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

AGENDA ITEM 62

Question of Algeria (A/3197)

1. Mr. PINEAU (France) said that France had never admitted and would never admit any competence on the part of the United Nations in a problem which France regarded, under international law, as an essentially domestic matter. France had not objected to the question of Algeria being placed on the agenda, in part because the General Assembly could, in many cases, discuss certain matters without thereby acquiring the right to adopt recommendations, but mainly for three reasons. First, France wished to make a public reply to the campaigns of systematic denigration which had been directed against it for several years, not only by the rebels but also by the representatives of certain countries whose right to give lessons to France was questionable. Secondly, it wished to draw attention to foreign interference in the question of Algeria; the question would indeed long since have been settled if certain Powers had not kept the conflict alive by their deliveries of weapons and an astonishing orgy of propaganda. Thirdly, after demonstrating how a democratic country heeded United Nations recommendations, France wished to afford each Member of the General Assembly an opportunity of showing equal respect for the United Nations Charter.

2. That attitude was not inconsistent with France's challenge under Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter, of the General Assembly's competence. As the representative of Thailand, Prince Wan Waithayakon, the present President of the General Assembly, had said on 22 September 1955,¹ the General Assembly should study the question of Algeria without making any recommendation that might constitute intervention in the domestic affairs of France.

3. Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter was unambiguous; yet the United Nations, for political reasons, had persistently disregarded that provision, relying either on the right of peoples to self-determination or on the need to secure the maintenance of peace. International lawyers recognized with one voice that Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter *per se* placed a general limitation on the activities of the United Nations. It was true that the principle of exclusive domestic jurisdiction was qualified in that the provisions of Article 2, paragraph 7, were incapable of prejudicing the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII of

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Session, General Committee*, 103rd meeting, para. 43.

the Charter. The qualification, however, was intended to cover a situation which constituted a "threat to the peace", a "breach of the peace" or an "act of aggression". In the case of a latent or potential danger, on the other hand, the principle of exclusive domestic jurisdiction was not subject to any exception.

4. Secondly, inasmuch as it was the Security Council that bore the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, it was out of the question that, in a case where the claim to exclusive jurisdiction rested on such solid ground, the "Uniting for Peace" resolution (General Assembly resolution 377 (V)) could be brought into play in the way in which it had operated in the matters of Korea or Egypt, by transferring to the General Assembly the power of recommending one of the measures referred to in Chapter VII of the Charter.

5. Furthermore, the Articles of the Charter relating to the General Assembly's own powers in no way conflicted with the terms of Article 2, paragraph 7, relating to exclusive domestic jurisdiction. Under Articles 11 and 13 the Assembly had no right to make recommendations except in connexion with the purposes enumerated in Article 1, paragraphs 1 and 3, of the Charter. The General Assembly had no recommending powers with regard to the right of peoples to self-determination. United Nations intervention could not be reconciled with the principle of domestic jurisdiction, for such intervention would imply a direct threat to the territorial integrity, indeed to the very existence, of States. What was more, the principle of self-determination was so vague that it could not be laid down in a provision governing competence.

6. Finally, the argument that the General Assembly was empowered to draw the attention of the Security Council to situations, even internal situations, which were likely to endanger international peace and security should be resisted, first because every exception had to be strictly construed and, secondly, because it was inconceivable that the Security Council, the body responsible for the maintenance of peace and security, could have its attention drawn to exceptionally serious situations by some other body.

7. The question of Algeria was indisputably a French domestic matter. The French settlement in Algeria was the result of the legitimate occupation of a territory at a time when no real sovereignty had been exercised in the territory. Furthermore, for over 120 years, no State had made the slightest protest in the matter. As Mr. Raúl Fernández, a former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil and a distinguished jurist had recognized, Algeria was a group of French departments and formed part of the metropolitan territory. The existing situation in Algeria was nothing more nor less than a rebellion aiming at the dismemberment of the territory of France. That was why Mr. Raúl Fernández had concluded that, in those circumstances, United Nations intervention would, without a doubt, be unlawful.

