



JHUMUNC
JOHNS HOPKINS MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

**Joint Crisis: Algerian War of Independence –
Front de Libération Nationale (Algeria)**

JHUMUNC 2017

Joint Crisis: Algerian War of Independence - Front de Libération Nationale (Algeria)

Topic A: Fighting for Independence

Topic B: Maintaining Internal Cohesion

Committee Overview

At the end of 1955, the fight for Algerian independence has been ongoing for almost a year now. The delegates are all fighting to free Algeria from colonial rule. Therefore, members of the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN), Algeria's leading nationalist group, are battling against the French and Algerian loyalists who are in favor of a French Algeria. Brutal conflicts have been emerging where FLN leaders are targets. As the fight for independence continues, it is important that delegates strategize and work cooperatively to gain greater support for independence efforts and outsmart the French army. Along with this war, the committee will also have to resolve internal issues between groups such as Algeria loyalists and Algerian nationalists and specifically combat the inequalities Algerian Muslims are facing.

There will be 21 delegates that have different backgrounds and associations with the FLN and Algeria in general. These delegates will have to work to develop strategies and ways to fight the French and evaluate independence propaganda both domestically as well as internationally to gain attention and greater support from foreign powers that can further the nationalist agenda. Delegates must work together with the goal of achieving independence from France while also establishing a new independent Algeria that

is more just and equitable for its diverse citizens. Of the many tensions that Algeria faces internally, one specific group, the pieds-noirs (European Algerians), have greater advantages economically, socially and politically compared to Algerian Muslims. If the committee can achieve independence, it is up to the delegates to collaborate so that the country can provide independence and rights for all its people. In addition, delegates have their own personal agendas that can they can try to achieve throughout committee with crisis notes and personal directives, keeping in mind that an independent Algeria will result in new leaders and decisions to be made.

Parliamentary Procedure

This committee will follow standard parliamentary procedure. Much of the time spent will be in moderated caucuses, but there will also be unmoderated caucuses as the committee sees necessary, motioned by delegates. The chair also has discretion to make final calls before voting on motions.

Delegate Biographies

Mostefa Ben Boulaïd

Boulaïd is considered the "Father of the Algerian Revolution." He played an important role in the Special Organization and was a founding member of Revolutionary Committee of Unity and Action. He is a figure that united many

people for the revolutionary cause and later became a member of the “Committee of the Six” – the insurgent leaders.

Larbi Ben M'hidi

M'hidi is a leader of War of Independence and one of the six founding members of FLN. He is a strong advocate of a sovereign Algerian state and has been leading various revolts within the state.

Ahmed Ben Bella

Bella is Algerian Socialist and Revolutionary, one of six founding members of FLN. Earlier, he founded an underground organization that was trying to overcome the colonial rule, but has begun participating in the Revolutionary Committee of Unity and Action.

Frantz Fanon

Fanon is a psychiatrist, philosopher and revolutionary. He is a political radical studying and disseminating information on the psychological ramifications of the fight for independence. He has been working on various publications on colonialism and has become active in the FLN.

Rabah Bitat

Bitat is one of six founding members of FLN. He is an Algerian nationalist activist and politician, a figure with great leadership qualities; he also holds close ties with Ahmed Ben Bella.

Mohamed Boudiaf

Boudiaf was one of six founding members of FLN. He was heavily involved in war organization and planning in terms of funds, forces and arms. Having recently survived an assassination attempt, he has been involved in working from Cairo in exile towards independence.

Houari Boumediène

Boumediène was educated in the Islamic Institute in Constantine. He has recently joined the FLN and the cause by serving as an officer during the war, working to reach higher ranks in the army.

Mourad Didouche

Didouche's worked for the Algerian Assembly and organized municipal elections. He then founded and is an active member of the Special Organization. He has worked in covert movements and was heavily involved in the writing of the Declaration.

Hocine Aït Ahmed

Ahmed is one of six founding members of FLN. He is an Algerian politician and is seen as one of the most prominent leaders of the FLN, working hard to politically oppose French rule in Algeria.

Messali Hadj

Hadj is an Algerian nationalist politician and has called for an autonomous republic (along with Ferhat Abbas). Though he was active in the FLN, he began creating organizations outside the FLN. Recently, he established the Mouvement National Algerien (MNA), which has been causing tensions among other members of the FLN.

Djamila Bouhired

Bouhired is an Algerian militant and nationalist. She has been actively opposing French rule since her time in college. She has been working as a liaison officer of the FLN under commander Saadi Yacef.

Mohamed Khider

Khider is one of six founding members of FLN and was also active in other organizations prior. Earlier he was a member of the French National Assembly,

representing the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties. He has recently begun to represent the FLN externally.

Zohra Drif

Drif is a student in Faculty of Law at the University of Algiers and has been gaining greater interest in activities related to the opposition movement.

