



Tuesday, 5 February 1957,
at 10.30 a.m.

New York

CONTENTS

Page

Agenda item 62:	
Question of Algeria (<i>continued</i>)	113

Chairman: Mr. Victor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

AGENDA ITEM 62

Question of Algeria (A/3197) (*continued*)

1. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria), resuming his statement, declared that French policy in Algeria had, in general, evolved very little during the last 126 years. It had, however, produced two sets of results: a first set consisting of the conditions actually prevailing in Algeria, and the other consisting of the imperialist psychology prevailing in France with respect to Algeria.

2. The French policy in Algeria was a composite of many policies. First, there was the policy of pacification which actually meant a policy of war and repression and was meant to open the way for the implementation of other policies. Then, there was the policy of assimilation, the purpose of which was to destroy Arab-Algerian culture and nationhood and to replace it by French culture, integrating Algeria with France. A third policy consisted of developing and utilizing Algerian resources for the benefit of French residents and other French individuals to the detriment of Algeria and the impoverishment of the Algerians culturally, economically and socially. Then, there was the policy of forming a ruling French minority in Algeria with special privileges while, at the same time, destroying the unity of the Algerian people through measures of "divide and rule"; because of that policy, the French minority in Algeria had become so strong that at present it actually controlled the policies of the French Government concerning Algeria. Lastly, there was the policy of alienating Algeria from its sister Arab countries. It was unfortunate that, in the latter respect, France received the co-operation of some other Western Powers, for the purpose of that policy was to disrupt the growing trend towards union in the Arab East and to keep it divided in order to ensure the continuation of Western domination.

3. The policy of pacification had begun with invasion of Algeria itself. It had been necessary because French rule ran counter to the aspirations of the Algerians. The co-operation between the army and the administration, of which the French representative had spoken (831st meeting), was not new; it had been ordained from the very beginning. The army was expected to create conditions in order to facilitate the forcing of French rule upon the Algerians.

4. He then quoted from a book entitled *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord* by Professor Charles-André Julien,¹

¹ Paris, Payot, 1931.

a French Socialist historian, to show how the French Army had used strong repressive measures from the beginning and added that it was important to remember that French repression in Algeria had only activated the resistance and the patriotism of the Algerians. The French generals who had led the army of conquest had in their reports—which had been quoted by Professor Julien in his book—given details of the policy of destruction and extermination which had been carried out in Algeria under their command. Contrary to the assertion of the representative of France, Professor Julien's book also conclusively proved that Algeria had been conquered.

5. Despite the statement of Mr. Lacoste, Minister residing in Algeria, that the situation in Algeria was under control, the policy of pacification was still being followed. In fact, the French settlers in Algeria were demanding that France impose even more repressive measures. A typical example was the recent rioting in the city of Algiers, which had been condemned even by the French conservative paper *Le Figaro*. Another French paper, *Le Monde*, had published reports of an expedition led by French parachutists who were returning from Egypt. Again, as recently as 27 January 1957, *The New York Times* had reported military action which had been carried out by French troops. The policy of pacification had thus never stopped for any length of time.

6. Pacification was predicated on repression. Acts of genocide had been committed contrary to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Since the representative of France had referred (831st meeting) to some acts of genocide by Algerians, the Syrian delegation would favour an international investigation in order to determine whether acts of genocide were being committed by the French Army or by the Algerian Liberation Movement. It was a request that the Syrian delegation would ask to have considered later.

7. The occupation of most of Algeria in 1850 had not brought about pacification. The French repressive policy had strengthened Algerian resistance. From 1870 to 1872 France had virtually had to undertake the pacification of Algeria all over again. In 1912 France had been forced to undertake military operations on a large scale. In 1916 and 1954 in the Aurès region, in the eastern part of Algeria, France had had to take measures of "repacification". In 1945, under the orders of General Charles de Gaulle, large scale massacres had taken place in Algeria. In only two days, in the city of Constantine and the region around it, 45,000 Algerians had been massacred. That was the figure submitted to the French Chamber of Deputies. According to official United States reports and according to information available in Syria it was even greater.

