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MEETING**

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

**AGENDA ITEM 62**

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

1. Mr. NOBLE (United Kingdom) referred to the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France at the 830th and 831st meetings on the position of the French Government in regard to Algeria, and described it as one of the most impressive testimonies that he had had the privilege of hearing. He declared that, in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 7, of its Charter, the United Nations was precluded from intervening in the domestic affairs of any Member State, and the General Assembly had no right, under the Charter, to discuss any matter or adopt any resolution in that field. The question of Algeria was incontestably within the domestic jurisdiction of France and, as such, was outside the competence of the General Assembly. While not admitting any right on the part of the United Nations to intervene in the internal affairs of Algeria, the French Government had nevertheless come to present its position before the Committee.

2. He asked the members of the Committee to examine the facts, and see how they squared with the statement of the Syrian representative (831st to 833rd meetings). Moreover, Mr. Pineau's version of Algerian history seemed a great deal more accurate than that of the representative of Syria.

3. Mr. Pineau had made it clear that the French Government had a detailed policy for a political solution to the problem of Algeria on the most liberal terms. He said that it had been difficult for the French Government to carry out that programme because of the intervention of certain countries which made no secret of the fact that they were working to decide the future of Algeria on quite different lines and which did not now come to the United Nations with clean hands.

4. His Government had the fullest confidence in the desire and the ability of the French Government to carry out the policy which it had set itself to follow in Algeria. If Algeria was to develop in freedom and prosperity, what was needed, above all, was peace. And peace, as Mr. Pineau had reminded the Committee, was respect for the rights of others. His delegation supported the plea made by the Foreign Minister of France that the Committee should not adopt any resolution on the issue.

5. Mr. BEN-ABOUD (Morocco) stated that his delegation attached the greatest importance to the question of Algeria. In stating briefly the attitude of the

Moroccan Government with respect to the Algerian question, he quoted from a speech by His Majesty Sultan Mohammed V in which he had declared that humanity was suffering cruelly from the events of which Algeria had become the scene and that the universal conscience and the men of good will in France, in Algeria and throughout the world urgently appealed to those responsible to put an end quickly to the bloodshed and, with a view to establishing solid relationships between the two peoples, to devote themselves to the task of finding a solution which, while giving satisfaction to the aspirations of the Algerian people to freedom, would respect the higher interests of France and would safeguard the interests of the French who had chosen to settle in Algeria.

6. He pointed out that the Algerian question was an international problem, and both France and Morocco would benefit if a solution were found as a result of redoubled efforts and with the assistance of the United Nations. He warned against giving a *carte blanche* to a colonial country to dictate its will by administrative and military means, for in the light of experience, such an action might result only in provoking the opposite reaction. Any peaceful contribution by the United Nations would hasten the development of a spirit of understanding through which a solution could be reached which would be in the interests of all. The United Nations was a school for the readjustment of minds to the spirit of the times. There was an impressive number of examples demonstrating that thesis. But there was no example to support the colonial thesis that military action could restore peace or that discussion of such problems in the United Nations would result in a recrudescence of insurrection.

7. Algeria had been an independent State before the French had landed on its territory. Later, it had been transformed into a colony and finally that colony had been purely and simply annexed as French territory. The Algerian people demanded the return of its freedom. The whole problem might be summed up in the following conclusion: European colonialism was seeking to deny and annihilate the national existence and legitimate aspirations of an entire people.

8. France upheld the view that Algeria was a part of the metropolitan territory. The Algerian people defended the existence of its national entity, in the light of the factors which composed that nationality, such as its geographical location close to similar sister countries, its common history with the Arab and Moslem peoples, its Arabic language and Moslem-Arabic civilization, the ethnic composition of its people, its devotion to its own motherland and its own social and legal institutions, and, finally and above all, the common will, which fiercely resisted any attempt at assimilation or integration, to have in the present its own identity, and to have, in the future, links of co-operation and brotherhood in equal justice for all, within the national as well as within the international framework.