Ferhat Abbas

Abbas is an Algerian politician, who worked with Messali Hadj to achieve an autonomous republic, opposed to violence (tried to mediate between French and Algeria). He spearheaded the Manifesto of the Algerian People and formed a nationalist political party, trying to focus on a different approach with French cooperation.

Belkacem Radjef

Radief has been very active in the fight for independence from the start. He is a part of various organizations (Etoile-Nord Africaine, Parti du Peuple Algerien, etc. and has recently been involved in the merge of the various organizations that have been absorbed into the FLN.

Benyoucef Ben Khedda

Khedda is an Algerian politician, serving as general secretary to central committee of the PPA-MTLD and adviser to Abane Ramdane. He has also dealt with arrests and opposition from the French.

Albert Camus

Camus is a French-Algerian philosopher, author, and journalist. He was born to a Pied-Noir family. He also found the Revolutionary Union Movement and was against the involvement of civilians on both ends.

Djamila Boupacha

Boupacha is a militant from the FLN and is currently working as a trainee at Beni Messous Hospital.

Gisèle Halimi

Halimi is a French lawyer, feminist activist and essayist. She is currently a practicing lawyer.

Krim Belkacem

Belkacem is an Algerian revolutionary fighter and politician, involved with the PPA-MTLD paramilitary organization. He has been threatened to be sentenced by death, but has been heavily involved in the Organisation Speciale.

Abane Ramdane

Ramdane is an Algerian political activist and revolutionary. He has been an important revolutionist whose ideology is associated with Frantz Fanon.

Topic A: Fighting for Independence

Introduction

After years of oppression, the time has come for the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) to take a stand. Many forces within both Algeria and France battle: some are pro-independence, and others are staunchly against it. In the midst of this time of revolt and chaos, you – the rebels at the forefront of this movement – must shape the revolution that is imminent.

Physical conflict between the French and Algerians has recently come to a head. In the past few months, we have seen unprecedented unrest. From protests-turned-massacres to the targeting of civilians, the violence inside Algeria is reaching new heights every day.

It is up to you to bring about the independence that Algerians crave. This means that you must consider a variety of factors: finding personnel willing to fight, attaining the resources that FLN forces require, guiding the ideology of this movement, and planning a revolution of this scale. You must also consider the realities of operating in Algeria, where Ferhat Abbas's Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto (UDMA), the ulema, and the Algerian Communist Party (PCA) are all forces to be reckoned with. You must sort through all these obstacles to make the FLN as strong as it can be to make a stand for independence. To start, be sure to familiarize yourself with the context provided in this background guide.

History and Background Information

Overview and Pre-Colonization

Algeria is a predominantly Muslim country in North Africa that extends from the Mediterranean coast, along which most of its people live, to the Saharan desert, which constitutes the majority of the country's area.¹

The territory that now comprises Algeria was ruled by various Arab-Berber dynasties from the 8th to the 16th century, when it became part of the Ottoman Empire² as the Regency of Algiers. As an Ottoman territory, the Regency of Algiers acted as a major hub for piracy and the Barbary slave market.³ After the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the territory enjoyed a brief period of independence that ended with France's conquest in 1830.⁴ The French created the boundaries of what we know today to be modern Algeria.⁵

Colonization

In 1827, the dey (a ruling figure chosen by the people) of Algeria struck the French consul with a flywhisk after a disagreement. The French retaliated, using this slight against a French diplomat as the basis of a naval blockade that lasted three years. When the blockade failed, the French attempted to negotiate with the dey. The dey, not taking the negotiation attempts well, directed cannon fire towards the blockade ships. This aggression, compounded with France's political goals in

¹ "Algeria." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, Web. 07 Oct. 2016.

² Ibid

³ Davis, Robert. "Europe Under Attack." *History*. BBC, 17 Feb. 2011. Web. 08 Oct. 2016.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ "Algeria." *Algeria Map / Geography of Algeria / Map of Algeria*. World Atlas, 12 July 2016. Web. 05 Oct. 2016.

the region, led the French to invade Algeria in 1830 using a plan originally created by Napoleon in 1808. By June of 1830, the dey had capitulated and fled Algeria with his family.⁶

By 1834, the French had officially annexed Algeria as a military colony. European immigrants mostly came from France, lured to Algeria by subsidized land. The number of European immigrants also grew quickly, from 350,000 in the 1880's, to 700,000 just fifty years later.⁷ French soldiers usurped land from Algerian farmers and gave it to these immigrants, known as *pieds noirs*, for free.⁸ These displaced Algerians were forced to move out of fertile plains and into the mountains.⁹ The *pieds noirs* accumulated power and wealth quickly in Algeria, and the social hierarchy of Algeria would change with this new state of affairs.

