

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ORIGINS OF ALGERIA'S AFRICAN POLICY

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The FLN had a long African experience which started shortly after the beginning of the Algerian war of liberation. The same colonial rule that had been imposed on Algerian people was imposed on most of the rest of the continent. This had created a common feeling among African peoples that they were against one enemy - «colonialism», and this led to a feeling of sympathy for the suffering of the Algerian people.

On the other hand the FLN had carried out a political battle abroad to gain massive support for the Algerian cause in International Organizations. Arab and African support were the first targets of the FLN's political battle.

In order to present the Algerian problem to African governments and peoples and particularly those of East Africa, which seemed to know little about the Algerian people and their movement against colonialism, the FLN, had to be involved in African politics. This involvement started in 1958 through attendance at African Conferences and through growing recognition of the GPRA, as well as the joining of the Casablanca group, and was in fact the origins of Algeria's African Policy.

A. THE FLN, GPRA AND AFRICAN CONFERENCES

France had always claimed that the Algerian problem was an internal affair. The FLN by contrast, claimed that the conflict was between two different countries. The recognition of the GPRA, from this point of view, by African states, which came in the late 1950s and early 1960s, was very important and helped undermining French claims that Algeria was a part of France.

Before that recognition, on the formation of the GPRA in 1958, the FLN had to struggle on the African political scene. With the creation of the GPRA, it was able to attend African conferences on an equal footing with other independent African states. The Accra Conference, April 1958¹⁾, which aimed to establish friendly links of co-operation and solidarity between African states, «accorded a non-voting status to the representatives

of the Algerian National Liberation Front»(2), but reaffirmed the right of the Algerian people to independence and self-determination(3). The signatory countries confirmed their determination to make every possible effort to help the Algerian people to achieve its independence.

The recognition by the Accra Conference of Independent African states, which «offered diplomatic and other support, including itinerant African delegations to publicize Algeria's cause»(4), was very significant:

in July 1958, the FLN called upon the African powers to help in pressing its case before the UN General Assembly. In late August several African delegations went to Europe and Latin America to inform both governments and peoples and lobby for support(5).

By the end of that year 1958 Algeria went back to Accra, represented this time by the GPRA not the FLN, to attend the All African People's Conference A.A.P.C.(6). In fact, it was the first opportunity for the GPRA to attend an African Conference, only three months after its actual birth. In a special resolution on imperialism and colonialism the AAPC declared its full support to all fighters for freedom in Africa. The Conference condemned all legislation which considered those who were fighting for their independence and freedom as ordinary criminals(7).

The Algerian problem stood high as a topic on the agenda of the conference(8), Frantz Fanon(9) was very active as Algeria's representative in the Conference. His other Algerian colleague was appointed to the Managing Committee of the Conference. That committee agreed to hold a meeting between the 6th and 9th October 1959 to discuss the Algerian problem.

In the following year, the GPRA was recognised as a full member of the Conference of Independent African States which met at Monrovia from 4th to 8th August 1959. But things were different at the Lagos Conference of January 1960. Seven independent African states refused to attend because the GPRA had not been invited. In fact the Casablanca group was the first to act. The foreign ministers of the group met in Accra a few days before the Lagos Conference. They considered their position in this light and announced that under the circumstances they found it impossible to attend(10). This showed how strongly African feeling supported the Algerians(11). It is important too to note that the issue of the Algerian invitation was discussed between President Sekou Toure of Guinea and President Tubman of Liberia, when both met in 1961, in an attempt by the Guinean President to secure Algeria an invitation. But in spite of that move the question remained unsolved(12). Indeed the Nigerians agreed to issue an eleventh-hour invitation to the GPRA, but the Conference never took place(13).

The Tunis Conference of the AAPC (25th--30th January, 1960) was an opportunity for the GPRA to put forward many propositions such as the

creation of solidarity funds and a Liberation Movement Co-ordinating Committee. The GPRA announced that it was ready to train African guerrilla fighters in the FLN camps, and within a few months holden Roberto of Angola, Fanon's friend, joined a training camp of the FLN.