9. Morocco, Tunisia and Libya considered the armed struggle between the two adversaries, France and Algeria, as a dispute which was much more closely connected with their everyday existence than would be thought at first sight. North Africa was like a large house inhabited by the same family. France could be one of the best friends of that family. Moreover, France and Morocco are already Members of a much bigger family, the United Nations.

10. His delegation wished to contribute as far as it could to the objective study of the Algerian question by seeking the truth and narrowing the differences between the opposing parties, as well as by acting in moderation in order to promote a spirit of understanding and conciliation. In that respect, his delegation would be guided by the principles and the moral teaching of the Charter. Any discussion or decision outside the framework of the Charter of the United Nations would lead to confusion and to arbitrary action, which would result in the illogical spectacle of one of the adversaries being at the same time a party to the dispute and the supreme judge of the arbitration of that dispute. That would be a violation of reason and justice.

11. The Algerian problem constituted a part of the complexity and the cross-currents in the history of colonialism. The world upheavals, which were a product of two world wars, had made those difficulties more obvious, to such an extent that one of the most characteristic phenomena of the present time was the disappearance of colonialism, first as far as territorial occupation, which was nearly always a military occupation, was concerned, and then as far as the philosophy of the colonial pact was concerned. In that sense, the Algerian problem was simply an example of a general colonial phenomenon which was well known to present-day historians, sociologists and moralists and which had almost become a routine question in the field of diplomacy and politics. Every man fervently wished that justice should be done, in order to stop the bloodshed and to satisfy the national aspirations and the legitimate interests of the parties involved.

12. The Algerian question could be considered both from the point of view of value judgements and from that of realistic judgements. The former posed questions of law and moral principles; the latter belonged to the field of necessity. Since the United Nations could not claim to be a court of justice, one might say that, both in spirit and in letter, the United Nations was incontestably closer to the field of principle than to the field of material necessity and private interests. It was that high morality which made the Organization the refuge of the small and the weak, a factor for moderation and *rapprochement*, and the hope of the great nations guided by reason rather than misled by their power.

13. In his view, the Algerian problem would appear in its true light if it were studied in a strictly objective manner. In the course of its struggle for independence, the Moroccan people had been accustomed to draw a sharp distinction between a people and a system, between a country and a policy, between France and colonialism. A nation was the vehicle of a civilization; it was the positive sum of the constructive and energetic efforts made by its inhabitants in different walks of life for the common good of humanity. France was an example. A political doctrine, like colonialism, was contingent upon circumstances, however long they might last; it changed with events; it disappeared in the great transformations of history. A people deserved

respect, and it had that respect. A problem or a policy in which the truth must be reached must be the subject of frank and detailed examination, but that goal could be reached only if the premises of the problem were made completely clear. The line of demarcation between a nation and a group of people supporting a specific political doctrine or attitude must be defined. In support of that idea, he quoted extracts from the book *Imperialism and World Politics*, by Parker Thomas Moon.<sup>1</sup> He felt, therefore, fully justified in drawing a distinction between people as a factor of progress, and a political doctrine with its representatives and defenders. He noted that such a conclusion was a sound reason which should be added to the other reasons for maintaining and consolidating friendship between nations.

14. The very nature and machinery of colonialism determined the form in which national struggles manifested themselves—whether evolutionary or revolutionary. The hand of the foreigner or the propaganda from outside was only the mask behind which colonialism hid; it was only a scapegoat for one's own shortcomings. The experience of his own country and its observation of history, as well as the study of certain texts, had convinced his delegation of certain truths which he would discuss and which appeared today as rules almost universally acknowledged in the former colonial countries and the countries which were still dependent. His delegation would state those truths in a general way because they applied to all the territories which were included within the framework of the old empires.

15. Those rules could be generally summarized as follows. First, national freedom was the essential condition of individual freedom. Colonialism was a contemporary version of the instinct of domination. Algeria had been an independent nation with its own government. It had been transformed into a colony and then annexed as a French department. That unilateral measure had been accompanied by an intense activity of "depersonalization"—which was a very common word in Algeria—in order to absorb, materially and intellectually, the Algerian people within the whole of French territory. A people which had lost its freedom never lost the memory of that national freedom. The most simple solution to the problem would be the re-establishment of that freedom.