Governance

European colonization was not passively accepted by Algerians. From 1832 to 1847, the French faced significant opposition from Abd al Qadir, an Algerian military and religious leader¹⁰ who united various tribes to fight the French occupation. Al Qadir's opposition led the French to bring over a third of its army strength to Algeria to wage all-out war. Once Al Qadir was defeated, resistance movements shrunk in scale and intensity.¹¹

Until the 1870s, Algeria operated as a military administration for the most part. Except for *pieds-noirs*, Algerians were subject to the rule of military officers. These officers often had knowledge of local issues and complaints, and no financial interests in Algeria, making them more sympathetic to the indigenous population of Algeria than the *pieds-noir* population.¹² During these years, *pieds-noirs* amassed more and more land, leaving the Muslim population lacking in resources. Muslims were also only declared French subjects and thus did not receive the benefits of citizenship. Christian French education also replaced that of Muslim religious education.¹³ This led to building resentment among the oppressed Algerians.

In 1871, the Kabyle Revolt, the largest uprising since the death of Abd Al-Qadir, broke out.¹⁴ The revolt was quashed by French forces, and subsequently, more Algerian land was taken by the French. After the French took advantage of loopholes in policies designed to protect tribal lands, many poor Algerians were forced to move to peripheral lands.¹⁵ According to estimates, the population of Algeria fell by a third between 1830 and 1870 as a result of warfare, disease, and starvation.¹⁶ The outlook for the Algerians was bleak, but they would continue to fight back.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Renkveren, Deniz. "How French Colonization Shaped Algeria's Future." *DailySabah*. Daily Sabah Feature, 17 June 2016. Web. 07 Oct. 2016.

⁹ "French Algeria 1830-1962 - The Algerian Story." *French Algeria 1830-1962 - The Algerian Story*. Google, Web. 08 Oct. 2016.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Emerit, Marcel. "Abdelkader." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, Web. 10 July 2016.

¹² Brown, L. Carl. "Algeria - History." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, Web. 10 July 2016.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ "France Algeria Revolt 1871." *On War*. Web. 10 July 2016.

¹⁵ Evans, Martin. "French Resistance and the Algerian War." *History Today*. N.p., 7 July 1991. Web. 10 July 2016.

¹⁶ Modern Muslim Societies. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Reference, 2011. Print.

Recent Altercations

Massacre of Sétif and Toussaint Rouge

On May 8th, 1945, while most people around the world saw the end of World War II, the town of Setif became one of the first battlegrounds of the Algerian war for independence. Many of the French soldiers who had fought in WWII had actually been citizens of Algeria, making the end of WWII a joyous day for Algerians in particular. After celebrating Algerians flew the Algerian flag as a symbol of freedom, French soldiers cracked down – by the end of the day, multiple demonstrators were dead and tensions between the French and Algerians were at a high.

Those high tensions manifested in five days of riots, during which 103 French colonists were killed by Algerians. French retribution was swift. Approximately 15,000 Algerians were killed by French soldiers in what became known as the Massacre of Setif.¹⁷ While many pinpoint Toussaint Rouge (“Red All Saints’ Day”), a series of attacks on French military installation over two hours, as the beginning of the Algerian war for independence, the roots of deep distrust between the Algerians and French can be traced to the Massacre of Setif.

FLN’s Progress Militarily

Solidification of the FLN

Development of the FLN can be traced to the formation of Algerian political groups after the end of the First World War. Previously prohibited by the French government, these groups varied widely in their perspectives on Algerian independence, from an inclination towards violence to a desire to integrate religious aspects into an future independent Algeria.

¹⁷ Calçada, Miquel. "Analysis of the Algerian War of Independence: Les Événements, a Lost Opportunity for Peace." Web. 15 Aug. 2016.

Three primary organizations rose to eminence by the onset of the Algerian War: the MLTD ("Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties") and the UDMA ("Democratic Union of Algerian Manifest") - both nationalist political groups - and the Ulama (a religious group). In an effort to more quickly achieve independence, the three strove to align their actions and resources.¹⁸

Upon stabilization, the FLN was also comprised of several constituent bodies. The ALN ("Army of National Liberation") served as the FLN's military arm, while the CRUA ("Revolutionary Committee of Unity and Action") acted as the FLN's political leadership. CRUA later became the basis for the GPRA, the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic.¹⁹

In its quest for wartime unity, however, the FLN often dispensed with a strict ideological framework on which to base its actions. Besides a shared belief in the necessity of violence, the FLN relied on the principle of a singular Algerian identity to rally Algerian denizens to its cause.²⁰

The Toussaint Rouge

Considered by most to be the opening barrages of the war, the Toussaint Rouge occurred on November 1st, 1954. Rather than one event, the Toussaint Rouge was a series of attacks on French military installations. From midnight to 2 AM, FLN affiliates made over thirty independent attacks on police and military bases across Algeria, primarily concentrated in the Aures and Kabylie regions. Casualties included