The Third Conference of Independent African States (14th--24th June, 1960) held in Addis Ababa, was attended by thirteen African countries(14). The GPRA attended as a full member.

The Conference demanded the withdrawal of African troops from the French Army in Algeria(15).

The last Conference attended by the GPRA, before Algeria's independence was the Cairo Conference (25th--31st March, 1961) which expressed its total support for liberation movements.

Within the framework of these conferences the Algerian cause was presented on an international level for the first time, which helped the Algerian Revolution to get political support needed to take the problem to the UN.

B.AFRICAN RECOGNITION OF THE ALGERIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT

The FLN, and later the GPRA attendance at Conferences of Independent African States and the AAPC gained them political support. It introduced the Algerian cause to African peoples and governments and created a feeling of sympathy towards the struggle of the Algerian people.

However the GPRA was hoping for more than sympathy; it sought political recognition. In Accra (December 1958) the GPRA was recognised by Ghana, Guinea and Liberia(16). It is important to mention that the GPRA had recognised Guinea at its independence. The Guinean recognition of the GPRA came as a reply to that recognition, as Guinea's representative at the Monrovia Conference 1959 pointed out(17). This also applied to Togo and Congo as well. As for Somalia, Nigeria, Ethiopia and many other African countries, they maintained relations with the GPRA even though they did not recognise it officially. In general, the political war of the GPRA had an outstanding success. The new independent African states helped the GPRA to take the Algerian cause to the UN Assembly, and gave it a massive vote in the XV Session. This possibly was one of the factors leading to negotiations between the FLN and France shortly after the session, in Melun, from 25th--29th June, 1960.

The only problem of recognition which faced the GPRA came from the «Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest» (CEAO); an organisation established in 1958 under French domination(18).

The GPRA campaigned against the CEAO and the Franco-African Community promoted by General de Gaulle on the grounds that they were

instruments of French neo-colonialism(19). In his appeal in the UN, the GPRA's Foreign Minister, Mr. Krim Belkacem, mentioned the CEAO without naming it and queried its members over «their ambiguous standing with or against colonialism, with or against the right of the Algerian people for self-determination»(20). That possibly had an effect on the Abidjan meeting of the CEAO (24th-26th October, 1960) which took decisions concerning the Algerian problem:

1. The withdrawal of African troops in the French army in Algeria.
2. Intentions were focused on the renewal of negotiations between France and the GPRA. The CEAO regarded the GPRA's demand for the UN to intervene unjustified.

This had led to a vote against the GPRA in the UN. However we should note that Cameroun, Congo, Brazzaville, Congo, Leopoldville, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Gabon, Niger, Upper Volta, the CAR, Senegal, Chad, Mali and Togo had refused to participate at the Abidjan meeting because they were sympathetic towards the Algerian Liberation Movement.

C.CASABLANCA GROUP

In the late 1950s and early 1960s Africa was divided into three main political groups, the Casablanca Group, the Monrovia Group and the Brazzaville Twelve. One of the reasons for their division was the support of the Casablanca states for the Algerian Independence struggle, and their recognition of the GPRA, which was accorded full membership of the group. This was strongly opposed by the Brazzaville states, who because of their close links with France, regarded the Algerian war as a problem to be solved by France alone(21). This provoked a reaction from the Union of African States(22), which issued a statement appealing to the Brazzaville group to follow a higher and more healthy conception of African Unity(23).

Because the Brazzaville group had supported Mauritania, claimed by Morocco, over the question of its admission to the UN, Morocco took the initiative in calling the Conference of the Casablanca group, held on January 3rd, 1961(24). The Conference which took place at Casablanca, established the framework for co-operation between Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Guinea, Ghana and Mali. A political Committee for Policy co-ordination, an Economic Committee for the establishment of a Customs Union, a joint African High Command for Military co-operation, and a cultural committee were created(25).

