suffice wholly to define what the French Government has called the "Algerian personality." That is why the Government has deemed it necessary to undertake, without delay, the application of a programme to bring about a peaceful, democratic and just solution. May I stress, in passing, that these words figure in the statement of cause of the loi-cadre, and underlie its provisions.

May I remind members of the Committee, that the term loi-cadre, in French, denotes a law which lays down principles, but does not go into all the details of implementation.

The first of our concerns was to assure absolute equality to all citizens and communities. This is made manifest by the suppression of the double electoral college, the institution of universal suffrage under a single college for elections to all representative assemblies. This means that all voters, regardless of which community they belong to, will appear on a single electoral list, will cast their votes in the same polling places with the same ballots, and will choose between the same candidates.

The second of our concerns was made manifest by the setting up of legislative and executive organs in regions defined by physical, economic and human geography, as well as central bodies. Each region will have its Assembly, elected by a single college and universal suffrage; its Council of Communities; its responsible Government. In Algiers, the corresponding central organs will be set up according to the procedures that have almost always been followed for the establishment of federative institutions, especially in the United States and many other countries. The powers of these organs will be determined with a view to as great a political decentralization as possible, permitting the Moslems, on different levels, to manage their own affairs.

Concerning the powers reserved to the French Republic by the loi-cadre, to a certain extent they will still be exercised by the Algerian population itself, since they can have their representatives in the metropolitan Parliamentary Assemblies.

The third of our concerns deals with the evolutionary character of the loi-cadre. This legislation provides the machinery for the evolution of Algerian institutions, and permits the adaptation, in accordance with the experience gathered, of the powers devolving upon the different legislative and executive organs.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

It, therefore, is not a question of a granted statute. Free discussion can be instituted between France and the validly appointed representatives of the Algerian population on the very meaning of their institution.

Some will no doubt try to bring up the matter that a first draft of a loi-cadre was rejected last September. It is useful to point out that the ballots of those in the French National Assembly who wanted a more liberal law outnumbered those of the deputies expressing reservations or wanting restrictions. I take this to mean that the rejection cannot be interpreted as a refusal by France to find a political solution to the problem of Algeria; the deputies who voted in favour of the governmental draft, after all, represent the average opinion of the country.

According to the rules obtaining in democratic countries, the new Government has taken into account the reservations of the National Assembly to the original draft, and this latter was consequently modified, without the new text in any way lessening the historical import of the loi-cadre.

Appended to the loi-cadre was a draft Electoral Law which contains the principle of proportional representation, applied in many democratic countries, in order to assure minority representation without being unjust thereby to the ethnic majorities.

Furthermore, Councils of Communities have been provided for, so as to avoid the passing or decreeing in Algeria of provisions creating discriminations between the different parts of the population. They will not constitute additional or supplementary Legislative Assemblies, but special bodies intended exclusively to preserve harmony among the communities.

Those who thus far have proposed nothing but preconditions, at variance with all democratic usage, are hardly the ones to criticize the French initiatives.

As far as we are concerned, the loi-cadre is the first step. It bears witness to our desire to establish conditions of a peaceful equilibrium and to set in motion the practical machinery required to implement the principles constantly upheld by France: cease-fire, elections, negotiations. It permits of an evolution, in liberty and respect for human dignity, of institutions which undoubtedly do not embody all virtues but which make possible, without any further delay, the promotion of a new élite in whose hands will be placed the future of the country.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

Everyone here should wish for the success of an effort which is so much in keeping with the principles which underlie our Organization.

There are some who criticize the reforms already introduced by France, as well as the loi-cadre that I have just outlined, for taking insufficient account of the principle of self-determination of peoples, a principle so often invoked at the United Nations and in whose behalf sincere men often take a stand in causes about which they know little.

We do not by any means under-estimate the value of this principle, but it was never written into the text of the Charter that a right to secession would automatically derive from it.

What would happen in fact if, this principle of self-determination having been affirmed, France decided to put it into effect in Algeria?

In the present circumstances, the inevitable result would be partition, in other words, the division of Algeria into two or more States.