¹⁸ Davis, Mallory. "The FLN's Strategy for Gaining and Independent Algeria, 1954-1962." Diss. U of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2007. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Summer 2007. Web. 15 Aug. 2016.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

seven French military members and two French pied noirs.²¹

In the aftermath of the attacks, the French government responded poorly. On November 1, 1954, FLN members carried out attacks and bombings against thirty French police and military targets. Those attacks resulted in seven deaths, and led to the dispatch of three companies of French soldiers to Algeria. Toussaint Rouge also had political implications for France. It shook the already weak Fourth French Republic, and led to the instatement of Charles de Gaulle as the new President of France. Despite its importance as the marker of the beginning of the war and the subsequent political reaction is elicited, Toussaint Rouge received little attention in the French press.²²

Four days after the event, French foreign minister Francois Mitterand proclaimed that, "The only negotiation is war."²³ He later deployed six hundred soldiers to Algeria, including three companies of paratroopers. French political leaders, including the President of the French Council of Ministers, believed that Algeria was a definitive and "irrevocable" part of the French Republic.²⁴ A year after the attacks, the French military presence in Algeria had risen from 56,000 to 83,000 personnel.

Meanwhile, public reaction to the Toussaint Rouge was limited in France. French citizens primarily knew of the

attacks through French political reactions, though the attacks did reach the headlines of dailies such as *Le Monde* and *Le Journal*. In Algeria, proponents of the status quo largely denounced the attacks, while those who sought political and economic change lauded the assaults, including leaders of the MTLD and UDMA. In the short-run, the attacks incited a divide between those who sought a militant approach to Algerian independence and those who pined for a more diplomatic resolution.²⁵

War Tactics

FLN Strategies

Over the course of the war, the FLN and the French military largely relied on two opposing, if complementary, strategies. While the FLN focused on guerrilla warfare, the French military focused on counter-insurgency tactics to combat the FLN's actions. The FLN engaged in hit-and-run tactics, sometimes brutally. Infrastructure, including communication and transportation lines, was heavily assaulted. Agricultural areas were not spared. Unfortunately, civilians were major casualties of such tactics, as the FLN sought to disperse any internal Algerian dissent to independence as well. Torture was not uncommon, nor was kidnapping.²⁶

French Strategies

French tactics were more traditional, if equally indiscriminate. The French military applied a policy of collective responsibility to Algerian villages found to be harboring or fostering FLN affiliates. Such areas would be attacked by ground or

²¹ "The Algerian Civil War, 1954-1962: Why Such a Bitter Conflict?" University of San Francisco, 23 Apr. 2006. Web. 14 Aug. 2016.

²² "Algerian War." *Algerian War Reading*. UCSF, Web. 15 Aug. 2016.

²³ Droz, Bernard, and Evelyne Lever. *Histoire De La Guerre D'Algérie: 1954-1962*. Paris: Éditions Du Seuil, 1982. Web. 13 Aug 2016.

²⁴ L'Afrique française : bulletin mensuel du Comité l'Afrique française et du Comité du Maroc, volumes 61-65, p. 10. Comité du Maroc, Comité de l'Afrique française, 1957. Web. 14 Aug 2016.

²⁵ Droz, Bernard, and Evelyne Lever. *Histoire De La Guerre D'Algérie: 1954-1962*. Paris: Éditions Du Seuil, 1982. Web. 13 Aug 2016.

²⁶ Leulliette, Pierre. *St. Michael and the Dragon; Memoirs of a Paratrooper*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964. Web. 12 Aug 2016.

air forces²⁷. From a technological perspective, the French military fielded the upper hand as well, launching the full brunt of its aerial and naval forces into the conflict. Compounding its advantage, the French military enticed local Algerian volunteers to aid the military - these individuals became known as the infamously persecuted *harkis*. By the end of the war, as such beleaguered tactics began to fail, the French military shifted to surgically target FLN strongholds.²⁸

War Propaganda

French Creating Divisiveness

It was essential for leaders who were part of various opposition groups, to come together - just as they began to do in 1956 at the Soummam River, where they created the Committee National pour la Révolution Algérienne.²⁹ Many began to notice how the independence efforts in Morocco and Tunisia were being responded to differently. In Algeria, the French attempted to keep separation between Algerians working with other Algerians and their supporters in different countries. This was done through border control and monitoring, such as through the establishment of the “Morice Line.”³⁰ The Morice Line was meant to prevent the flow of FLN rebels from coming into Algeria from countries such as Tunisia and Morocco, resulting in many difficulties for guerillas to travel and communicate with one another.

²⁷ Alexander, Martin S. Special Issue on France and the Algerian War: 1954-62 ; Strategy, Operations and Diplomacy. Ilford, Essex: Cass, 2002. Web. 14 Aug 2016.

