

Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles commented as follows at the September 17 National Security Council meeting.

"Mr Dulles said President de Gaulle's September 16 speech on Algeria was disliked both by the *colons* and by the FLN. The speech, which holds out the prospect of independence for Algeria after a four-year period of pacification, was as generous an offer as it was possible for De Gaulle to make while still retaining the support of public opinion in France. Mollet would support the De Gaulle propositions and Soustelle would probably do so. De Gaulle's proposals, however, would be subject to attack by two sets of extremists, the Algerian rebels and the French *colons*.

"The President noted that De Gaulle, before making this speech, had held meetings on Algeria with the French military authorities and with representatives of the *colons*, and had also received assurances of Moslem support. De Gaulle did not want to deal with the FLN. Mr. Dulles believed that De Gaulle's references to various alternatives for Algeria would be attacked by the FLN as amounting to a proposal for the partition of Algeria. The President remarked that the French had never admitted that the Sahara was a part of Algeria. Before the coming of the French, no Algerian national government had ever had authority over the whole of Algeria, subsequently no one except the FLN had exercised sovereignty over the Sahara. The President added that De Gaulle was hopeful that his Algerian proposals, which would also be the subject of a major French speech in the UN, would elicit US-UK support and provide an opportunity for UN 'electioneering' designed to dissuade Algeria from getting a resolution of censure against France passed by the UN. Mr. Dillon remarked that one of our more difficult problems was what to say about De Gaulle's speech in press conferences. While we are sympathetic to the De Gaulle proposals, we cannot go so far publicly as to bless them in their entirety." (Memorandum of discussion at the 419th Meeting of the National Security Council, Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records)

When asked about de Gaulle's proposals at his press conference later that morning, President Eisenhower made a statement that reads in part as follows:

"It is a far reaching declaration, containing explicit promises of self-determination for the Algerian peoples and as such, completely in accord with our hopes to see proclaimed a just and liberal program for Algeria which we could support. I am greatly encouraged by General De Gaulle's courageous and statesmanlike declaration. It is our hope that it will lead to an early peace. And I might add that it is a plan I think is worthy of General de Gaulle's efforts." (*American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1959*, page 1100)

Two days later, Herter reported from the 14th Session of the U.N. General Assembly in New York that the US Delegation was receiving numerous queries about its position on General Assembly discussion of Algeria, and that Foreign Minister Couve de Murville was pressing for a public statement that the United States would vote with France