First of all, the population of European origin, which is in the majority in some regions, especially the larger coastal cities -- there are more than 50 per cent Europeans in Algiers and 65 per cent in Oran -- would be perfectly justified in applying the principle to their own advantage. They might demand the breaking up of Algeria and the right to administer the territories where they are in the majority.

Regarding the other territories -- the largest, though not the most prosperous -- would they then become a unified, Moslem Algeria? Of that we are by no means certain. Everything leads us to think that local powers would spring up, resolutely determined not to submit to outside authority. The populations of the Aurès, the Tlemcen region and Kabylia would make it their first concern to maintain their autonomy and to give their independence a local character.

To those who do not twist it to support their theories, the history of Algeria shows that that is the way things would occur; that is, unless a new force were to spring up -- with outside support and having no respect for the true will of the peoples -- and then bring about an enforced unity under the yoke of the strongest and the most brutal.

Perhaps, though, this is the solution that some hope, one day, to achieve. Can we take it as being good -- or even acceptable?

In Algeria, partition would bring face to face a small but relatively wealthy State, with large ports, alone having access to the resources of metropolitan France, and one or more poor States, without outlets to the sea, living in want, in regions which no one could possibly develop. Such a solution would, strictly speaking, be in keeping with the principle of the self-determination of peoples but would be contrary to the interests of the peoples concerned, who would thereafter be consecrated to constant conflict.

Is it one of the tasks of the United Nations to contribute, even by one iota, to the setting up in North Africa of a source of local and international conflict?

Can we, to cleave to the illusion of a theory, turn a blind eye to the practical results as regards the existence of the populations concerned and the peace of the world, merely in order to apply that theory?

In point of fact, the indiscriminate invocation of the right of peoples to self-determination very often goes against morality, and especially if it overlooks what we feel to be the most sacred rights of mankind and the international community.

Naturally, France, like other Members of this Organization, recognizes the principle of self-determination; but it can only be conceived of within a framework of respect for individual freedoms, protection of minorities, the gradual promotion of an élite capable of making valid decisions, the enjoyment of true democracy and the maintenance of order, without which man cannot fulfil himself except as compelled by violence and fear.

To complete this recital, I should like to evoke the future that is already dawning for Algeria and North Africa despite the present difficulties.

Much has been said lately regarding the solution of the Algerian problem by placing it in a wider North African context. I have said why, under the present circumstances, confusion between two different ideas must be avoided. Isolationism is not a French tradition. At present, more than ever before, France wishes to broaden its co-operation with other countries, and especially with those to which it is linked by ties of history and friendship. This is the case with North Africa.

To involve them in the difficult settlement of the Algerian problem is one thing; to associate them in an economic, social and even political entity is another.

The prospects in that domain are vast indeed. For Algeria, and also for its neighbours, new wealth recently discovered in the Sahara may mean the beginning of a new economic era.

France, in mobilizing its efforts, its technology, its capital and its men for the prospection and exploitation of the resources of the Sahara, does not intend to introduce in these areas what you might call a neo-colonialism of the desert. On the contrary, it intends to associate the neighbouring countries in this huge task of economic and social development and to bring them to share in the hoped for results.

We are ready to consider all aid that might be given for the development of this area and the exploitation of its resources.

Far from being of interest only to Africa and Europe, the increased trade that will result from this programme of expansion will be channelled in such a way as to benefit other continents as well.

In this chamber, where Algeria becomes a topic only where its contemporary difficulties or the more painful aspects of its problems are concerned, I wanted to give a quick sketch of these prospects in order to show a brighter side to its future.

(Mr. Pineau, France)

I come now to the end of my speech.

As I have shown, the situation in Algeria has become considerably simplified. The rebels have lost on the military front. They have also lost on the psychological and political fronts. They know that France is ready to meet, with positive action, the legitimate aspirations of the Algerian populations without thereby abandoning their territory to anarchy and poverty.

What can they hope for now, except your help to give them back the prestige they are now losing? The internationalization of the Algerian conflict is their main hope for a comeback, which they know they are incapable of achieving on their own.

What then is your duty in this case? I think it is a very clear one. It is to allow France to continue putting into effect the peaceful, democratic and just solution, which you were right in hoping for.