8. International authorities had, indeed, never contested the fact that Algeria was part of France. The North Atlantic Treaty expressly referred to the French departments of Algeria. In May 1956, the Soviet Union had still been advising France to find a solution for the Algerian problem, a clear indication that France alone was qualified to do so.

9. Since Algeria was in law a French territory, its frontiers were the frontiers of France. That being so, it was difficult to see how, for example, the Latin-American States could agree to the detachment of Algeria from France when they had agreed among themselves that their own frontiers, as existing in 1810, were inviolable. He recalled, moreover, that it was the function of the United Nations to guarantee respect for national frontiers.

10. France alone was qualified to decide, in conformity with its own Constitution, what political system it desired to apply to Algeria. No nation was entitled to ask another to violate the most fundamental rules of its constitutional law.

11. It followed from those considerations that France would be unable to accept any recommendation by the General Assembly concerning Algeria. If such a recommendation were made, in disregard of international law, France desired to give the United Nations solemn warning that it would not consider itself bound to implement any such resolution. France had recently given an example of respect for the United Nations, despite the extreme importance of the interests involved. It could not, however, go beyond the United Nations Charter. France would be doing the United Nations a disservice if it consented to a deliberate violation of one of the fundamental provisions of the Charter for reasons which bore the stamp of political passion.

12. Having made that fundamental reservation, the French Government wished to describe its efforts to improve the living conditions of the Algerian population.

13. In 1830, Algeria had had less than 2 million inhabitants; it had been ravaged by epidemics and torn by internal dissension. Its institutions had been obsolete and its cultural life non-existent. As a result of the medical, economic and social progress brought about by France, Algeria now had 9 million inhabitants. Infant mortality had declined from 50 per cent in 1830 to 8.5 per cent in 1956. The population increase was due to the civilizing mission of France, but it posed distressing problems; every year food had to be found for 225,000 more inhabitants in Algeria, and the country's production had to be geared to the additional demand.

14. The economic expansion of Algeria had always been France's chief concern. The aid which it had given to Algeria since the Second World War was far greater than that provided under the Marshall Plan.

15. The Algerian economy was predominantly agricultural. The traditional farming methods had remained in a primitive state for a long time. Iron plowshares, as well as soil enrichment and crop rotation had been unknown. The effects of drought had been aggravated still more by systematic deforestation and by grazing habits. Consequently, agricultural yield had been very low and insufficient to meet the needs of a constantly increasing population.

16. France had spread education among the farmers and had offered them the aid of agricultural provident societies. In 1954, for example, the Fonds commun des sociétés de prévoyance (Common Fund of the Provident

Societies) had distributed 3,775 million francs among more than 600,000 Moslem farmers. Thanks to the modernization, the soil yielded larger crops, and in many areas the yield was comparable to that obtained in certain departments of metropolitan France. In carrying out that programme, the public authorities had striven constantly to merge the Moslem with the European farming system.

17. It was easy to refute the allegation that the French settlers had seized Moslem property and had reduced their former owners to the status of hired farm labourers. Actually, the Europeans held 2,726,666 hectares, while the indigenous inhabitants held 7,349,166 hectares. It was true that most of the 500,000 hectares located in the Mitidja, Bône and Habra plains, which were among the most fertile in Algeria, were European-owned. However, those lands had not been stolen from anyone, but had been reclaimed from marshlands which the indigenous inhabitants had been reluctant to cultivate because they had been infested with mosquitoes. In Algeria, as elsewhere, there were, of course, instances of great wealth which presented a shocking contrast to certain instances of poverty. However, such accumulations of wealth formed an exception to the rule, and the French Government was engaged in a new distribution of farmlands.

18. The French farm-owners had been accused of devoting a large part of the arable land to the cultivation of large vineyards. The truth was that only 4.7 per cent of the cultivated land was used for vineyards, a percentage that was hardly injurious to the Algerian food economy. On the contrary, the sale of wine brought in large cash returns and viticulture provided employment for a superabundant labour force.