16. Secondly, in the permanent struggle between the conqueror and the conquered, the conqueror sought to maintain his domination by weakening the victim more and more in all branches of life. That was why no colony had become a modern nation within the framework of and with the assistance of colonialism. The territory was always developed unilaterally for the benefit of the European element; the indigenous population was chained in poverty, ignorance and fear.

17. Thirdly, democracy and colonialism were incompatible and mutually exclusive because one killed the other. In Algeria as well as in other colonies there was no democratic form of government, for there could be no such form of government in any colony. There were some statutes of a fictional democracy, but if they were examined more closely, their true nature could be seen.

18. Fourthly, the attempt to stop intellectual development paralleled the attempt to stop the material progress of the population. In Algeria, as well as in other countries, one phenomenon was striking: it was not by

<sup>1</sup> New York, The Macmillan Company, 1926.

chance that in all colonies, however long the colonial régime had lasted — whether two or three centuries in Asia or a century and a quarter or even less in North Africa — the schools received an average of only 10 to 20 per cent of the children of school age, the others passed their time in the streets or were compelled to earn, or beg for, their bread while still very young.

19. Fifthly, the exercise of various freedoms was incompatible with the existence of the colonialist system. Human rights were lacking under such a system, and the means of expression were suppressed.

20. Sixthly, the form of domination was total in a colonialist system; it included political, cultural and social domination, as well as domination in religious matters. The purpose of total domination in Algeria was to neutralize Algerian resistance to colonialism in order to annex the territory and assimilate the population.

21. Seventhly, colonialism appeared as the modern version of the instinct for domination. It was nothing more than prolonged occupation beginning with an armed invasion. Patriots were described as outlaws; if they offered armed resistance, they were called terrorists. In the United States and in the United Nations, they were called Communists. Similar accusations had been levelled against the Moroccan and Tunisian nationalists in recent years.

22. Eighthly, the game which colonialism played with freedom was carried out through a policy of reforms. In fact, however, progress was perpetually blocked in order to justify perpetual colonialization.

23. Ninthly, it appeared that colonialism, in whatever form — whether as a mandate, a protectorate, a colony or any other — was everywhere the same. When it had been independent, Algeria had had a government directed by a Head of State. The Algerian Government had been simply done away with, and the Head of the State as well. Not very long ago, Madagascar had been a protectorate, with the attributes of at least nominal autonomy; but by a stroke of the pen, that protectorate had been transformed into a colony and the Head of the State had been exiled. He gave examples of similar actions taken in Morocco, Tunisia and Indo-China.

24. What was needed was the consent of France to open bilateral talks concerning the freedom of Algeria. Algeria was one nation; France was another. Colonialism did not accept that truth. Algeria could never forget that it was a nation, different from France, conquered for a time, but returning periodically to armed and revolutionary resistance. He quoted from statements made by several French sources and stated that the history of colonialism in Algeria was in reality the history of Algerian resistance to a foreign army, which had preceded and followed an army of colonists and exploiters.

25. Algeria had been an independent nation. At the time of invasion of that country, the French Government had assumed the task of proving and defending the independence of Algeria. Official declarations maintained that the Regency of Algiers had been an independent State. A few days after the capture of Algiers, Turkey had protested to the French Government.

26. In 1830, the Algerian State had existed. He could not share the view of Mr. Pineau that the authority of the Dey had not extended beyond the city of Algiers. In fact, Algeria had been divided into three provinces: Médéa, Oran and Constantine. It appeared from official testimony, as well as from international public opinion,

that Algeria was not a chaotic mixture of Kabyle Republics and Arab Kingdoms, as had been recently stated by the Prime Minister of France, Mr. Guy Mollet. The French government of that time had stated that Algeria was an independent State, while the present government asserted that there was no Algeria at all.