You are impatient. But then, you would be neither warmhearted nor peace-loving men if you were not impatient. But you cannot substitute for the time that seems necessary to quiet emotions, to effect a meeting of minds, and to create conditions for harmony and peace.

Thoughtless interference in this distressing affair would not only be a violation of the Charter on your part, but would have no practical result other than to risk postponing a solution that we all wish to find as soon as possible.

France intends, in this matter, to show herself worthy of the traditions to which many among you graciously referred last February. But France would betray her mission if she showed unforgivable weakness toward those who have chosen violence and murder as the only methods of proving their existence.

I know well how attached you are to principles whose value France appreciates as much as you do. The problem that faces us is not to defend these principles today in the abstract, but to apply them to human beings.

If you wish to remain true to your role, you must ask yourselves only one question: what is in the real interest of the populations concerned?

Must we deliver them to terror, to poverty, to totalitarianism or to anarchy? Or must we, on the contrary, give them their only chance of attaining democracy, which will guarantee every man and woman freedom and peace?

Take your choice. France has already made hers.

Mr. LOUFI (Egypt) (interpretation from French): I do not propose to respond to the lengthy speech of the representative of France at this stage, but I am unable to pass over in silence the accusations which he has levelled at my country. These accusations are replete with deliberate inaccuracies and falsehoods. French propaganda since the aggravation of the situation in Algeria seeks by all ways and methods to make Egypt responsible for the war which has been going on in Algeria since 1954. This stream of French propaganda is designed, in our opinion, to mislead public opinion in France and throughout the world. It is designed to make people believe that the situation which now obtains in Algeria is due to the assistance which the Algerian nationalists allegedly received from abroad.

However, the explanation of the cruel events which are taking place in Algeria is simple: it is due to France's refusal to recognize Algeria's rights and the struggle which the noble Algerian people are waging for independence against the French army, 500,000 men strong, with all modern armaments and everything that they have at their disposal in the way of the means of destruction.

This is all I have to say at this stage.

Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria): Following the intervention just made by the representative of Egypt, I should like to add something by way of clarification of one point which was raised by the representative of France. This point relates to the question of external help to Algeria and intervention in its affairs which, according to him, have been undertaken by some Arab countries, including Syria. The representative of France even went to the point of qualifying, in his otherwise excellent French, some information carried by the Damascus radio as being dementielle. He stated that external aid extended to Algeria allegedly included military aid. This, in fact, does not really exist.

The Algerians have been well furnished with arms, though unwillingly, very often by the fact that the heavily equipped French forces have at times been in a position to leave a lot of material and arms on the field. This supply accumulated with time, and it has been the mainstay of the Algerians in ensuring the necessary arms for their use.

(Mr. Zeineddine, Syria)

We do not find this strange because our experience in Syria at one time demonstrated the same thing. During the Syrian revolt we were mainly furnished by French arms in that manner.

I do not intend at all to make any derogatory remarks regarding the French army. It is true to say that the Arabs, in their various experiences, have not had any more courageous and determined army to fight against. All this results from the very nature of an army heavily equipped and unable to move quickly, faced by forces lightly equipped who very often are able to acquire large quantities of arms.

As to external financial help, it is true that in Arab countries in particular, and in other countries as well, large sums of money were raised for the victims of the war in Algeria, but not for the perpetration of war in Algeria. These sums were voluntary contributions given in the earnest desire of people to aid the victims of French oppression in Algeria and to assist them in finding some way of healing their wounds and in taking care of their vital needs.

As to the information coming from sources in Arab countries and elsewhere concerning the Algerian situation, this information indicates one thing: that the Arab people everywhere are most deeply concerned about the Algerian question. The French press and radio also are deeply concerned. Of course, in France, as elsewhere, passions may rise, but I do not know of any instance where official information was given by any Arab country which was not in accordance with the facts of circumstances.

Lastly, let me say that to try to pretend that the Algerian national liberation movement is not the result of the prevailing conditions in Algeria, conditions which are the direct result of previous and present French policies, and that external intervention and assistance are the cause of the movement, is, in my humble submission, a method which is used in order to mislead the discussions in this Committee, though it might be so used unconsciously.

