

## The Algerian War's Origins in French Colonization of Algeria

- 1830** Algiers is occupied by France.
- 1839** Abd el-Kader declares war on the French after their meddling in the administration of his territory.
- 1847** Abd el-Kader surrenders. France finally subjugates Algeria.
- 1848** [Algeria](#) is recognized as an integral part of France. The colony is opened to European settlers.
- 1871** Colonization of Algeria increases in response to the loss of the Alsace-Lorraine region to the German Empire.
- 1936** Blum-Viollette reform is blocked by French Settlers.
- March 1937** The Parti du Peuple Algerien (PPA, Algerian People's Party) is formed by the veteran Algerian nationalist Messali Hadj.
- 1938** Ferhat Abbas forms the Union Populaire Algérienne (UPA, Algerian Popular Union).
- May, 1940** World War II—Fall of France.
- November 1942** Allied landings in Algeria and Morocco.
- May 1945** [World War II](#)—Victory in Europe.
- May 8, 1945.** While France celebrates VE Day, Muslim protesters in Sétif organize to demand Algerian independence. What begins as a march becomes a massacre: the protesters murder more than 100 European settlers, or *pieds-noirs*, and French armed forces retaliate by killing (according to various estimates) between 1,000 and 45,000 Muslims.
- October 1946** The Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques (MTLD, Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties) replaces the PPA, with Messali Hadj as president.
- 1947** The Organization Spéciale (OS, Special Organization) is formed as a paramilitary arm of the MTLD.
- September 20, 1947** A new constitution for Algeria is established. All Algerian citizens are offered French citizenship (of equal status to those of [France](#)). However, when an Algerian National Assembly is convened it is skewed to settlers compared to indigenous Algerians -- two politically equal 60-member colleges are created, one representing the 1.5 million European settlers, the other for 9 million [Algerian Muslims](#).
- 1949** Attack on the central post office of Oran by the Organization Spéciale (OS, Special Organization).
- 1952** Several leaders of the Organization Spéciale (OS, Special Organization) are arrested by French Authorities. Ahmed Ben Bella, however, manages to escape to [Cairo](#).
- 1954** The Comité Révolutionnaire d'Unité et d'Action (CRUA, Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action) is set up by several former members of

the Organization Spéciale (OS, Special Organization). They intend to lead the revolt against French rule. A conference in Switzerland by CRUA officials sets out the future administration of Algeria after the defeat of the French -- six administrative districts (Wilaya) under the command of a military chief are established.

**June 1954** New French government under the Parti Radical (Radical Party) and with Pierre Mendès-France as chairman of the Council of Ministers, an acknowledged opponent of French colonialism, withdraws troops from Vietnam following the fall of Dien Bien Phu. This is seen by Algerians as a positive step towards recognition of independence movements in French-occupied territories.

**November 1, 1954** Emboldened by the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu, the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) launches armed revolts throughout Algeria and issues a proclamation calling for a sovereign Algerian state. The French are unimpressed but deploy troops to monitor the situation.

**August 1955** The FLN begins targeting civilians, inciting a mob that kills more than 120 people in Philippeville. Between 1,200 and 12,000 Muslims are killed in retaliation by French troops and by *piéd-noir* "vigilante committees." Jacques Soustelle, then governor-general of French Algeria, resolves not to compromise with the revolutionaries.

**September 30, 1956** The FLN attempts to draw international attention to the conflict by targeting urban areas. The Battle of Algiers begins when three women plant bombs in public venues. Algiers erupts into violence.

**May 1958** A mob of *piéd-noirs*, angered by the French government's failure to suppress the revolution, storms the offices of the governor-general in Algiers. With the support of French army officers, they clamor for Charles de Gaulle to be installed as the leader of France. The French National Assembly approves. De Gaulle is greeted in Algeria by Muslims and Europeans alike.

**September 1959** Increasingly convinced that French control of Algeria is untenable, de Gaulle pronounces that "self-determination" is necessary for Algeria. *Piéd-noir* extremists are aghast. The FLN is wary of de Gaulle's declaration.

**April 1961** A few prominent generals in the French army in Algeria, clinging to a hope of preserving *Algérie française*, attempt to overthrow de Gaulle. This "generals' putsch" is unsuccessful.

**May 1961** The first round of negotiations between the French government and the FLN commences in Evian, but is not productive.

**March 1962** After a second round of negotiations in Evian, the French government declares a cease-fire.

**March–June 1962** Despairing *pieds-noirs* in the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS) mount terrorist attacks against civilians (Muslim and French). The FLN and the OAS ultimately conclude a truce.

**July 1, 1962** A referendum is held in Algeria to approve the Evian Agreements, which call for an *Algérie algérienne*. Six million Algerians cast their ballots for independence.