8. In 1952 and 1953 the situation had deteriorated still further. Recalling his statement before the First Committee at the seventh session (552nd meeting), he

said that he had then warned about the serious consequences of the situation developing in North Africa. That warning had proved to be true, because on 1 November 1954 the present revolt had broken out in Algeria. The massacres carried out under General de Gaulle's command had probably been one of the most important factors behind the Algerian revolt. Those massacres had convinced the Algerians that France could never act reasonably as long as it followed a policy of imperialism. As a result of that conviction, the Algerian parties had unified themselves into one liberation movement, and underground work was organized throughout the country. France had now to face a mass movement for liberation.

9. As the situation existed today, France could no longer claim that it really occupied Algeria. More than half of Algeria was already free and effectively controlled by the Algerian Liberation Movement. In about one-third of the country, France did not exercise any power because of the troubles caused by the Algerians and by the French residents. Then, there were parts of the country which were constantly changing hands between the French and the Liberation Movement. France thus no longer, either in law or in fact, could claim to speak for Algeria. If France did not hasten to act in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, then French rule and French presence in Algeria would soon come to an end. The Algerian situation was far more grave than the situation in Indo-China had ever been.

10. The French policy of pacification had failed because of the passive resistance carried out by the Algerians. Thus, the French pacification of Algeria was an unending process in which France was continuously engaged. Today, France had over half a million troops employed in Algeria, in addition to the forces of the French residents, which amounted to another 100,000. There was one soldier for every two residents in Algeria, and the three together were insecure. The Algerian war was probably the biggest colonial war of its kind. Safety and security were unknown, and although it was repeatedly said that the situation was under control, the facts indicated just the opposite. The June 1955 report of a French Parliamentary Committee which had investigated the situation in Algeria² had stated that the population and the army in Algeria were moving in the shadows of insecurity. It should be noted that insecurity prevailed mostly on those roads which were reportedly under French control. The roads under the control of the Algerian Liberation Movement were much safer.

11. The policy of pacification had also greatly injured the reputation of France as a liberal nation. For long France had been known as "the country of the day of the Bastille". That was being forgotten, as France was getting to be known for the many, many days of Algeria.

12. The French policy had also its economic and financial results. It had impoverished the Algerians by seizing their land and destroying their country. It had impoverished France which had to maintain a large army in Algeria and had to bear the cost of its numerous wars in that country. It had, however, enriched individual French residents in Algeria at the expense of both the Algerian and the French nations. The sum con-

structively expended did not amount to 1 per cent of the cost of the war in Algeria.

13. France was being helped financially, militarily and diplomatically in the United Nations and elsewhere by nations which professed to support liberty in the free world in spite of the fact that France had been carrying on its repressive policy in Algeria. He wondered whether that support would continue. Help given to colonialism was the most important factor in the determination of many countries of Asia and Africa to oppose certain Western policies. In that respect, it was interesting to remember that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was no longer an instrument to contain or to oppose a given great Power. For all practical purposes, NATO had been turned into a means of facilitating the destruction of liberty by some of its most important members.

14. The French policy of pacification had become self-destructing. The Algerian resistance to that policy had earned world-wide support. Syria supported Algeria and in that respect had no apology to offer, except that it had not supported Algeria as much as it should have. A people that tried to destroy liberty ultimately lost its self-respect. Syria valued greatly the self-respect of every nation, and particularly of the French nation, and it hoped that the self-respect of France would be safeguarded by the grant of liberty to Algeria.

15. The situation in North Africa was also affecting the stability of France itself. The representative of France had alleged that there were many parties in Algeria which were opposed to one another. Even if that were so, all those parties were, however, working to the same end. The question was how many parties in France were opposed to one another; consequently it was necessary to ask not merely "Whither Algeria as a result of the pacification policy?", but also "Whither France?"