(Mr. Zeinaddine, Syria)

The fact is that the Algerian movement is a movement of a people, a mass movement of a people conscious of its national existence, determined and ready to achieve its full independence. It is not external help that is making it. It is the conditions in Algeria itself. It is the wish of the Algerians to live free. It is a vital issue to the Algerians, and their existence is the thing that they are trying to defend.

This army of Algerians is not a force formed of recruits that are forced to serve; these are voluntary recruits. They are what we call Mojaheeden, meaning people who out of their own free will are determined and ready to sacrifice their belongings, to sacrifice their lives and, above all, to submit themselves to discipline and self-restraint so that the cause of right and righteousness may be well served. That is the kind of movement that exists in Algeria. It is not at all a kind of movement that comes from the outside; it is a popular movement in every sense of the term. It is essentially a democratic movement of a people expressing its will by the only means that has been left at its disposal.

Lastly, this army of Mojaheeden is not believed capable by the French representative of dealing with the situation in Algeria except in a manner of causing massacres here and there. If we are to follow the argumentation of the representative of France, that would mean exactly that Algeria is at present in a state of anarchy. It is not. Algeria is well administered to some extent by the Algerians themselves, and this army that is serving the Algerian cause is an army of volunteers, as I have said, and of men who would like to render a service to their country. To some extent France is to be thanked for it because quite a number of them have fought through French wars and were trained and equipped for that purpose. They have passed to the Algerian army and are now serving in its ranks.

It is not external help, and such claims that have been made can help us to see clearly in the discussion. It is facts that will count, and these facts we will try to expand upon in greater detail in the near future.

Mr. MACKLOUF (Libya): I am sorry to have to be compelled to intervene at this stage of the debate, which is mainly due to the reference, which was made by Mr. Pineau, the Foreign Minister of France, to my country when he stated:

"Religious chiefs themselves have not been spared, be they priests, rabbis, imams of mosques or sheikhs of brotherhoods. On 22 August last, one of the most highly revered personalities of Moslem Algeria, the old Sheikh Ben Tekkouk, was murdered at the same time as his son. Two days later, the FLN spokesman for Radio Tunis rejoiced over this feat of arms. Despite the FLN prohibition, however, thousands of Algerians were present at the funeral of the Sheikh, whose prestige extended even to Libya." (A/C.1/PV.913, p. 23)

I think it is opportune even at this stage to make it clear to the Committee and to the representative of France that the man in question is completely obscure to us except for one factor which I came to know recently here in the lobbies of the United Nations: that he undertook a journey for a few days to Libya. Does this mean that such a journey would enable anyone to gain prestige or a reputation in a country in which he is completely unknown?

Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): I am only speaking because I want to maintain the serenity of the debate. I am fully aware of the fact that the statement of the representative of France is bound to give rise to replies. I therefore request you, Mr. Chairman, to adjourn this debate until Friday since I am the representative who is listed to speak after the representative of France.

Mr. PINEAU (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to tell Mr. Slim that I am the first to support his proposal. It is only natural after the statement that I have made and after having mentioned a number of countries, that this statement should be carefully considered in order to reply to it as pertinently and as completely as possible. I do not want to do so this evening because I do not think it is a very good idea to enter bilateral discussions here. However, I should like to take note of two statements that were made by the representative of Egypt and by the representative of Syria, statements which appear

(Mr. Pineau, France)

to me to be extremely interesting in, should I say, their aspects of denial. I can only take note of the fact that the representative of Egypt denies absolutely that Egyptian arms have been sent to Algeria and that the two representatives state that nothing has been said in their respective radio broadcasts that is contrary to the truth; this is a promise about which I shall take note. I hope thus that we shall not see any more Egyptian weapons in Algeria and that we will hear no further interventions from the radio broadcasts that I mentioned earlier, and I trust that in the future we will be able to take account of these two promises made to us.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): The representative of Tunisia has asked for the suspension of the debate on the Algerian question until Friday, 29 November. If there are no objections, I shall take it that the motion is adopted. The next meeting of the first meeting will therefore take place Friday at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.