19. The problem of irrigation was of particular importance in Algeria. Twelve large dams had been constructed within the past twenty years, providing irrigation for an area of more than 100,000 hectares. In the same period, 2,850 kilometres of canals had been built. Those results had been achieved in spite of the constant encroachment of the desert sand and in spite of soil erosion, which exposed the arable land to the danger of being carried away by torrents.

20. In 1956, in spite of the rebellion, the yield of Algerian agriculture had been higher than ever; the Moslem farmers had been able to sell their entire crop to the farm surplus agencies (*organismes stockeurs*), which had protected them from the looting carried out by the rebels.

21. French efforts had been no less important in the industrial field. Algeria was a country with poor resources of energy. Yet much had been done to equip the territory. The production of electricity, which was increasing from year to year, amounted to 880 million kilowatt hours, and was generated both by hydraulic and by steam plants. Steps had been taken since 1946 to encourage the development of new industries. It was to be hoped that the encouraging results of the Sahara oil surveys would promote the trend towards industrialization in Algeria.

22. In addition, France had spent large sums on the country's infrastructure; 80,000 kilometres of roads had been built; 20,000 kilometres were still under construction; and there were 4,500 kilometres of railroads. Fourteen modern harbours and thirty-two airfields were available for use. Those accomplishments had helped to improve living conditions. The consumption of food products had risen steeply; that of sugar

and meat, for example, had doubled since 1938, while that of dairy products had tripled.

23. In the social field, France had done a great deal to improve health conditions. No health service or public assistance had existed before the coming of the French, but now Algeria possessed facilities which were comparable with those of the other French provinces. Thanks to the establishment of hospitals and to the introduction of compulsory medical care, generously provided by 2,000 doctors, the control of endemic diseases had been most successful. Further progress was expected through the reform of free medical aid, which had been instituted in July 1956 and under which the cost of all medical assistance, previously defrayed partly by the departments and the communes, would become a charge on Algeria's general budget.

24. For the purposes of comparison, he said that Algeria had 30,000 hospital beds, or one for every 360 inhabitants, whereas in Egypt the ratio was one bed for every 1,000 inhabitants. In Algeria 1,034 francs per inhabitant were spent on public health, whereas the figure for Egypt was only 460 francs; and the infant mortality rate in Algeria was half of the rate in Egypt.

25. France had also made a completely fresh start in the field of public education. One-sixth of the ordinary budget of Algeria was applied to education, while 13.5 per cent of the extraordinary budget was reserved for the building and equipment of schools. The school programme involved 2,500 schools, comprising 11,000 schoolrooms and almost 523,000 children, including 350,000 Moslems. In 1956, 1,500 new class-rooms had been added, and 1,700 more would be built in 1957. Secondary education was provided in about fifty *lycées* and *collèges*; in addition, 517 courses offered supplementary instruction to almost 15,000 students. The University of Algiers ranked third among French universities. A special effort was also being made to train technicians and skilled workers in technical schools. Under a decree of 5 March 1949, the different forms of education had been merged and all forms of discrimination between the two communities eliminated. As was proper, the children of all races and religions sat on benches in the same schools and received the same education.

26. France had also given careful attention to the housing problem. Despite the difficulties created by the Second World War, 45,000 new dwellings had been built during the past five years, and in the second half of 1956, 500 million francs had been appropriated for rural housing.

27. In the field of administration, France had gradually brought the indigenous inhabitants into the management of local and Algerian affairs. The principle underlying that partnership had been laid down as early as 1873. The civil registry had been established in 1883, and in 1898 the Assembly and the financial delegations had rectified the prevailing excessive centralization. By 1900, Algeria had had an autonomous budget. In 1912 and 1914, the Moslem electorate for the *communes de plein exercice* had been appreciably increased. In 1919, French citizenship had been widely granted, and in 1937, exclusively Moslem municipalities had been established. Full citizenship had been granted to all Algerian Moslems on 7 May 1946, with the result that they were authorized to send fifteen deputies, seven senators and nine councillors of the French Union to Paris. Finally, the statute of September 1947 guaranteed to all inhabitants the full rights of French citizens and

created an Algerian Assembly consisting of sixty delegates from each college and possessing some measure of legislative autonomy.