27. From 1830 to 1871, a fierce struggle had raged between the few colonizers and the Algerian patriots. The news of the ravages of war and the massacres which had been provoked had reached France and spread over Europe, and had awakened the true conscience of France, its human conscience. Public opinion had become disturbed; the conscience of France had been revolted. The French Government, faithful to moral principles, at an early date decided to send a commission of inquiry, called the Commission for Africa. The investigation had been carried out over a period of only three months — from September to November 1833. The balance sheet of that short period described what had happened:

“We appropriated for the national domain the property of the charitable foundations. We seized the property of a class of inhabitants that we had promised to respect. We began the exercise of our power with a forced loan of 100,000 francs. We seized private property without compensation and, more often than not, we went so far as to compel owners whose property had been expropriated in that way to pay for the expenses of the demolition of their houses and even of a mosque. We rented buildings of the domain to third parties. We recklessly profaned temples, graves and places sacred to the Moslems. It is known that the necessities of war are sometimes irresistible, but one can find, in the application of extreme measures, delicate and even just methods which hide the odious nature of these measures. We massacred people carrying safe-conducts and we slaughtered whole groups of people who were then found to be innocent. We tried men who had good reputations in the country, men who were venerated because they had enough courage to expose themselves to our fury in order to intercede in behalf of their unfortunate countrymen. Judges were found to condemn them and civilized men to have them executed. We exceeded in barbarity the barbarians whom we came to civilize.”

28. In spite of massive destruction of the population and its property, Algerian national consciousness had become stronger and stronger. The first leader of Algerian resistance, Abd-el-Kader, had waged war against the invasion forces until 1847, when he had been defeated. But in 1859 there had been a new rising. Another uprising in 1864, followed in 1871 by a general insurrection, left no doubt concerning the firm determination of the Algerians to fight the occupation of their country. Revolts and repressions and provocations had then been multiplied. They had taken place in 1881, in 1904, in 1916, and, again, in 1945. To bring about final submission, the forces of conquest resorted to all means, without distinction.

29. While the military offensive was proceeding, an offensive aimed at weakening the economy had been launched. A vast movement of confiscation and expropriation of land had been carried out. The result, after more than a century of land alienation, was that 25,000 Europeans possessed about 2,720,000 hectares of the best land, without counting State lands. Three-quarters of the settlers possessed an average land area of 28 hectares. The less productive land — 7,672,000 hec-

tares — was shared by 532,000 Algerian land owners, three-quarters of whom possessed an average area of only five hectares. That economic deterioration had become a system. Government aid to agriculture was one of the gravest aspects of the discrimination between Europeans and Algerians, for, according to the statistics quoted by the French Deputy Maurice Violette, 99 per cent of the Europeans, but only 1 per cent of the Algerians, benefited from the appropriations.

30. The same applied to education. As a matter of fact, all European children now attended school, while less than 20 per cent of the Algerian children did so.

31. The defenders of colonialism in Algeria exercised such a great pressure on events that they constituted an insurmountable barrier to the national aspirations of the Algerian people. That group was small in number. Its wealth was inversely proportional to its numbers. That small group appealed to patriotic and national feelings in France when it needed the French Army. Its most genuine spirit consisted much more in the instinct of domination to protect profits than the protection of moral values which it disfigured in letter and spirit. The psychology of those people was characterized by confusion between force and justice. That confusion engendered and explained a superiority complex, transformed immediately into racism, the daily language of which gave an exact picture of that mentality. The statement was commonly heard in Algeria: "He was an Arab, but he was dressed like a person."

32. Propaganda in spreading throughout the European circles in Algeria aggravated racism. When the pressure of necessity had led the national movement to make even very timid claims, repression followed from the European circles concerned, even including some innocent minds which had been misled by the falsifications of history which were taught in school or by verbal offensives launched in the local European newspapers. Such a psychological attitude was incapable of accepting the idea of freedom for Algeria.