²⁸ Pike, John. "Algerian National Liberation (1954-1962)." Globalsecurity.org. Global Security, 7 Nov. 2011. Web. 15 Aug. 2016.

²⁹ Jones, Jim. "Algerian Independence." *Algerian Independence*. Westchester University, 2013. Web. 13 Aug. 2016.

³⁰ Ibid

The French were being strategic and sought to create a division between “rebel movement between the fighters within Algeria, called the ALN (for *Armée de la Libération Nationale*), and the external representatives of the FLN (*Front pour la Libération Nationale*).”³¹ Much of the external work was being done outside of Algeria as well, specifically through heavy involvement from rebels based in Tunisia.

International Attention

In addition to support from Algerian rebels based in other countries, leaders from other countries were also expressing their disagreements with French rule as well. An important international actor includes Egypt. Gamel Abdel Nasser, leader of Egypt, became a strong figure in Algeria’s attempt for independence.³² Nasser’s voice was able to attract many people’s solidarity since the message and struggle that Algerians were facing were not foreign to other Arab nations that also resented colonial rule.

This message resonated with many of the disheartened, frustrated and unjustly treated colonized in other countries or those who had recently been freed from colonization. Through the Radio Cairo, which the FLN was able to use due to Nasser’s support, they reached out to the Arab community. They spoke to many Algerian Muslims, championing “a sovereign, democratic and socialist state in accordance with the principles of Islam.”³³ This appealed greatly to various groups in Algerian society, including peasants, the intellectuals and the ulema.³⁴

³¹ Ibid

³² Ahmed, Nazeer, Prof. Dr. "The War of Algeria's Independence – 1954-62." *History of Islam*. An Encyclopedia of Islamic History, 30 Dec. 2009. Web. 14 Aug. 2016.

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid

Additionally, other factors which could prove to benefit the FLN would be exhaustion and leftover mess French has had to deal with since its defeat with other colonies, such as in Indochina.³⁵ This could also prove to be a challenge seeing how the French military and government would execute harsh military strategies and avoid political negotiation. However, the FLN and its supporting rebels will not entertain the idea of negotiation – therefore, they were working hard to attract greater support from neighboring countries. Such countries can contribute financially, militarily or politically by advocating for Algerian independence.

Various Contributions

Role of women

Several efforts were also made outside of traditional guerilla fights and military personnel. A huge contribution has also been coming from women, specifically involved with the terrorist cells. Many women have made familial sacrifices in order to serve the FLN. The terrorist cells, located in big cities, were heavily monitored by police, but women could get past these officers more easily and therefore were able to execute planned military attacks.³⁶ Women have begun planting bombs to target civilians – doing so in the name of nationalism. They would often go to large public areas, carrying a bomb with them to leave there.³⁷

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ McNair, Ronald E. *The FLN's Strategy for Gaining an Independent Algeria, 1954-1962* Mallory Davis University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Ronald E. McNair Program, Summer 2007 Mentor: Dr. Bruce Fetter, Department of History Introduction (n.d.): n. pag. Mallory Davis, 2007. Web. 15 Aug. 2016.

³⁷ Ibid

Recruitment

FLN was also able to use French counterterrorism as propaganda, proving the injustices Algerians have been facing. The organization had been distributing materials including pamphlets to the public. These pamphlets even included information such as names of those “who had been killed.”³⁸ This effort has also been effective with Algerians in France, who were not exempt from French brutality. Their support was also necessary as a war tactic in order to gain more financial power and a greater voice for their cause. As French counterterrorism tactics have been becoming more brutal, it has actually been increasing favorability and leading to greater number of people whom the FLN can recruit.³⁹ It is necessary for FLN to continue to use unforeseen recruitment strategies in order to increase their support and numbers.

Questions the Committee Must Address

1. What tactics and strategies must be used in the war?
2. How to gain greater support and attention both domestically and internationally to the independence cause
3. Outside of war, what other initiatives can be taken to achieve independence?
4. What threats and disadvantages (financially, militarily, politically) must the FLN overcome in order to win the war?
5. How must the FLN deal with Algerian loyalists?

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ibid

Concluding Remarks

The fight for independence has taken off. After many decades of oppressive treatment from the French, Algerians have been able to unite in their relentlessness to free themselves of this parasitic relationship. In order to ensure FLN's victory against the colonial power, effort must continue to be made not only by rebels on the battlefield, but by other civilians and powerful leaders of other Arab nations as well. Make use of all resources available to you, and try to think outside of the box. The FLN is ready to continue to do whatever it takes – however many lives necessary to sacrifice and difficult decisions to be made – to finally destroy the French government, its military, and drive all its power and influence out of Algeria.