28. Turning to the reforms currently being effected, he said that the French Government, considering to be inadequate the progress made as a result of the significant measures which France had already taken and which involved greater difficulties and sacrifices than some might imagine, had launched a programme of substantial reforms. In order that those reforms might be carried out as rapidly as possible, the Parliament, by the Act of 16 March 1956, had given the Government special powers enabling it to take all the necessary measures in Algeria for continuing economic expansion, raising the level of living, accelerating social advancement and reorganizing the administrative structure. The two basic objectives underlying the reforms were, first, to ensure genuine social equality by forming a Moslem leadership, and, secondly, to increase and expand social progress by improving productivity, raising the volume of food production and making the administrative structure more efficient.

29. In that spirit, the French Government had simplified the formalities and eligibility requirements which had to be met by French Moslems before they could enter the civil service. In order to overcome the difficulty for some French Moslems in taking competitive examinations in which the French language was required, the Government had waived certain requirements so that candidates for the whole range of civil service posts could be recruited, without an examination, on the basis of their educational qualifications. The results were not long in coming, and despite the propaganda of the rebels, more than 6,000 applications had been examined, 1,750 appointments had been made, and 2,000 others were about to be made. Moreover, a training centre in administration had been set up for young Moslems, and steps had been taken to facilitate their employment by national establishments and private companies working for the State or public authorities.

30. Another significant reform was the territorial reorganization of Algeria. Nine new departments had been created to cope with the growth in population, but the basic reform had been made on the level of local government. The Act of 20 September 1947 had provided for the gradual abolition of the mixed communes, the administration of which had been entrusted to a special body of officials. The decree of 28 June 1956 had gone further, since it had created 1,127 new communes out of the former mixed communes, which had been added to the 333 *communes de plein exercice* already in existence. Henceforth, Algerian Moslems would enjoy self-government on the municipal level and could therefore participate in local affairs. The elections to be held throughout Algeria should therefore bring forth new men capable, in partnership with France, of promoting an equitable political settlement.

31. On the social level, an order dated 17 March 1956 had raised the daily minimum wage by nearly 25 per cent, bringing it up to a total of 440 to 525 francs a day. For the purpose of comparison, he noted that the maximum daily wage in Egypt was 120 francs. The tenant-farming contract, which had given the manual labourer only one-fifth of the crop and deprived him of the social advantages of wage-earners, had been abolished. He would henceforth get one-half of the crop harvested. Under a recent decree concerning the National Old-Age Pension Fund, all needy citizens

over sixty-five years of age would be entitled to a fixed allowance. Those measures, involving an expenditure of 7,000 million francs a year, affected 300,000 persons, 250,000 of whom were French Moslems.

32. A bold programme of land reform had also been undertaken. There had been a redistribution of land through a rural property fund which was in possession of land reclaimed in the irrigable areas, land expropriated from the large estates and land obtained by private sale. An initial 10,000 hectares reclaimed in that way had been used for the settlement of nearly a thousand families. At the present time, over 130,000 hectares had been expropriated, an area of 200,000 hectares belonging to the public domain and to the communes had been made available to a public corporation responsible for land reform, and private properties had been acquired by the Fund. Thus, 300,000 hectares were about to be parcelled out in individual plots ranging in area, depending on the crops grown, from five to thirty hectares, and by the will of France, farmers, sharecroppers and wage-earners had become or were about to become the owners of the land they cultivated.

33. The French Government had at the same time been continuing its programme for the industrialization of Algeria. Since 1945, the capital equipment plan had brought into being some fifty new industries that would supplement the three basic industries of Algeria: coal, iron and phosphates. The four-year plan covering the years 1954 to 1957, which had provided for substantial public and private investments amounting to 305,000 million francs, had proved inadequate in 1954, and had been increased to 1,500,000 million francs over a ten-year period. The result of that action should be a 6 per cent annual increase in the average *per capita* income.