16. While the French policy of pacification had some resemblance to colonial policies in other countries, its policy of assimilation in Algeria was something unique. To implement the policy of making Frenchmen of Algerians, it became necessary to create legal fictions on the one hand and to use force to make those legal fictions appear a reality. The police, administration and the system of education were the main instruments used by France in that respect. The Algerians were to be obliged to forsake their national consciousness and to believe that they were French.

17. To achieve that aim, France had made the learning of Algerian history a criminal act. In fact, the history of Algeria was said to have begun with the French invasion. When questioned concerning their ancestors, Algerian schoolboys were required to give the answer "Our ancestors were the Gauls." A professor in an Algerian school, Professor Zerrouki, had been recently sentenced to four years' imprisonment for having taught Algerian students their Arab history. The curriculum of the educational system had been changed to suit colonial needs. French had become the only official language in Algeria. Arabic, the language of the Algerians, could not be used by them even in their day-to-day dealings with the administration. Arab schools, even those managed by philanthropic foundations, were closed. About 80 per cent of those schools had been closed in less than twenty years after the French occupation. Philanthropic foundations for educational and other purposes, which were very numerous in all Arab lands, had been confiscated by France, and

² *Rapport d'information sur la mission effectuée en Algérie du 4 au 9 juin 1955*, by Messrs. Pineau, de Chevalgne, Jacquet, Moreau and Lejeune (Paris), Imprimerie de l'Assemblée, 1955), No. 11,100.

their estates had been used as an inducement to the French *colons* to migrate to the land.

18. While most of the Arab institutions had been closed by the French authorities, very few French schools had been opened to Algerians. The result was that about 90 per cent of the Algerian people were at present illiterate. At the time of the French invasion, the percentage of literacy in Algeria compared well with that in France. The French authorities wanted to keep the Algerians backward in order to have a cheap labour force for the use of the *colons* and to make them more amenable to French colonial policy.

19. The French policy of assimilation had also moved into the area of religion and conscience. A communal sectarian concept had been developed in place of the national concept of the Algerians. The policy was adopted of referring to the Algerians not as Algerians but as "the Moslems". The French policy of assimilation had political motives in its attacks on Islam, and the reaction of the Algerians had been one of great resentment. French authorities had even encouraged the creation of some so-called Islamic sects which were responsible for spreading some false belief in superstitions. They also tried to use those sects to spread the false belief, forbidden by Islamic teaching, that foreign rule was morally legitimate.

20. The French had also used migration to Algeria as an element of their policy of assimilation. Many non-Algerians had been attracted to Algeria by the privileges offered to them. But in fact there had been very little mixture, and instances of Frenchmen becoming Algerian or Algerians becoming French were rare indeed. But it might be possible to say that no aspect of French repression in Algeria had been more reprehensible than that which had acted on the mind and conscience of the people. The policy of assimilation, instead of destroying the identity of the Algerian people, had strengthened their national concepts and their opposition to French rule. An unfortunate aspect of the policy had been the tendency of Frenchmen to believe that they had a superior culture and the view of the Algerians that theirs was the superior culture which was under constant attack. Of course, there was no question of the superiority of either: the culture of each nation was its own way of life. When in 1848 the Algerian leader Abd-el-Kader had been forced to surrender, he had refused a French offer of property if he adopted France as his country, pointing out that he could not live among another people. The Algerian people had likewise rejected the policy of assimilation, feeling that they could enjoy liberty only in their own culture. It was very important that every nation now dependent should be allowed to have its national liberty in order to develop its national culture according to its own genius. In the case of the Arab countries, such a development would allow the Arab people to continue their abundant contribution to civilization.

21. About 80 per cent of the approximately 850,000 square miles of Algerian territory was either desert or steppe. The majority of the inhabitants lived mainly in the region of good land, which lay for the most part along the coast. The economically arable land was about 16 million acres, but the good land did not exceed about 10 million acres. Due to climatic conditions, Algeria required irrigation. Although most of the irrigated area was owned by French *colons*, most of it had been irrigated before the arrival of the French. The actual extent of the irrigated area was hardly a half-million

acres at present, and about a million acres more were irrigable.

