



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the question that the Algerian historian Abou El Kacem Saâdallah started this chapter on this massacre deserves to be a reflection of the depth of the wound<sup>†</sup>, the horror of the tragedy and the bitterness of pain and depression over the land of Algeria and on the faces of Algerians. In the time the allies were celebrating their victory over Nazism and fascism, Saâdallah asked these two questions: Was the event of May 08, 1945, a failed revolution by Algerian nationalists against the French presence in their country? So they deserved the severe repression they had and the harsh lesson they had taken, or a massacre orchestrated by the French against innocent Algerians, as they were celebrating the victory of the allies, which symbolized the victory of freedom and democracy? Saâdallah answers: They are two questions if I answer them with “no” or “yes”, we do not open the blinded mystery and reveal the vague secret. ‡

There are those who accused the patriots and held them responsible for planning for an all-out revolution that was discovered before its time, so it stumbled and failed. On the other hand, others accused the French for being responsible for the massacre and of plotting against the national movement that started to appear strong, especially after the formation of Ahabab El Bayan walHouriya Movement in March 1944, and the French retaliated against it with by avenging. Before talking about the responsibility of the crime, we must shed light on the national movement during the Second World War.

## 2. The outcome of the activity of the national movement during the Second World War 1939-1945:

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<sup>†</sup>Abou El Kacem Saâdallah, (1992), *The Algerian National Movement*, 2<sup>nd</sup> part, Western Islamic House, Ed 04, Beirut, Lebanon, p 225.

<sup>‡</sup>Abou El Kacem Saâdallah, (1992), *The Algerian National Movement*, 2<sup>nd</sup> part, Western Islamic House, Ed 04, Beirut, Lebanon, p 227.

### **The outcome of the activity of the national movement during the Second World War 1939-1945:**

With the outbreak of the World War in September 1939, France saw in Algeria a good chance to depend on, especially as France was weak at that time, no strong government and no army ready to confront Hitler's Nazi forces.<sup>§</sup> It first tried to impose calm in Algeria and imposed great pressure on the Algerian people to prevent any hostile moves it might think of, so it dissolved the People's Party led by Misali Al-Hadj in September 1939 and imprisoned its leaders on charge of incitement\*\*. It tightened its grip on the Association of Algerian Muslim Oulemas, banning its activity and putting its chairman, Sheikh Abdel-Hamid Bin Badis, under house arrest in Constantine. His deputy, Al-Bashir Al-Ibrahimi, has been sent to exile to the city of Aflou in the year 1940 where he stayed for three years. Therefore, it imprisoned thousands of other Algerians considering them to be hostile to France and a danger to public security and imposed conscription on Algerian youths. The Communist party continued its activities, and so was the case with the merging party led by Farhat Abbas, which was not disintegrated.†† In addition, it started looting natural resources, resulting in the loss of foodstuffs and the spread of famine and epidemics among Algerians.

### **C/ the landing of allied forces in Algeria and their impact on political life:**

The first communication was between Farhat Abbas, the American Murphy, and Augustin Berque, the official in charge of civil affairs in Algeria, where

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<sup>§</sup> Ibid, p 173

<sup>\*\*</sup> In November 1940, The Government of Vichy offered to Misali El Hadj to cooperate. However, he denied the offer. Therefore, he was captured and put in AGEN prison in France after refusing to cooperate for the second time. On March 17<sup>th</sup> 1941, he was sentenced by a military court for 16 years of prison with hard labor and depriving him from his legal, rights and was then moved to The Tazolet (LAMBESE). On April 1943, he was transferred to the Ksar El Bukhari Prison, and on December 1943 he was transferred to Ain Saleh, and in January 1944 he was returned to Ksar El Chalala Prison and in April 1945 he was transferred to Brazzaville to be released on 11/08/1946. He went to France and settled in Algiers from October.

<sup>††</sup> About El Kacem Saâdallah, Ibidem, Part 03, p 173.

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a memorandum was submitted to the allies, including France, on behalf of the representatives Algerian Muslim, on December 20<sup>th</sup> 1942<sup>††</sup>.

According to the memo, a conference should be allowed to generate “a political and economic constitution, a new meeting for Algeria” and if the representatives of the United States and Britain were content to receive this document without a reply, the representative of France refused to receive it on the pretext that it was not addressed to the French government But to the responsible authorities as written in the introduction to the memorandum<sup>§§</sup>.