34. It might be interesting to note that in 1956 the cost *per capita* of the assistance furnished by France to its associated and as yet under-developed territories had been slightly higher than the cost *per capita* of the assistance given during the same period by the United States to the whole world.

35. He went on to explain the causes of rebellion. In the first place, some of the reforms to which he had referred would normally have been carried out sooner, had not two successive wars imposed a limit on the sacrifices which the French economy could make on behalf of Algeria. In the second place, the demographic situation in Algeria was extremely complex. While it was true that there were two clearly distinct groups, one of Moslem and the other of European origin, the European group included not only people from France, but also people from Spain, Italy and Malta. There was also a Jewish colony, many of whose members had been in Algeria for centuries. The Moslem population, too, was composed of several groups, including the Berbers, who had been there the longest, and the Arabs. The fusion of the various groups had undoubtedly not been as complete as it might have been, and a number of misunderstandings and even clashes had made matters easier for the agitators.

36. That situation was not peculiar to Algeria, but it should be clearly noted that France had never sought to use force in solving the problems resulting from the ethnic differences of the Algerian population.

37. The rebels had been the first to resort to force, and the present crisis was the result of the activities of terrorist groups which had been organized gradually in

recent years, more often than not with the help and at the bidding of foreign Powers.

38. In 1926 the first movement aimed at the secession of Algeria, the Etoile nord-africaine, had been set up by Messali Hadj as a branch of the Secours rouge international. His organization had been modelled on the Communist pattern. Its activities had initially been confined to Algerians living in France, but had been extended to Algeria itself from 1936 onwards. In 1937 the organization had become the Parti populaire algérien, which had been admittedly subject to Communist control; it had been outlawed in 1939 but had continued to exist underground until 1946 when it reappeared under the name Mouvement pour le triomphe des libertés démocratiques (MTLD).

39. In the meantime the group called Les Amis du manifeste algérien had been set up by Ferhat Abbas in 1944, but the active members of the Parti populaire algérien had succeeded in infiltrating that movement which had been induced to play a large part in the bloody rebellion in the Constantine Department.

40. After the adoption of the Amnesty Act of 9 March 1946, Messali Hadj's party had been re-established. Shock groups had been organized and placed under the command of Ben Bella, and terrorist cells had been set up with the help of Hitlerite agents such as Mohammedi Saï, alias Si Nasser, who had been decorated with the Iron Cross.

41. Nevertheless, dissensions had soon arisen within the party, and the splinter group had set up a Comité révolutionnaire d'unité et d'action (CRUA), which had undertaken to organize the revolt in collaboration with Egypt. The revolt had broken out in the Aurès region on the night of 31 October 1954. It had caught the French authorities unaware, and, since there had been practically no troops in Algeria, it had managed to spread. After a few months, CRUA had been replaced by the Front de libération nationale (FLN), whose headquarters were at Cairo and whose military arm was the so-called National Liberation Army.

42. Messali Hadj had in the meantime regrouped his followers and embarked on an armed struggle of his own in certain sectors.

43. The rivalry between the FLN and the Mouvement national algérien (MNA), led by Messali Hadj, had become extremely bitter, and the two parties were still engaged in a merciless struggle marked almost daily by murders.

44. There were also various smaller groups among which was the Algerian Communist Party, whose activities warranted close scrutiny both on account of their scope and their significance.

45. The influence of the MNA in Algeria was a matter for speculation. Messali Hadj had been in retirement when the rebellion had broken out, but in July 1955 he had abandoned his policy of wait and see and the MNA had thrown itself into the terrorist activities with a view to taking over the leadership of the military movement. The indications were that the MNA wielded considerable influence in the south, in the Department of Oran and in part of the Department of Algiers. It was thought to be the MNA which had organized the rebel areas of Bou-Saâda, Aumale and Bouïra. It had also taken root in the Aurès region. Nevertheless, Messali Hadj's claim that his authority extended over three-quarters of the rebels was obviously exaggerated. It would be recalled that in France the MNA's strike order had been obeyed by only 20 per cent of the

Algerian workers. On the international level, however, the Party was clearly very active.