33. But if public opinion was misled by the falsifications in books and in newspapers, the agents of colonization, as well as their servants, knew very well that they were defending material interests by means of their domination in the government. The most striking illustration of that fact was afforded by the fixing of elections. The Algerian nationalists who had put forward candidates in the sixty electoral districts for the Algerian Assembly set up under the statute of 20 September 1947 soon discovered the existence of electoral trickery. That had to be mentioned to explain the alarm felt by the Algerians when they heard the word "election". At the beginning of the electoral campaign, thirty-nine of the nationalist candidates had been arrested. One of them, Mr. Yazid, who had been at the time Secretary-General of the Association of North African Students, had not been able to start his electoral campaign. He had been kidnapped when he got off the plane which had brought him from Paris to Algiers and had received a sentence of two years, during which he could meditate on the meaning of democracy. That electoral system was carried on without any attempt at concealment. On the contrary, it was used by the local settlers as a reply and a warning to the metropolitan Government, as was evidenced by confessions and testimony of great value in the possession of the Moroccan Government.

34. Another piece of testimony was to be found in a report by Mr. Jacques Soustelle dated 1 June 1955,

to the government of Mr. Edgar Faure, the contents of which had been divulged by Mr. Mendès-France's weekly *L'Express*. The report by Mr. Soustelle, who had then been Governor-General of Algeria, had been kept secret. It confirmed the rigging of the elections and helped to make clear that any idea of elections in a country which was not free was a trap.

35. The avowed purpose of removing the Algerians from public affairs was to keep the monopoly of the Government and the Administration, in the hands of those who exploited Algeria. As domination was never based on justice, it was inevitable that force should be used. Recourse was made to the police State and to the armed forces of the metropolitan country.

36. He used the term "colonialist adversaries" to represent a small number of the virulent *colons* and not the entire population of European origin in Algeria. Mr. Pineau had stated (831st meeting) that there were 1.2 millions Europeans, or French, in Algeria. That element constituted an argument rather than a difficulty. That argument was well known in connexion with the study of the Moroccan and Tunisian question and it was advanced today to oppose the solution which should be given to the Algerian problem. Statistics themselves deserved reconsideration. It was claimed that out of 10 million inhabitants, there were 1.2 million Frenchmen, who were sometimes called Frenchmen and sometimes called Europeans. In fact, they were Frenchmen, Italians, Spaniards, Maltese and others, as Mr. Pineau had acknowledged. To them, 135,000 Jewish Algerians, who had been naturalized by France, were to be added. The number of Europeans varied depending upon the political temperature of the moment; it went from 750,000 to 1.2 million, and expanded and contracted according to the circumstances. In any case, the percentage of Europeans in the total population was exactly the same in Algeria as it was in Tunisia.

37. Another element in the Franco-Algerian conflict was that the Algerian people were fighting for freedom. The Algerian people wanted finally to introduce justice into the country, to put an end to exploitation, to end the daily injustices and to eliminate the humiliations which it suffered. If a demand was made for freedom, it was in order to obtain the surest safeguard of human treatment for all Algerian citizens, whatever their origin. That people wanted technical and social progress to be carried out in equity, it wanted justice to be equal for all, and it wanted an equal distribution of the fruits of civilization. The Algerian patriots were fighting so that people and property might enjoy the same protection under the law.

38. The *leit-motif* of all the plans of reform, which were only means of gaining time, was that, once the economic and social situation had been improved, everything would be all right. The Algerians were convinced, after long, bitter and vain experience, that the only effective way of securing and protecting the moral values which assured their dignity resided in freedom. They had understood, like all the other recently liberated nations, that freedom in its most general sense, was both an end and a means. As a means, national freedom removed the obstacles placed in the path of progress by colonialism. A reform movement was justified only to the extent that such reforms were proposed and implemented by the people concerned themselves. Experience had shown that a unilaterally proposed reform movement consisted only of taking with the left hand what had been given with the right. Such a policy was designed merely to maintain the unilateral and pater-

nalist nature of the institutions, which was precisely what must be fundamentally changed by recognizing the right of the Algerian people to freedom. The Algerians stated on every occasion that they wanted democracy with executive power. The presence of a Governor-General was the very antithesis of those aspirations.