22. When France had invaded Algeria, all the land had belonged to the Algerians, whose standard of living at the time could well have been compared to that of France. At present, 25,000 European *colons*, whether individuals or companies, owned more than 6 million acres, comprising the most fertile and irrigated land and yielding most of the total agricultural production. Giving examples of such ownership, he noted that, in contrast, the millions of Algerians now owned less than 10 million acres, most of which was average or poor land of low productivity. They lived under subsistence conditions. Dietetic studies showed that, on the average, the individual Algerian lived on about 1,500 calories daily, half the needs of an adult individual.

23. As for the manner in which the French had acquired the land, Professor Julien, in his *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord*, had noted that, as was recognized by juridical authorities in Algeria, the acquisition of lands during the first ten years, although under judicial appearances, had in fact mostly been made by theft. Another method of land acquisition cited by the author had been confiscation of lands owned by rebel tribes. Still others had involved State ownership of land for which legal proof of ownership could not be adduced, even though a family might have owned such land and worked upon it for generations. According to Professor Julien, such methods had been used to establish the *colons* on the prosperous tribal lands of Algiers, Bône and Oran. The author had noted that it was not inconceivable that the insurrections of 1845 and 1846 had in part been provoked by those massive expropriations. Thus, some of the massacres in Algeria had been provoked in order to drive the people away, to dispossess them and to take over their land.

24. The means used subsequently to develop that system were illustrated by the *Compagnie Genevoise*, which had kept the best land for its own use. It had built villages and had rented the lands to those who had owned them before expropriation, to whom the company would lend money, sometimes at 100 per cent interest *per annum*. The acquisition of even the smallest right to property jointly owned with an Algerian could enable a Frenchman to require that it be turned over to him undivided. In that way, many had acquired property for minimum sums. The laws of 26 July 1873 and 28 April 1887 had enabled sales at auction to Europeans of land under State control, most of which land was then rented to the Algerians. Professor Julien pointed out that the coincidence of the expropriation with the growth of the native population had transformed a large number of small landholders into a very cheap labour force. The Algerians had remained subject to a special régime of repression according to which any persons suspected or accused of subversive ideas could be placed under guard in the desert territories.

25. In a recent article in the *Middle East Journal*,³ Professor Knight of the University of California had noted that one way of assessing the conflicting views of the French and their Moslem critics was to compare European and Moslem output from land in terms of value. One of the peculiar results of French colonial policy had been to transfer land from food production to the production of wine, which Algerians did not

³ M. M. Knight, "The Algerian Revolt: Some Underlying Factors," *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Autumn 1956), pp. 355-367.

drink. Algeria produced annually about 475 million gallons of wine. The representative of France had estimated the value of wine exported annually at about 50,000 or 60,000 million francs. The total agricultural output in Algeria being about 200,000 million francs a year, wine amounted to about 30 per cent, and all of it went to French residents. As Professor Knight pointed out, about two-thirds of the Algerian output of wine was waste, since France distilled vast amounts into commercial alcohol in order to relieve the market.

26. Before French rule, Algeria had been an exporter of wheat. At present the national income of Algeria went mainly to the French residents. Algerians were unable to produce wheat sufficient to cover their need and did not have the possibility of buying wheat. Whereas in 1871 each individual could have at his disposal an average of five quintals of wheat, the current figure was only two quintals *per capita*. The 10 million Algerians received only about 85,000 million francs of the total estimated yearly agricultural production of 190,000 million francs. The relatively few residents working in agriculture—not more than 200,000 including their families—got about 105,000 million francs. The French resident thus got about fifty times more from agricultural production than the Algerian. The Algerians were also those who did most of the work on the land of the *colons*. In that connexion, he pointed out that, although the representative of France had said that one-fifth of production was the normal share of sharecroppers in Islamic countries, in Syria the sharecropper—and there were not many—had received in the past and still continued to receive three-quarters of the crop.