46. The FLN for its part denounced the gangsterism of the MNA while massacring its members and acknowledging responsibility for the murders in writing. In France, the FLN, despite the efforts it had made, had not yet succeeded in winning over from its rival the 400,000 Moslem workers for whose allegiance both parties were struggling. At the trade-union level, the rivalry was being violently pursued between the Union syndicale des travailleurs algériens and the Union générale des travailleurs algériens.

47. As far as could be ascertained, the MNA differed from the FLN by the fact that it was more Western, more realistic and, especially, more independent. It was an exclusively Algerian movement, having no affiliations with Cairo. Two of its most important leaders had, indeed, been interned in Egypt since 1955. The MNA advocated the convening of a sovereign constituent assembly and free elections under international control.

48. As to the Algerian Communist Party (PCA), an offshoot of the French Communist Party that had become independent in 1935, its influence among the Moslems had been steadily growing. During the period immediately following the Second World War, the Party had campaigned for Algeria's integration with France but only because, as that time, the French Communists had been in the Government of the Republic and still hoped that they would shortly come to power. About 1950, the Communists had realized that they would not be able to achieve that aim and had switched to a position in favour of Algerian independence. It was at that juncture that the European leaders of the Algerian Communist Party had been replaced by Moslems. By setting up joint organizations, the Algerian Communist Party had tried to induce some unity of action among Algerian nationalists and had promised to help them attain independence.

49. In order to be able later to claim credit for any success that might be achieved and to separate the Moslem masses from the leaders of the MNA and FLN, the Algerian Communist Party had encouraged social and trade-union agitation and had organized collections for the rebels and popular committees to fight against repression and in favour of an amnesty. In addition, militant Communists had joined the gangs of Aurès and southern Constantine, and contacts had been established between the leaders of the *maquis* there and the Algerian Communist Party. The responsibility of the Party in the various outrages committed at Bône, Tlemcen and Constantine had been completely established. Moreover, the Algerian Communist Party had proposed to the rebel chief in 1955 that an "Algerian National Congress" should be convened. After being dissolved by the French authorities in 1955, the Party had gone underground. Its illegal activities were being continued through secret cells, the propaganda carried on by its newspaper *Liberté* and the influence exerted by it on the workers by way of the General Confederation of Labour.

50. With regard to the armed struggle, the Algerian Communist Party had actively participated in the rebellion. Terrorist cells had been discovered as, for example, at Constantine in December 1955, and members of the Party who had been mobilized for service in Algeria had not confined themselves to operating as intelligence agents, but had deserted and furnished arms and supplies to the *maquis*. Moreover, many Algerian Moslems resident in France had returned to Algeria

after being trained in Communist centres such as that of Bobigny; some had been instructed to infiltrate the troops of the FLN.

51. In 1956, the Algerian Communist Party, disappointed at the poor results achieved by its *maquis*, had decided to concentrate on terrorism in the cities, which was more spectacular and less costly. It had invited its combatant members to join the Army of National Liberation and to accept control by the FLN. At that stage, the Communist Party had taken over the organization of terrorism in the cities, and that was the reason for the recrudescence of such terrorism. It appeared, in fact, to be preparing to take over the MNA and the FLN. According to one of its tracts, its aim was to set up a democratic and social republic or, in its own words, a republic of the Soviet type.