39. In the Franco-Algerian conflict, the indigenous element expressed itself through the activity of the Algerian patriots. That political expression assumed three successive forms: at first, armed resistance to an armed invasion; later, a peaceful political movement, which was, however, interlarded with revolt; at present, insurrection, which had lasted more than two years. The insurrection assumed the name of the National Liberation Front.

40. On the French side there were two groups as far as public opinion was concerned. The first wished to turn history backwards. It refused any structural change. It opposed recognizing the right of the people of Algeria to self-determination. It demanded a military prerequisite, that is, a cease-fire. A second body of opinion was held by persons of good faith and goodwill, who were very numerous in France and in Algeria, and sometimes joined the Algerians in the same prisons. They understood that reason, experience and justice recommended, first of all, a political prerequisite, namely, the recognition of the national aspirations of Algeria to freedom. Those among the French intellectuals who knew the Algerian problem well and those who had had the experience of living under a colonial régime saw only one solution to the Algerian problem. That solution was the most natural one; it was in conformity with history; it reflected international public opinion; it was in the conscience of every individual; it was the only valid solution; and to stifle it or to ignore it now was merely to postpone it, for it would come back repeatedly to the General Assembly, posing itself in a more imperious way because it would be surrounded by more serious and tragic events. That solution was to recognize national aspirations to freedom. It was simple. The Moroccan Government had taken a clear stand on that point, which had been explained by the Moroccan Minister for Foreign Affairs during the general debate at the eleventh session of the General Assembly (590th plenary meeting).

41. The Moroccan Government, conscious of the importance and the dangers of the Algerian question, had decided to contribute its help to the Algerian people. It had been surprised and disappointed by the interception of the Moroccan airplane carrying the Algerian nationalists. The efforts exerted by the Moroccan Government consisted of talks between the French and the Moroccan Governments through the intermediary of His Highness Prince Moulay Hassan, and later of a meeting between the Algerian leaders and the Moroccan authorities in order to prepare for a conference which was to be held in Tunisia. He asked by what right France could seize a person under sentence when that person was under Moroccan protection in accordance with its exclusive sovereignty and the rights of its police. If France could seize such a person, he asked why France had not requested extradition in proper form, as was customary from the point of view of diplomacy and from that of international law. France had not done so; it had confined itself to violating both moral and international law. The arguments put forward by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Pineau, to justify and legalize France's action were surprising indeed.

42. The Moroccan position, as defined by the Moroccan Minister for Foreign Affairs in the General Assembly, was quite clear. It was inspired by the most recent events; it was based on a genuine spirit of good will; it was based on the spirit of brotherhood, moderation and freedom which formed the framework of the United Nations Charter; it was designed to strengthen the links between France and North Africa in friendship, liberty and equality — links which were more than ever necessary.

43. The dispute between Algeria and France was made up to many factors; political factors, including, in first place, the recognition of the right of people to self-determination; ideological factors, relating to the just redistribution of freedom in a free world; economic factors, to safeguard and defend legitimate interests without selfishness or domination; historic factors, following the evolution of history towards replacing colonial domination by freedom and co-operation; social factors, by the protection of democracy and respect for minorities and individuals; and finally, international factors, by the maintenance of peace and security. Thus, the complexity of the problem justified recourse to the United Nations.

44. The United Nations was morally obliged to consider the problem of Algeria and to devote to it the efforts that it deserved. Only freedom could preserve peace. The role of the United Nations was an urgent one at the present time, and one of considerable importance for the future. The contribution of the United Nations to the solution of the Algerian problem would consist of re-education in the direction of freedom. The labyrinth without issue of reformism would produce nothing but another insurrection which would be an aggravation of the present one.