Topic B: Maintaining Internal Cohesion

Introduction

We are now a year deep into the Algerian war for independence, and the country is understandably seeing the effects of the conflict. Both sides have relied upon casualty-heavy guerilla style warfare, and rumors of torture abound for both sides.

Within the country, the conflict has manifested itself as a civil war. Loyalists who want to remain a part of France stand in contention with nationalist Algerians fighting for independence. As one France's longest-held territories, Algeria has within its borders many *pieds-noirs* (European immigrants), as well as its own indigenous Muslim population. The vast majority of this Muslim population is weary of the discriminatory policies of the French. Among these are laws curtailing the ability of Algerians to vote, the imposition of higher taxes on Muslims than Europeans, and the preclusion of substantial Muslim representation in government.

Years of occupation have taken their toll on the Muslim population of Algeria. Because *pieds-noirs* control tax expenditure, Algerian villages and rural areas receive very little benefit from tax revenue. In addition, *pieds-noir* control of national funds has resulted in the deterioration of the Algerian educational system. In short, the population of Algerians now standing against the French are undereducated and impoverished relative to their *pieds-noir* counterparts.⁴⁰

It is in this climate of oppression and disadvantage that the FLN must maintain internal cohesion. Domestic threats (economic collapse and civil war) as well as

⁴⁰ Gascoigne, Bamber. "History of Algeria" HistoryWorld. From 2001, ongoing.

external threats (Organisation de l'armée secrete and French military campaigns) must be effectively dealt with in order for the FLN to achieve success. The attacks carried out on Toussaint Rouge that started this war are only the beginning of the FLN's mission to fight for the rights withheld from Algerians for so long. In this time of uncertainty, the FLN must act with prudence: making sure that its actions benefit Algerians, maintaining its reputation among both *pied-noirs* and native Algerians, and ultimately bringing about the future that it wants for Algeria.

History and Background Information

Groups within Algeria

During WWI and WWII, many Algerians fought on the side of the French. After these wars, many of these men continued their association with the French army. Later, when the war for independence began, Muslim Algerian loyalists serving in the French army were known as *Harkis*. The reasons that *Harkis* had for fighting on the side of the French varied: some were just trying to provide for their families, while others disagreed with the FLN's nationalistic stance or had defected from the FLN.⁴¹ It is estimated that throughout the war, 250,000 Algerian auxiliaries, 50,000 soldiers, 120,000 volunteers and 30,000 officials worked on the side of the French.⁴²

In addition to the *harkis*, France also had support from the *pied-noir* population. *Pied-noir* is a slang term that refers to a person of European (typically French) origin living in Algeria. Many Muslim Algerians resented the *pied-noirs* for the French

oppression that they represented. Indeed, the unfairness of the disparity between *pied-noirs* and indigenous Algerians was one of the driving forces of the revolution. In addition, despite being significantly poorer than the *pied noir* population, Muslim Algerians ended up paying the majority of taxes. In 1909, Algerian Muslims "produced 20 percent of Algeria's income, but paid 70 percent of direct taxes and 45 percent of the total taxes collected."⁴³ Even in *pied-noirs* attempts at negotiation, Muslim Algerians were severely disadvantaged. In reform effort in 1947, the vote of a *pied-noir* counted seven times more than that of an indigenous Algerian.⁴⁴ Thus, even *pied-noir* attempts at reconciliation propagated the inequality that had marked Anglo-Algerian relations since the 1830's.

It is worth noting that not all *pieds-noirs* were Frenchmen of Christian origin – there were Jews amongst them as well. Despite occasional bursts of anti-Semitism, European Jews were well integrated into *pied noir* society, and even held government positions. Historically, *pieds noirs* always fought on the side of the French, except for an instance in 1870 when they replaced the military government with a *pied noir* civilian administration. At this time, the *pieds noir* government granted full French citizenship to Algerian Jews, further cementing discrimination against Algerian Muslims.⁴⁵

Beginnings of resistance

In the 1920's and 1930's, Algeria saw the development of multiple nationalist movements, all with slightly different agendas and goals. The first movement,

⁴¹ Khettab, Djamila. "Q&A: What Really Happened to Algeria's Harkis." *Al Jazeera English*. N.p., 22 Aug. 2015. Web. 12 July 2016.

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ "Military." Algerian National Liberation (1954-1962).. Web. 12 July 2016.

⁴⁴ "The History of the Pied-Noirs." Algeria.com. Web. 12 July 2016.

⁴⁵ Benjamin, Roger. (2003) *Renoir and Algeria*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003, p. 25.

called Young Algerians, was an assimilationist movement made up of Algerians who had received a French education and were living in the richer French areas of Algeria. This movement championed a gradual approach, and was willing to form a union with France if it would afford them the rights of Frenchmen.