Farhat Abbas redrafted the memorandum and submitted to the French authorities in Algeria on December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1942,<sup>\*\*\*</sup> two days after the rejection of the first one, which stated:

- Allow a conference of all Muslim representatives to be held.
- Participate in the liberation of France on condition that it promises these reforms.
- Preparing Algerian constitution.
- Guarantee all rights and freedoms of all Algerians.

Giro rejected the proposals contained in the memorandum after his interview with the Algerian delegation at the beginning of January 1943 and replied that he was fighting, not involved in politics, and was more interested in recruitment than in reforms.<sup>†††</sup>

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<sup>††</sup>Abd al-Rahman bin al-agoun, (1984), National and Political Struggle through Contemporary Memoir, Part 02, National Book Foundation, Algeria, , p. 237

<sup>§§</sup>Jamal Qanan, (1994), Issues and Studies in Algeria's Modern and Contemporary History, National Foundation for Communication, Publishing and Education, Algeria,,s Rights ", p. 193.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Since December 1942, Algeria has been under the responsibility of three persons: General Giroud, Senior Allied Official. Augustine Burke, Director of Civil Affairs. Beroton, Governor-General of Algeria, succeeded Chatal in January 1943.

<sup>†††</sup>Qanan, Ibid, p. 193, in return, finds that Ibn al-Aqsoun mentions that when the Allies disembarked on Algeria. Algerian parties moved again and Giroud summoned all the men of political parties and the heads of Algeria from peasants, traders, deputies and others. They were asked to participate in the war effort alongside the Allies even if victory took place, Algeria was one of the countries that had the best of luck from the swag of victory. See Ibn al-Aqun, National Struggle, op. cit., 235.

**Statement of the Algerian people 10/02/1943:**

On February 10<sup>th</sup> 1943, Farhat Abbas wrote the “Algerian People’s Declaration “, which was a sincere expression of the urgent desire to put an end to Algeria’s French policy, and was presented to the General Assembly “Berotun” by a delegation composed of Dr. Ben Jalloul, Dr. Tamzali, AroRabah, Ibn Ali Al-Sharif, Farhat Abbas, and other members of the Council. On March 31<sup>st</sup> 1943 A.D.<sup>†††</sup>

**Among the statements mentioned in the statement are<sup>§§§</sup>:**

- Deploring and removing colonialism.
- Applying the principle of self-determination to all peoples.
- Granting Algeria its own constitution includes:
  - Freedom for all residents and equality among them without any gender or religious discrimination.
  - The abolition of agricultural feudal through extensive agricultural reform.
  - Recognize Arabic as an official language alongside French.
  - Freedom of the press and the right to assembly.
  - Free and compulsory education for all children.
  - Freedom of belief for all inhabitants and application of the principle of separation of religion from the state.
  - The urgent and effective participation of Muslim Algerians in the governance of their country.
  - To release all political detainees from all parties.

In the main of the statement, we see the shift in Farhat Abbas opinions, as he strongly criticizes colonialism and condemns its selfishness and its non-acceptance of equality with Algerian Muslims. We notice that Abbas get rid of his views of merging with France and agrees that it is hard for Algerians and French to live together in harmony.

This delightful position of Abbas came after he agreed to the French army as a pharmacist and was a sergeant as he noticed racial discrimination and the French authorities regarded them as families, and did not receive the

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<sup>†††</sup>Abbas Farhat, Algiers War and Revolution (Colonial Night), translation by BoubakarRahal, Fadhala Press, Mohammadiyah, Morocco, d. T.T. ' pp. 175.

<sup>§§§</sup>Ibid, p 170-171.

same salaries as the French, and they did not even served them bread equally as French people were offered. \*\*\*\*

The French pretended to accept the statement in order to gain time, because at the beginning of 1943 France and the allies were in a critical situation, despite Despite the clampdown on Romel's forces from the east and from the west. On April 03<sup>rd</sup> 1943, the Governor-General appointed a committee to study the economic and social issues of Algerian Muslims – not political issues – and the aim of this endeavor was to absorb national enthusiasm and creating divisions in the ranks of the national movement that turned around the statement.

The French subsequently requested a detailed supplement to the statement, and Farhat Abbas and his companions drafted an annex on 26 May 1943 and submitted it to General de Gaulle on June 10<sup>th</sup> 1943, and the following day a copy was handed over to the New General Secretary Catroux who succeeded Burton in June 1943. ††††

The appendix to the statement is a detailed explanation of the statement and is divided into two parts:

The first part states that at the end of war an Algerian state will be established equipped with an Algerian constitution to be set by an elected Algerian constitutional Council.