27. Turning to non-agricultural production, he declared that practically all enterprises in mineral production, industry, transport, banking, and other fields were owned by the French, under concession or otherwise. The profits earned by non-agricultural activities went almost entirely to the French residents. Algerians had thus become an underpaid labour force having practically no participation in the ownership of income-earning units utilizing Algerian resources and possibilities.

28. Although labour was very cheap in Algeria, there were about one million people permanently unemployed. A good percentage of the agricultural workers were also chronically only partially employed. The French residents in Algeria, by contrast, were almost fully employed and received remuneration for their work similar to that received in France. The average wage for Algerians for an eleven- to fourteen-hour work day in agriculture was about 400 francs. The very few French agricultural workers received an amount 250 per cent higher for a nine-hour working day. The system of social security was fully applied in Algeria to French workers alone. The majority of Algerian workers did not come under the system; if the system was applied to them, an Algerian worker would get only about one-third of what a French worker received. Professor Knight concluded that average *per capita* income for most Algerians was about \$55 a year. The plight of the population was evident from the fact that prices in Algeria were approximately the same as in the United States. The Algerian spent about 80 per cent of his income for food, and even so was undernourished. The average income of an Algerian family of six was about \$470 a year. In contrast the *per capita* income of the French in Algeria was higher than it was in France. The well-to-do class, almost completely composed of

French residents, had an income of about \$21,000 dollars per family. The so-called civilizing mission of France was thus shown to be the exploitation of Algerian land, labour and resources by the French residents.

29. Whereas health conditions for Europeans in Algeria were approximately the same as in France, in the countryside, which was predominantly or completely Arab, there might be only one doctor and one hospital bed for every 20,000 people. About 50 per cent of the Algerians died before the age of five. There was one bed in a tuberculosis hospital for every 3,400 Algerians, among whom tuberculosis was rampant because of under nourishment.

30. Turning to education, he said that in 1830 there had been 2,000 Algerian schools in Algeria, either subsidized by the State or depending on income from Algerian educational foundations. By 1887, those schools had been suppressed, except for seventy-nine allowed to function by agreement with the French authorities, and no more Arab public schools had been created. Some private schools, depending on contributions, had been established later. Algerian schools now had about 50,000 students. The schools were subject to various harassments and difficulties set by the French authorities. Many had been closed at various times. Their curricula were under close supervision. Many teachers had been subjected to various kinds of ill-treatment, including imprisonment. French policy regarding education for Algerians had, like other aspects of French policy, been greatly influenced by the *colons*, who had always opposed education of any kind for the Algerians. In 1908, for example, a resolution of the Conference of French Residents in Algeria had stated that, in view of the danger created by the education of natives as much from the economic standpoint as from the point of view of settlement, the Assembly expressed the wish that elementary education for the natives should be abolished. Naturally, secondary and higher education would then become impossible.

31. In 1954 there had been 28,000 students in secondary schools in Algeria of a total of about one million French residents, while the 10 or 11 million Algerians had had only 6,000 students in their schools—a ratio of approximately 1 to 50. There was one Algerian student attending an institution of higher education for every 16,000 Algerians, while for the French residents the figure was one for every 227. That proportion was much higher than in France, where the ratio was about one to 300 or more. Those figures indicated clearly the real meaning of the civilizing mission of France and made it clear that Algeria could not live if French rule continued.

32. French propaganda had made much of French achievements in Algeria. But the creation of housing, communications and other facilities, especially in the urban areas of European concentration, were a natural concomitant of the wealth acquired through the exploitation of Algeria by the European residents. There had been very little general development of the country. The representative of France had said that there were thirty-two airfields in Algeria, but had neglected to add that most of them had been built and were being used for military purposes. Algeria as a country had developed very little under the colonial régime as compared with other countries. What development there had been benefited the French residents and not the impoverished Algerians. In that connexion, Mr. Zeineddine quoted from the report of the Com-

mittee of the French Government which had investigated the situation in Algeria to the effect that the majority of allocated funds had gone to European landowners for the development of agriculture with high return on investment and that the industrial equipment of large enterprises had contributed to limiting the employment of native manual labour and to creating unemployment. The report had stated that no man of conscience could fail to be struck by the misery in many regions in Algeria. It had also stated that salaries were extremely low: an agricultural labourer received 300 francs daily, from which he generally provided for seven or eight people; if he worked approximately 150 days a year, he was considered "privileged" in comparison with the innumerable hordes of the unemployed.