The next group, the Association of Algerian Muslim 'Ulamā', focused not on political reform, but on religious revitalization. The actions of this group led to a stronger sense of both Muslim identity and Algerian identity amongst the indigenous population of Algeria.

The third group, the most radical of the three, preached "nationalism without nuance".⁴⁶ Led by Ahmed Messali Hadj, this group's strong nationalistic stance left little room for compromise with the French. The FLN represented the continuation of this third group, and over time, attracted supporters from the other two groups as well.⁴⁷

Internal Economic Inequalities

Over a century of colonial oppression has fostered an economic quandary - if not an economic malaise - of eviscerating disparities between the indigenous Algerian Muslim population and the European-descended *pieds-noirs*. Bound by grave resource deficiencies and inadequate technical capacities, indigenous Algerian Muslims languish in rural areas. Meanwhile, the *pieds-noirs* relish an existence as scions of preceding century's privileged *colons*. The strife of the impending civil war is inevitable.

Even today, the economic schisms that led to the war still linger. As argued by Professor Miriam R. Lowi of San Jose State

⁴⁶ Brown, L. Carl. "Algeria - History." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, Web. 10 July 2016.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*

University, the economic tumult of contemporary Algeria can be traced to the violence of the civil war, which furnished a veil for the "perpetuation and exacerbation of unhealthy political and economic arrangements [prior to the war]." Such reverberations affirm that the roots of the Algerian Civil War lie not only in the oppression of colonial rule, but significantly in the patrimonial economic system that engendered mistrust among and poverty for millions of Algerians.⁴⁸

Economic status of the pieds-noirs

From the moment of their arrival, the *pieds-noirs* wielded disproportionate economic influence in Algeria. Establishing large and expansive estates known as the *grande colons*, the *pieds-noirs* controlled almost thirty percent of all arable and irrigable land while yielding more than sixty percent of agricultural output and exports. By the mid-twentieth century, such influence would lead to a five to one income imbalance between them and the indigenous Algerian Muslims.⁴⁹

In almost every industry, *pieds-noirs* operations ran in sync with European markets. While France provided capital and consumer goods, the grand colons supplied wine, citrus, olives, and legumes. The colons' manufacturing and mining industries produced raw materials for Europe as well, cultivating a dense export trade over which the *pieds-noirs* again exerted the vast majority of control.

Even in taxation, the *pieds-noirs* enjoyed policies that permitted the perpetuation of their economic influence.

⁴⁸ Watkins, Thayer. "The Economy and Economic History of Algeria." San Jose State University Department of Economics. San Jose State University, n.d. Web. 11 July 2016.

⁴⁹ Kimmelman, Michael. "Footprints of Pieds-Noirs Reach Deep Into France." *New York Times*. *New York Times*, 5 Mar. 2009. Web. 11 July 2016.

Not only were colons were exempted from the taxes imposed on Muslims, but colons directed the dispensation of tax revenue. The *pieds-noirs'* urban domiciles were thus lavished by ornate structures and vegetation, while Algerian villages and rural areas were neglected to dereliction.⁵⁰

Of course, the economic fate of the *pieds-noirs* began to diverge in the years leading up to the civil war. While many remained in the grand colons of old, a handful arose from peasant backgrounds and limited holdings. Upon their return to France, most *pieds-noirs* and their descendants were reduced to the lower class as industrial workers or shop owners, having had little compensation from the French government for goods and capital lost during the war.⁵¹

Economic status of Algerian Muslims

During its 130 years of colonization, rural Algeria labored arduously to survive. Already lacking control of the country's prime economic industries, Algerian Muslims languished under conditions that precluded even the slightest chance of economic advancement.

During the occupation, the colonial regime remanded funding for the Muslim religious schools that furnished youth with religious and financial literacy. The regime further confiscated the *habus* lands that comprised the religious schools' income. Tax revenue was siphoned away from Muslim education even as the Muslim population outnumbered that of Europeans. In the late nineteenth century, less than five percent of Algerian children had any schooling. By the start of the civil war, conditions had yet to be ameliorated: only

twenty percent of Muslim boys and six percent of Muslim girls had received a formal education.

Algerian Muslims who did have the privilege of schooling were often directed to French schools that diminished Arabic studies and produced a generation of Algerian Muslims loyal to French cultural perspectives. This phenomenon only worsened the economic divides between the Algerian Muslims and the *pieds-noirs*, as it formed a gaping communication vacuum between the two communities.⁵²

The Algerian Muslims who did manage to seek out an existence often did so in agriculture. However, rural agriculture was primarily subsistence-based. As such, rural Algerian farms needed to be able to harvest surpluses to prepare for years when rainfall was at a nadir. Combined with an unpredictable climate and grand colons who obstructed infrastructure development in rural areas, Algerian farms were pummeled by starvation and pestilence.⁵³

Moreover, the Muslim population was subject to voracious taxation. By the early twentieth century, Muslims composed 90% of the population and produced 20% of its income, yet paid 70% of direct taxes. Many of these taxes were exclusive to Muslims, raising yet another barrier to economic stability.⁵⁴

In fact, economic conditions deteriorated to the point that a small group of Algerian Muslims, called *harkis*, were forced to serve the French during the war. As living standards declined during the war, these Algerians petitioned the French military for employment so as to sustain their loved ones.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Horne, Alistair. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962*. New York: Viking, 1978. Print.