While the second section provides for the participation of Algerians in the government and administration of Algeria, abolishing all exceptional laws and equality, and raising the Algerian flag in the Algerian teams to raise their morale, i.e. the annex envisages the status of Algeria in two stages, the stage of autonomy that should start from now on. The second phase, the phase of full independence, begins at the end of the war. ††††

France's reaction was represented in the statement made by "Catroux" on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 1943, in which it was stated: "victory should be the main concern, and it is not appropriate at the present moment to disturb minds by

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\*\*\*\* Abou El Kacem Saâdallah, *Ibidem*, Part 03, p 184.

†††† Julian Charles André, *North Africa Marches, Muslim Nationalities and French Sovereignty*, Translation of Manji Salim et al., Tunisian Publishing House, p. 324.

†††† Qanan, *Ibidem*, p. 196.

premature measures, and what will happen at the required time. But on the level of French unity, the unity of France and Algeria is an inseparable principle, and therefore every action that aims at tearing up unity is rejected, and France will never accept the independence of Algeria, which was an integral part of it.” §§§§

After the Algerians' refusal to attend the meeting of financial delegates on 22/09/1943 and adherence to the demands of the statement, Catroux dissolved the Council of Financial Delegates and arrested Farhat Abbas and Abdelkader Al-saeh and sent them to exile in a village south of Oran province, after several demonstrations protesting against the arrest of the two men, Catroux reversed the decision and ordered the release of the detainees. \*\*\*\*\*

**- De Gaulle's Speech in Constantine and reform decision:**

On December 12<sup>th</sup> 1943, de Gaulle announced in a speech in Constantine the intention of the French authorities – the Free France Commission – to carry out a set of reforms, including:

- Granting French nationality to thousands of Algerians without condition of renouncing Islamic conditions.
- Increase in the number of Algerian representatives on local councils.
- To retain a number of administrative functions for a number of qualified Algerians

As a result the committee then formed 16 individuals (06 French and 06 Muslims with the assistance of 04 employees) to study the issue of reforms, and this committee held sessions that lasted from December 21<sup>st</sup> 1943 to July 08<sup>th</sup> 1944 during which the so-called of March 07<sup>th</sup> 1944 was approved. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 1944, the city of Algiers issued an order or decree for reforms relating to Algerians, including the following:

Item 01: Algerians enjoy the same rights and duties as the French.

Article 02: Algerians and French are equal before the law, repeal of exceptional laws, and submission of Muslims to Islamic law in the rulings.

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§§§§ Julian, Ibidem, p 324-325.

\*\*\*\*\* Abd al-Rahman bin al-agoun, Ibidem, part 02, p 248

Item 03: The following categories of Algerians have French nationality and are registered with the French Electoral Commission) other than the Algerian Electoral Commission (as follows:

- The war-old, who received a certificate from a recognized French school
- Civil servants by the state, state or municipality.
- Employed in public positions.
- Members of the Chamber of Commerce and agriculture
- Pashagaws and leadership.
- Persons who have exercised or exercised an electoral function in the financial, advisory or municipal councils.
- Holders of honor or official receipts.
- Members of the recognized workers' Union Councils, in which they have held at least three years of duty.
- The administrative body is workers and farmers of the civil charity and its branches.
- Item 04: Other Algerians may benefit from French nationality after the necessary measures have been taken by the French Constituent Assembly.
- Item 05: All French in Algeria have the right to vote and run for Algerian councils without restrictions.
- Item 06: Military rule to remain in the south.<sup>††††</sup>

These reforms allowed the naturalization of 50000 to 70000 Algerians. This allows them to participate in the elections for the French parliament and to participate in the administration of the Algerian government<sup>††††</sup>, Farhat Abbas commented on the March 07<sup>th</sup> decree by saying: "It is a trivial answer to the aspirations of the Algerian people, which is opposed to and

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<sup>††††</sup> The decree of 07 March 1944 derives from the Bloom-Violet project and there are those who see it as a copy of it, while others see it as a compendium of the project itself and others see it as an expansion of the Bloom-Violet project for more see: Ben Al-Aqun, National Struggle, J2, p. 274

<sup>††††</sup> Abou El Kacem Saâdallah, Ibidem, Part 03, p 215-216.



contrary to the idea expressed in the statement. §§§§§” In response, Farhat Abbas founded on 14/03/1944, the “Freedom Lover Movement, “whose goals were to defend the statement, denounce despotism, and condemn racism and force. \*\*\*\*\*

- In this case, these reforms were aimed at smash in the eyes. The percentage of Algerians has always been lower than that of the French in the local councils, as the French have kept the upper hand in Algerian affairs and Algerians, despite their majority, cannot influence the country’s destiny. As for the old people, they reluctantly accepted these reforms owing to the circumstances of the Second World War period.