33. Dealing with the problem of the French residents, Mr. ZEINEDDINE said that they were, in fact, of varied origin: many were Italians, Spaniards, or Algerian Jews declared to be French. They formed about 9 per cent of the population. They were unified in a common desire for the continuation of French rule in order to ensure that their privileges would be prolonged and increased. They were highly organized as a pressure group to force the hand of France with regard to its Algerian policy. They were to a large extent armed and were ready to use force against the Algerians for their own purposes. They already formed a State within the State. Algeria was not their country, because they felt no allegiance to it and no sense of public responsibility. They shared neither Algerian culture nor Algerian aspirations. They formed a privileged minority disquieted by the active discontent of the people.

34. Reviewing the background of the problem, Mr. Zeineddine said that, on arriving in Algeria in 1830, the French had begun to establish a system similar to that in pre-revolutionary France. Unlike the French aristocracy, with its long traditions of service and loyalty to its country, the Algerian aristocracy, the residents, had come and stayed to exploit the country and sought to maintain a political situation which enabled them to continue to exploit it. They were thus the main impediment in the way of a solution of the Algerian problem. All-powerful in Algeria, they joined with the French armed forces in acts of wanton repression. They had a strong and influential lobby in Paris, which controlled many deputies and a good section of the French Press. They were also extremely strong in the French Army. They had constantly been in a position to make the French Government act according to their desires, to the extent of being able to dispose at will of a Governor of Algeria, a Minister responsible for Algerian affairs, and other officials. A comparison of the resolutions passed by the Conferences of French Residents in Algeria since 1908 with the legislative and administrative measures enacted in Algeria showed that any decision of any consequence taken by the residents had been followed by the authorities and to a very great extent implemented by them.

35. The residents not only ran public affairs in Algeria, but also public affairs concerning Algeria in France. Their political power was such that it could safely be said that France had capitulated and given itself into their hands. The residents had recently become critical of the current French Government, claiming that it was not efficient enough in its acts of pacification and repression. A tendency had arisen for them to take the law directly into their own hands and, if need be, to secure the help of many army and police officers. They even

aspired to bring about a change of régime in France, if necessary. Such an event might be possible in view of the increasing political instability of France and the increasing influence of the residents in French politics. In that connexion, he recalled the reception given to the Prime Minister of France on his visit to Algeria on 6 February 1956. The residents had even been able to force him to replace the then Governor-General, General Catroux, by Mr. Robert Lacoste, their own choice. But apparently Mr. Lacoste no longer pleased some of the residents, for they had reportedly planned to kidnap him. The settlers had well-known terrorist organizations, which openly admitted responsibility for attacks and bombings against Algerian lives and property which had taken place without any interference from the police. It was commonly known that the mass rioting of the settlers was organized with the complicity of the police and had resulted in killing of unarmed Algerians.

36. The French Government, in fact, no longer ruled effectively in Algeria. The liberated part of Algeria was run by the Liberation Administration, another part was ruled by the residents, using the French administrative machinery, while still another was in constant flux. The declaration of policy made by the French Government on 9 January 1957 showed only that it had been unable to find a solution. The only new element was that, according to Mr. Mollet, Prime Minister of France, the function of France would no longer be to rule Algeria, but to act as an arbiter between the two communities, which in fact ran the country. That was yet another attempt by France to give itself some kind of status in Algeria. The French Government was a party to the question and could not act as an arbitrator. Indeed, the representative of France had indicated that, on questions of sovereignty, France would act for the two communities, not as an arbiter, but as a ruler. France would not be accepted as an arbiter because any real arbitration would be categorically opposed by the residents, while the Algerians knew that France could not be impartial, regardless of the title it wanted to adopt. The whole concept of arbitration was completely unrealistic and inadmissible, particularly since the French Government had already pledged itself in essence to follow the same old policy. The only possible impartial arbitrator would be not France, but the United Nations. All the statements of French policy — that of the representative of France, the declaration of 9 January 1957 by Mr. Mollet, or the declaration by Mr. Mitterrand, Minister of the Interior, who was the Minister responsible for Algerian affairs to the effect that the only means of negotiation with the Algerians was war — boiled down to one thing, namely, the continuation of French rule in Algeria. Even when the French representative had referred to self-determination, he had declared that elections would be subject to the continuation of French sovereignty. The French delegation's attitude was also one of telling the United Nations to keep its hands off Algeria so that France could deal with the matter freely.

