

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 57/13

ALGERIA

Statement by Mr. Roch Pinard, Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, in the First Political Committee of a United Nations General Assembly, New York on February 8, 1957.

The Canadian Delegation has followed with great interest the speeches made on the question of Algeria in this committee. We are still a little doubtful of the wisdom of discussing a question which under the Charter falls so clearly within the domestic jurisdiction of a member state, and which has been so clearly and logically documented by the distinguished Foreign Minister of France, but we are glad that the Delegation of France has accepted the opinion of the majority and has agreed to present its views on the problem. I say that I am glad of it because the presence of France in this committee is of great importance to the work of the United Nations, and the French case needs to be presented to the world. I think the decision of the Delegation of France has been amply justified because the lucid speech of Mr. Pineau has placed in perspective what France has accomplished in Algeria and what it proposes to do in the future.

I shall not, however, Mr. Chairman, attempt to go in detail into the background of this question, since it has been presented from both points of view with great thoroughness. It is a problem of immense complexity on which we in this committee could hardly be expected to produce a solution satisfactory to everyone, even if we were competent to do so.

My Delegation has weighed carefully the evidence of the French Government. It seems to us that the latter is aware of the need to relate its policies to the necessities of a changing world and that it has embarked in a direction which will result in a state of affairs in Algeria that should satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the two main elements in the population. Such a relationship cannot be altered overnight without the danger of bringing down the whole structure which has so much of the constructive in its past.