### **Creation of Ahabab El bayanwalHouriyamouvement:**

The measures proposed by de Gaulle’s government did not satisfy the Muslims because time has passed and Algerians did not want French nationality, and that the popular masses were loyal to the People’s Party, scholars and personalities defending the statement’s proposals, and on March 14<sup>th</sup> 1944, they supported Farhat Abbas’s position and his political platform. He established a national bloc called “Ahabab Al bayanwalHouriya”††††† , in order to clarify the demands presented by the statement and the additional text and defend it†††††, a political movement that included the People’s Party, the Association of Oulema and the elites’ movement led by Farhat Abbas. §§§§§

These parties have become a national movement calling for the establishment of an Algerian Republic and the formation of a Federation with the French Republic against imperialism and against colonialism \*\*\*\*\* , and the various trends have been reconciled. In the past, the group of

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§§§§§ Mohamed ElarabyZuberi, (1984), First-year Algerian Revolution, 1, Ba 'ath Printing and Publishing House, Constantine, Algeria, p. 26

\*\*\*\*\* Abbas, Ibidem, 184.

††††† BouhoucheAmmar, (2005), Algeria's political history from the beginning to 1962, West Islamic House, 2. p. 239

††††† Keddache, Sari, Ibidem, p 77.

§§§§§ Abdelwahab Ben Khalif, (2005), Al-Wajiz in Algeria's history from the beginning of the French occupation to the massacres of 8may, i 1, Dar BaniMezghna, Algeria, p. 93

\*\*\*\*\* Bohouche, Ibidem, p 239.

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Muslim scholars urged that it should respect its goals and principles<sup>††††††</sup>, and that it was the task of fighting the colonial regime and fighting for the establishment of an autonomous republic united with the Republic of France, which is anti-colonial and anti-imperialist. <sup>††††††</sup>

After the establishment of Ahabab el Bayan walHouriya Movement, they started to move to prepare the public opinion to join it, defend its cause, and work to achieve its goals through propaganda and the issuance of the newspaper Al-Mosawat on September 13<sup>th</sup> 1944. <sup>§§§§§§§§</sup>

The Algerian people accepted the Ahabab el Bayan walHouriya movement, and it has not been a few months until half a million supporters have been involved. Al-Mosawat played a big role in informing and educating those militants and bringing the largest number of Algerians into the public political movement.

On the other hand, a vigorous national campaign against colonialism started, and they agreed that colonialism can be eliminated only through armed struggle. <sup>\*\*\*\*\*</sup>

Therefore, all the developments witnessed by the Second World War affected the revival of enthusiasm, the deepening of awareness and the enhancement of hope in the souls of the Algerian masses, the impact of the international liberation tide and the declaration of the Atlas Charter (item III – the right of peoples to self-determination), the emergence of the Arab League and the United Nations, which supported the liberation of peoples. All this has deepened the sense of nationalism among the Algerian people. <sup>††††††††</sup>

Accordingly, it can be said that the period of 1942-1944 was full of political activity, and by the end of 1944 the national movement had become more

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<sup>††††††††</sup> Mohamed el-Tayeb al-Alawi, Manifestations of Algerian Resistance, 1830-1954, Publications of the National Museum of Mujahid, p. 200

<sup>††††††††</sup> Keddache, Sari, Ibidem, p 77.

<sup>§§§§§§§§</sup> Bohouche, Ibidem, p 239.

<sup>\*\*\*\*\*</sup> Keddache, Sari, Ibidem, p 77.

<sup>††††††††</sup> Yousef Manasiriyah, (1995), bloody repression in 8 May 1945 and its political and social results, "Magazine of Memory", second issue, National Museum of Mujahid

aware and solid, then it entered an era of challenge and confrontation that it had not known before, which is the era that ended with the tragedy of May 08<sup>th</sup> 1945.

**Origins of 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 massacres:**

The origins of this carnage date back to March 1944, the year of the establishment of Ahabab El Bayan walHouriya Movement, whose activity angered the colonialists and raised their fears.

Mr. Farhat Abbas took on the main burden of the presence of this gathering, which originated in Setif, and was officially registered in Constantine. Nevertheless, he was the secretary general and political official of the French written weekly newspaper Al Mosawat.