45. The life and property of all the inhabitants of Algeria without distinction was insecure. There was a threat to world peace. It was no secret that the recent aggression by France in Egypt had been motivated by the illusion that the Algerian insurrection had originated in Egypt, as though that insurrection was the first in the history of Algerian nationalism. The help of the United Nations was needed in order to get Algeria out of what had been called "the Indo-Chinese rut". The official declarations of the French were based on the declarations made during the Indo-Chinese war and on the statements which preceded the happy solution of the Moroccan and Tunisian questions. At the time of the war in Indo-China, a rapid solution had also been refused. Elections had been requested for Indo-China. What actually happened was the monstrosity of dividing Indo-China in two. The solution in North Africa had been in the interest of all in the cases of Morocco and Tunisia, and that threw great light on the role which must be played by the United Nations. In the case of Algeria, colonialism understood political action, either in the form of diplomacy or that of local reforms, only as a means of absorbing the colony. That was a point of fundamental importance and had to be stressed. The victim placed all its hopes in the United Nations, which thus acquired a vital importance for all small countries.

46. There was no longer any doubt about the competence of the United Nations to deal with an armed conflict in which, on the French side, more than half a million soldiers with modern equipment were waging a war of conquest, or re-conquest, against the people which was shedding its blood to defend the ideals of freedom and democracy for which France itself stood.

47. Resort to Article 2, paragraph 7, of the United Nations Charter had become frequent and somewhat arbitrary. That paragraph had been invoked by France in the Tunisian and Moroccan questions. It had become almost a part of modern language; it was used merely to say "no". It was a kind of a small, disguised and shy veto. It had been designed to protect the domestic freedom of countries against any possible infringement from outside which might interfere with that freedom. But the old imperialist countries interfered in the internal and external affairs of countries, such as those in North Africa, yet they were the first to talk about Article 2, paragraph 7. In all logic, that was the opposite of what should occur.

48. In addition to the French argument that the United Nations lacked jurisdiction, France claimed that Algeria was not a State as Morocco and Tunisia were States. That claim was completely unfounded with respect to the past and the present. Even if it were assumed that Algeria had never been a State — according to that false claim — Algeria would still follow the same course as that followed by other countries which were formed without having had the structure of a State or government before their liberation. Spiritual factors should determine material factors. The soul of the people, their common will, their aspirations and their hopes — all those elements should be most important and should be taken into account in the first instance. The right concept of Algeria was that of a specific and separate entity, which was different from the French concept stemming from its ambition to annex the territory and absorb the people.

49. The Algerian problem was essentially an international one, and the Franco-Algerian conflict was essentially a struggle for emancipation. It was a conflict between the forces of colonialism and the forces of national liberation.

50. Everyone knew of the statute which France imposed unilaterally on Algeria in 1947. It could be

condensed into two principal ideas. The first was that the vote of a Frenchman was equal to the vote of nine or ten Algerians. The second was that, under article 39, a two-thirds majority was required on the request of the Governor-General or the Finance Committee. Such enactments might be called laws and reforms of a pseudo-democratic nature which were more fictitious than real. The essential factor for colonialism was the control which it inevitably sought in order to dominate.

51. France had already encountered many problems of the same nature as those involved in the Algerian question. France had encountered such problems in the Middle East, in the case of Syria and Lebanon, and in Asia and Africa. The arguments and the delays in satisfying the national aspirations of peoples to freedom were known to all. In order to avoid granting freedom, the opening of talks with those who demanded their freedom was delayed. That was why the tempting formula of holding elections had been presented — a formula which could be more dangerous than useful in a country which was not free.

52. The Algerians had expressed their national aspirations very simply. They had asked France to recognize the right of Algeria to freedom and self-government. They wanted to know their destiny. They wanted to know where their present sacrifice would lead them. A decision by the First Committee accepting the French position would implicitly put the stamp of approval on the *status quo*; a decision based on the right of peoples to self-determination would protect the Charter of the United Nations against any possible undesirable precedent and would be in keeping with the trend of history. A statement of intentions in conformity with the national aspirations to freedom would be an unambiguous point of departure which would allow the talks to begin in clarity. The legitimate interests of France as an individual nation would receive the highest guarantees based on co-operative relations.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.