52. That political aspect of the Algerian Communist Party was significant in that many of its adherents were of European origin and could therefore have no feeling of local nationalism. Only the prospect of setting up a Communist régime in Algeria could have prompted them to participate in terrorist actions. Proof that the slogans had originated outside the country could easily be gleaned from the Soviet Press, the French Communist Press and the report by Mr. Maurice Thorez to the Communist Party Congress in 1956. The policy of the Algerian Communist Party was clearly intended to support the present Soviet effort to penetrate into the Middle East. It revealed the existence of a comprehensive plan for the elimination of all Western influence on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. In pursuing a struggle in which it was losing its best militant members every day, the Algerian Communist Party was seeking to attain one principal objective of setting up in Algeria a people's democracy which would serve as an advance base for Soviet penetration in the direction of the Atlantic and tropical Africa.

53. The FLN had drawn up the plan for the insurrection of 1 November 1954 in direct liaison with the Committee of Liberation of the Maghreb at Cairo. Its delegation at Cairo was responsible for political action in the Arab world and in international circles. It controlled many of the Algerian *maquis* through its military organization. Both in Algeria and abroad, and very likely in France, the influence of the FLN was almost certainly growing at the expense of the MNA. The FLN, however, was not by any means, as it claimed, the only representative element among the Algerian people. It should be recalled that on the eve of the last parliamentary elections, a FLN tract had recommended the execution of all candidates, whatever opinion they represented, and the slaughter of all electoral officers. The FLN was, in fact, a totalitarian organization representing a tiny fraction of Algerian opinion. It was a minority striving to seize power by methods borrowed from communism — a procedure which had by now become traditional. It had itself proclaimed that its aim was to rally the people behind it and to liquidate the parties. As Mohammed Yazid had said at a conference of the American Committee on Africa, held in New York: "To achieve Algerian unity, we must not hesitate to kill and to stamp out all opposition."

54. In pursuance of that programme, 5,344 civilians — men, women and children — including 4,149 Moslems, had been murdered between 1 November 1954 and 31 December 1956, and in December 1956 alone, 200 Moslems had been killed. It was difficult to understand how the FLN could reconcile those figures with its

much publicized boast that it had the spontaneous and enthusiastic support of the Algerian Moslems.

55. He had mentioned the three chief movements of the Algerian rebellion; there were others of considerably less importance. But the main point to remember was that there was a large number of French Moslems who belonged to no movement and merely wished to live in peace. The many sectors of the population which had rallied to the French, and, even more important, the success of self-defence groups and the Moslem volunteer militia showed how weary some Moslems had become of a war that had been imposed upon them. The eagerness with which thousands of Moslems were seeking employment in the civil service and the welcome extended to the new legislation on assistance for aged workers were evidence that present developments were tending to bring France and the indigenous inhabitants closer together, rather than drive them apart.

56. The contacts made by high-ranking Frenchmen with some of the rebel groups on the instructions of the Government had prompted the FLN to conclude that France had recognized the representative character of that movement. It should be recalled that during the past year the Prime Minister of France had repeatedly stated that he proposed a cease-fire for Algeria and was accordingly prepared to establish contact with all those who were fighting. Four meetings had, in fact, taken place: two in April and one each in July and September 1956, but the gulf between the two positions

had proved unbridgeable, because the rebel chiefs had insisted on the establishment of a provisional Government before any arrangements for a cease-fire or even any political discussion. The government representative had insisted that the future status of Algeria must be settled by agreement with the elected representatives of "the Algerian people". The allegation made by Mr. Yazid in a memorandum, dated 12 November 1956, addressed to the President of the General Assembly that the French Government had regarded the representatives of the FLN as plenipotentiaries was devoid of foundation, since no agreement had ever been reached even on the nature of the subject under discussion and since France could not recognize anyone as a representative until free elections had been held. Mr. Yazid also asserted the French Government had approved the conversations held in October 1956 at Tunis, but it should be recalled that, on the contrary, the French Government had always solemnly warned the Governments of Tunis and Rabat against what it had regarded as inadmissible interference in a matter of exclusively French concern.

57. The Prime Minister, however, still stood by his appeal for a cease-fire, which was addressed to the FLN as well as to all other groups, and the French Government, in order to re-establish peace, was always ready to establish the necessary contact with those who were fighting.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.