

achieved its best triumphs at the time its rule was established over nearly the whole Algerian province. But the French army undertook the pacification of the territory; and with larger and better-trained forces, soon regained the province and reduced FLN arms to silence. The rebel troops were pushed back into the mountains or beyond the borders, into Tunisia or Morocco. Thenceforth, only guerilla warfare and terrorism were possible. The French army never seemed to have the situation better in hand than at the time of the negotiations and the cease-fire.

Military setbacks and semi-victories were, however, more than counterbalanced in the civilian field. The revolutionary movement, which numbered only a handful of nationalists at the beginning and had often to use force to recruit its followers and gain acceptance by the civilian population, gradually found its way among the masses, won them to its cause and became a national movement supported by the majority of the Moslem population. Concurrently, the FLN made important gains in the field of diplomacy. As could be expected, the Arab countries sided with the FLN, provided material assistance and recognized *de jure* its executive body, the "Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne" (Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic) as the only lawful government of Algeria. A number of Afro-Asian and Communist countries followed the same line and confirmed the FLN in its quasi-international statute. Diplomatic success was also achieved at the United Nations, which took up the matter as early as 1956, urging the parties concerned to work out a just and democratic solution, later recognizing the right of the Algerians to self-determination and continually urging the parties to negotiate.

### **A Unique Colonial Problem**

Nevertheless, the fighting lasted for more than seven years. One might wonder why France, which in the process of de-colonization, displayed so much liberalism, took so long to solve the Algerian crisis. At a time when Tunisia, Morocco and all the territories of the French Empire obtained their independence, why did the fight continue in Algeria? Why did successive French Governments between 1954 and 1958 remain powerless to solve this problem, which brought the fall of the Fourth Republic? Why did it take nearly four years for President de Gaulle to bring the conflict to an end? The reason is that the Algerian problem was unique in its character and did not include any of the elements of the standard colonial problem. No other territory had ever been so closely bound to the parent state or had ever produced so many unavoidable and direct repercussions on its very life. Never had so many natives considered themselves full citizens of the parent state. Above all, never had so many citizens of a parent state settled permanently in a territory; the European settlers constituted up to 12 per cent of the population of Algeria. The Europeans and assimilated Moslems, who had faith in the indissolubility of Franco-Algerian unity, rendered secession more difficult, if not impossible.

President de Gaulle was the only man who could perform the necessary act