These committees permitted the GPRA to get more aid, more solidarity and what is more, to act as a full state. The resolution adopted by the Casablanca Group Conference was a considerable success for the Algerian Revolution. It declared its determination to support by all means the Algerian people and the GPRA in their struggle for independence. It called

on all countries which supported the Algerian people to assist the GPRA. It denounced NATO assistance to France and called for the withdrawal of all African troops from Algeria(26).

Finally, Algeria's African experience not only led to the success of the Algerian Liberation Movement, it was the origin of independent Algeria's foreign policy towards Black Africa. The first Algerian Embassies in Africa were sent to countries which helped the FLN and the GPRA during the war of National Liberation(27).

FOOTNOTES:

11. A. Humbaraci, *op.cit.*, p. 51.
12. A. Ajola, *op.cit.*, p. 38.
13. A. Humbaraci, *op.cit.* p. 51.
14. Cameroun, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan and the United Arab Republic.
15. **El Moudjahid**, No. 67, 16th July, 1960.
16. After its creation the GPRA was recognised by many countries. Recognition came as follows: Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Iraq (19-9-58); Saudi Arabia, Jordan (20-9-58); Egypt, Yemen (21-9-58); Sudan, China (22-9-58); North Vietnam (26-9-58); Indonesia (27-9-58); Guinea (30-9-58); Mongolia (15-12-58); Lebanon (15-1-59); Defacto, Yugoslavia (12-6-59); Confirmed 12-4-61); Ghana (10-7-59); Liberia (7-6-60); Togo (17-6-70); Mali (18-2-61); Congo Leopoldville (19-2-61). Also from 1960 onwards the communist countries recognised the GPRA and accepted its envoys as official representatives.
17. M. Bedjoui, *La Revolution Algerienne et le droit* (ed.), (Bruxelles, 1961) p. 117.
18. For details about the CEAO see: Institute de etudes politique de Bordeaux: *La politique Africaine du General de Gaulle*, (Paris 1980).
19. See the statement made by the GPRA in **El Moudjahid**, No. 29, 17th September, 1958.
20. **El Moudjahid**, No. 79, 25th September, 1960.
21. Z. Cervenka, *The Unfinished Quest for Unity*, (London, 1977) p. 1.
22. Ghana, Guinea and Mali.
23. C. Chime, *Integration and politics among African States* (Scandinavian Institut of African States, 1970) p. 161.
24. The Conference was attended by Egypt, Libya, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco and the GPRA.
25. I. W. Zartman, *Government and politics in North Africa* (London, Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1964) p. 184.
26. The full text of the resolution can be found in A. Ajola, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-359.

27. P. Balta, 'La Politique Africaine de l'Algérie', *Revue Francaise des Etudes Politique Africaines*, No. 122, December 1976, p. 59.

28. E.A. Alport, «Socialism in three countries» *International Affairs*, (vol 43, No. 4, October 1967), p.

29. R. A. Mortimer, *op. cit.*, p. 672.

القسم الرابع

دراسات وابحاث باللغات الأجنبية

مضمون مقال:

مقدمة حول جذور السياسة الافريقية للجزائر

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الموضوع يتناول جذور السياسة الافريقية للجزائر أثناء حرب التحرير الوطني. حين عملت جبهة التحرير الوطني، ومن بعدها الحكومة المؤقتة على كسب التأيد الافريقي للقضية الجزائرية وذلك بمشاركتها في المؤتمرات الافريقية وابلاغها صوت الثورة الجزائرية. وكان من نتيجة ذلك أن تفتنت الدول الافريقية بأن القضية الجزائرية ليست أزمة داخلية كما تدعي فرنسا، بل هي قضية تصفية استعمار وهذا الانتصار السياسي للثورة الجزائرية على الصعيد الافريقي هو الذي جعل من أيام الاستعمار الفرنسي بالجزائر تبدو معدودة، نتيجة الاعتراف الدولي بالقضية الجزائرية.