37. Past experience in Tunisia, Morocco and Libya with regard to the problem of foreign residents indicated a way to the solution of the problem of the European residents in Algeria. The problem was very similar in each of those countries. Indeed, the problem was proportionately of the same dimensions as in Tunisia, where European residents also comprised about 9 per cent of the total number of inhabitants. The solution which could be envisaged for the question in Algeria was essentially the one applied in the other three coun-

tries. It included the following points. First, it was essential that the legitimate interests of the residents should be safeguarded and that they should be permitted to remain in the land. Such a safeguard should be incorporated in the Constitution of Algeria. Secondly, the residents should all be given the choice of becoming Algerian citizens if they so desired. If they became Algerian citizens, they could legitimately partake of all rights and duties of citizenship without any distinction being made between them and the rest of the Algerian people. They should also be allowed to choose to keep their present citizenship and to remain in Algeria, while enjoying full individual rights and opportunities consistent with their status as foreigners, such as the rights of property, work, etc. Political rights, however, could only be exercised by those with Algerian citizenship. Thirdly, those considerations concerning European residents should become valid provisions enacted in the Algerian Constitution. On such a basis the problem would receive a just and practical solution, peacefully established through a process of give and take in negotiations.

38. The French Government continued to repeat the theme of French propaganda that the Algerians were not a nation but a chaotic conglomeration of Arabs and Berbers. That had also been said earlier regarding Tunisia and Morocco. The statement had no foundation in fact and was merely an expression of French wishful thinking and policy. Reviewing the history of the area, he declared that, after the coming of Islam, a new people, a new Arab nation, had emerged about the tenth century. The Berbers had completely adopted the culture of the Arabs, and the process of assimilation had rendered it impossible to distinguish one from the other. Arabism was not founded on race, but was based on a national concept as in all other countries, including France. The fact that some of the main centres of armed resistance to the French were in so-called Berber regions was clear proof that the French allegations were without foundation.

39. The French policy of disintegrating Algeria by a policy of divide and rule had so completely failed by 1947 that it had been replaced by a policy of division through so-called administrative decentralization. The only measures taken by France in Algeria between the tenth and eleventh sessions of the General Assembly, apart from war measures, had been administrative ones to divide Algeria in order to increase local tendencies and to disrupt the national unity of the country. The French, it seemed, intended to divide the country into three parts. The richest part, although inhabited mainly by the Algerians, might go to the residents. The Algerians would be pushed back as refugees into a second part. The third part, to the south, was to be left vaguely as a new field for exploitation. All three parts would then be brought separately into the French Union. The policy was not yet very clear, but there were strong tendencies toward partition. But partition of Algeria would be one of the most dangerous actions that could be taken.

40. The policy of partition was connected with another policy referred to by the representative of France (831st meeting), namely, that of establishing a kind of cosmopolitan political formation which would include Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and parts of Africa south of the Sahara. All Western countries would benefit from special facilities in the area, and North Africa would somehow be turned away from the Arab world. The name "Eurafrica" had been used. That policy sought the support of other European countries without which France could no longer maintain its colonial power. In contrast to the policy of war and repression, which was largely dictated by the residents, the policy of trying to divert Algeria into another direction was created by general international interests bent upon maintaining power in Africa and attempting to disrupt the general tendency in the Arab world towards unity, development and progress.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.