⁵¹ Khettab, Djamila Ould. "What Really Happened to Algeria's Harkis." *Al Jazeera*. *Al Jazeera*, 22 Aug. 2015. Web. 11 July 2016.

⁵² *Ibid*

⁵³ Huré, Robert. *L'Armée D'Afrique: 1830-1962*. Paris: Charles-Lavauzelle, 1977. Print.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ *Ibid*

Altogether, Algerian Muslims were relegated to a devastating cycle of educational disparities and economic inequities that formulated the vast disparities leading up to the Algerian War.

Political Injustices

The history and economic disparities among the rivaling groups in Algeria have engendered an angry, frustrated, yet determined population. Although economic differences acted as a catalyst for many Algerian Muslims to recognize their role in the war effort, lack of political opportunities also helped people realize the need for greater ownership of Algeria and consolidation of power in the hands of the native people.

Political parties

Various parties were created over time to overcome political inequalities. Hadj, known for establishing the Star of North Africa, involved the working class in Algeria and well-educated Parisians.⁵⁶ Later he also created the Algerian People's Party, but over time much of this work had to be done covertly. Ferhat Abbas also formed another party that attempted to find middle ground called the Friends of the Manifesto and of Liberty, which later became the Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto.⁵⁷

The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties made impressive gains in the late 1940's, threatening French leaders. However, the colonials consistently knew a way to beat the system, but rigging numbers and finding ways to show that greater popularity resided with them instead. Combining the MTLD and UDMA, 7 seats

were given, but other "government-approved independents"⁵⁸ received fifty-five seats – furthering proving that political negotiations would not be sufficient in attaining true control the native Algerians desired.

Current Political Climate

1951 saw the conglomeration of MTLD, UDMA, the Algerian Communist Party, and the Society of 'Ulema. However, approaches to independence began to differ, making the union of these groups short lived. People began to support either Hadj, were centrists (wanting to negotiate with the French), or aligned with the militant group.⁵⁹

The unjust political system signaled efforts by Ben Bella, who established the CRUA and along with other independence leaders, they organized a system of military regions. This group ultimately became the FLN, hoping to change the course of Algeria's political trajectory. Their efforts and the native population's underlying resentment induced the awakening of sleeping revolutionaries.

Involvement in the War Effort

The force that has led to increased involvement of Muslims has proven to be powerful. Many strong messages have come from the FLN stationed in Cairo, Egypt – influenced by the nationalist rhetoric echoing under Nasser's leadership.⁶⁰ These messages reached out to parts of the population that have all been attempting to secure independence, power, economic security, or have other goals that militant and nationalist Algerian natives claim can be achieved through decolonization. However,

⁵⁶ Algeria - Political Parties." *Encyclopedia of Nations*. Nations Encyclopedia, 2016. Web. 9 July 2016.

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ Ibid

solidarity and unification among these various groups has guided the independence. Evident through the poor treatment Muslims were facing by the colonizers, the Arab nationalist movement and the domino effect thereafter brought about involvement from Muslims in a variety of forms.

In addition to establishing a systematic procedure to fund and provide for the war in materials and economic ways, other groups and Algerian Muslims are supporting the war in their own capacities outside the military. They have begun establishing “underground social, judicial, and civil organizations”⁶¹ that can operate independently despite French opposition. Although these developments are in the early stages, the leaders of the revolution and their people are aiming to not only militarily destroy their enemies, but also govern their supporters and the state through their own system and policies.

Questions the Committee Must Address

1. How have the inequalities among these various groups resulted in the stratification of Algerian society?
2. How can the existing situation improve that can lead to greater support for the FLN and independence movement?
3. What are some of the ways to give greater political and social rights to groups that have been deprived?
4. What are some of the ways the economic and financial disadvantages of groups can be overcome?
5. Trying to create a more just society that can productively help in the independence movement

⁶¹ Ibid

Concluding Remarks

The history of native Algerians has been grueling and inequitable. The oppression of Algerian Muslims and cruel treatment by groups just as the harkis and pied-noirs has left extreme discrepancies. These differences have come in the form of unequal economic status and earnings, along with little or disproportionate political rights and representation. Various groups have made an effort over time to improve these horrific conditions, however disagreement has also occurred. It is time the FLN and its supporting organizations take a stand to once and for all create an Algeria that can eradicate these injustices.