Meanwhile, a wave of propaganda was launched in February 1945 and a leaflet was posted on the walls in the Algerian cities, saying “Muslim brothers, your country’s life is in danger, because colonialism has destroyed it financially and morally. We must live within a framework of an Algerian entity and an Algerian government based on the sovereignty of the Algerian people and rejecting any foreign sovereignty. For this purpose, your brothers died in the cells suffering in prisons and camps, including those who fight enthusiastically within the framework of legitimacy or concealment. “

The leaflets multiplied and the secret newspapers appeared, and written phrases appeared on the walls calling on the Algerian people to prepare and mobilize their people “ prepare for the zero hour, let us prepare ourselves for the revolution, and which Algerians fought for freedom and died if necessary, but without leniency with the oppressed. “ You Algerians, mountains are calling you, the hour of liberation is about to come.”

All these combined manifestations indicate that the national movement has taken a new turn since the establishment of Ahabab El Bayan walHouriya, and that the national awareness has increased, despite the restrictions of war, the dissolution of the People’s Party and the persecution of scholars, and the French started to harangue the national movement, where the administration of General “Catroux” and the administration of “Yves

Shatigon” after it wanted to stop the “storm”, meaning by it Catroux Ahabab El Bayan wal Houriya movement, but the attitude with the Anglo-American prevented it from doing so temporarily and made it postpone the settlement of the issue until after the victory of the allies.††††††††

This is how the situation in Algeria was, when this revolution or massacre took place, it spread national awareness for the hour of salvation on the part of Algerians and it showed arrogance from the French part. §§§§§§§§

### **May 1945 demonstrations:**

In light of this fear, the People’s Party ordered its fighters to demonstrate on the occasion of the first day of May, these demonstrations showed the presence of the fighters and their readiness to sacrifice, and included all the national soil and the departure was from the capital, started from Martyrs’ Square toward the Central Post. It was peaceful and full of the struggle spirit of the National Movement, which prompted Ahabab El Bayan wal Houriya to call on the movement’s activists to hold further demonstrations\* On May 8<sup>th</sup> as it was the harshest and the biggest as it was time for Algerians to remind France and the allies of the promise they gave to the right of self-determination of colonial peoples on the occasion of the final victory over Nazism. They raised signs reading “ long live Algeria”, “Release Misali Al-Hadj”, “long live independent Algeria”.††††††††

The date of May 8<sup>th</sup> 1955 was the most significant on terms of losses in Constantine and evolved into a massive revolution††††††††. For Algerians, the hour of expression of national sentiment and their attachment to freedom has come, and this kind of expression is enough alone to blow up the situation, because the French did not accept it, especially since they

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†††††††† Abou El Kacem Saâdallah, Ibidem, Part 03, p 226.

§§§§§§§§ Ibid, p 229.

\* Party transformations and evolution after the massacres of May 8th 1945, (1996)

"Vision Magazine", first year, first issue, January/February.

†††††††† Bohouche, Ibidem, p 239.

†††††††† Keddache, Sari, Ibidem, p 76.

have been lurking in the Algerians for so long and have been waiting for their hour of revenge. §§§§§§§§

The first violence in the manifestations came from the police because they wanted to be subjected to the dissemination of narratives calling for independence, the extinction of colonialism and the release of Misali al-Hadj. The police did everything possible to ensure that the manifestations did not take place by flying Algerian flags. Nevertheless, riots started in all Algerian territory. \*\*\*\*\*

The first victim was shot by a French policeman in Setif, a young man whose name is SAAL Bouzid, he was carrying the national flag, and after insisting on keeping him in the face of chants from demonstrators. †††††††††

This action led to the explosion of the Algerian masses, who expressed its joy. However, the happiness was soon turned into a funeral. The police and European civilians attacked the demonstrators. Algerians found no way to defend themselves but to turn to the batons and any weapon they found. †††††††††

The newspaper "New York times" reported on April 29<sup>th</sup> 1946 that France had used all its power to extinguish the flames of resistance, which had reverberated to many cities and villages in many areas of Algerian soil. The colonial administration used the ground, navy and air forces. Hussein Al-Ahoual, one of the leaders of the People's Party revealed those massacres through a memorandum sent by the party to United Nations on August 12<sup>th</sup> 1950, which stated: "On May 08<sup>th</sup> 1945, while the whole world celebrated The Allies' Victory Day over Hitler. The Algerian people wanted to express their hope that they would see their sacrifices taken into account and that they would be able to fulfil their national demands, But the French armies charged with maintaining security and stability have unfortunately joined the French armed teams. Therefore, it caused a massacre of 45000, the

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§§§§§§§§ Mohamed El-Tayeb Al-Alawi, Manifestations of Algerian Resistance, 1830-1954, Publications of the National Museum of Mujahid, p. 20

\*\*\*\*\* Keddache, Sari, Ibidem, p 79.

††††††††† Nasser al-Din Saidoni, (1995), Events of May 8, 1945 "Memory of great sacrifices and a bitter struggle," Memory ", Issue II, Spring, National Museum of Mujahed

††††††††† Elaloui, Ibidem, p 207.

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heroes of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division of Algerian shooters, who came back full of victory from the battlefields of Africa and Europe, found their homes demolished. And their fields destroyed, their women raped and their parents were shot dead. “§§§§§§§§§§

- **Victims of the massacre:**

Much has been written about this massacre and the number of victims. Algerians agree that the number of victims is at least 45000 men, women and children. The Association of Muslim Oulemas and its Al-Basairnewspaper estimated the number to be around 45000. Farhat Abbas wrote about it and estimated it to be 60000 martyr. However, the Algerian official authority estimated the number to be 80000. It was posted on 08 May 1985, on the weekly newspaper of Al-Mujahid\*\*\*\*\*.

France provided a very small number, in order to camouflage the scale of the crime, which extended to the month of June in the city of El-Kala, where aerial bombardment continued there until June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the French Interior Minister **Adrien Tixier** said in his report after visiting some of the cities in which the incidents occurred, the number of Algerians who participated in the incidents is estimated at 50000. The death toll is between 1200 and 1500, the number of wounded was not mentioned – and 2,400 people were arrested. 517 were released and the rest were sent to trial, this is for Algerians. Moreover, the number of French victims is around 88 dead and 150 wounded.††††††††††

On the other hand, the colonial authorities arrested the leaders of the Bayan Movement party, such as Farhat Abbas, Dr. Saadan, Ahmad Francis, Ahmad Boumendjel, KadourSattor and others, as well as the arrestation of some of the most prominent members of the Association of Scholars, like Sheikh El-Ibrahimi and Sheikh Khairuddin.

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§§§§§§§§§§Mariouh, Ibidem, (1992), p. 374 quoting Al-Fadil Al-Wortlani, Algeria Al-Thiir, Dar al-Huda, Ayn Melilla, p. 423

\*\*\*\*\*Mariouh, Ibidem, Ibidem p. 376

†††††††††† Ahmed Saari, (2000), Incidents 08 May 1945 Through Some French Official Documents, Memory Magazine, No. 6, , p. 35

The People's Party has arrested many of its leaders, such as Muhammad Khider, Abdullah Filali, Larbi Ben M'hidi, and Benyoucef Benkhedda. In addition to placing many in detention, some estimated the number to be at least 5000 detainees.\*\*\*\*\*

The massacre was the cause of the widening the gap between the Algerian people and the French side. The wounds increased in depth and pain. In the latter, it can be said that the massacre in all its tragedies constituted a new turning point in the Algerian national movement's towards the armed struggle to tear up the darkness of colonialism and weave the threads of freedom and dignity. The May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945 massacres were the separation between those who were thinking of gaining independence in ways of political and diplomatic struggle and those who believed that armed struggle was the only way to independence.

- **Responsibility for crime:**

The reader may find a description of what happened on May 8<sup>th</sup> by the massacres unlike the French who describe them as "Events", and it is as well the case for some Algerian writers intentionally or inadvertently. The calling of the incidents by "Events" conveys an implicit meaning that free the colonial administration from its responsibility of the crimes and punishing the patriots for their qualitative demands and pressuring them to the broad masses for more than a year, The description also suggests spontaneity in the response, not the initiative of aggression against Algerians. But the evidence proves that the French were determined before to assert Algerians even before the demonstrations.\*\*\*\*\*

**First Evidence:** General Catroux, who was the Governor-General of Algeria during the time of the statement and the establishment of Ahabab Al bayan wal Houriya, and he was keen to eliminate what he called the storm as we mentioned earlier. The Administration, under the leadership of Governor-General Yves Chatin, who succeeded Catroux, sent the army to

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\*\*\*\*\*Mariouh, Ibidem, Ibidem p. 377

\*\*\*\*\*Shaosh Habasi, Lectures and Texts in the National Movement and the Algerian Revolution 1945-1956, p. 07

dissolve the gathering of Ahabab Al bayanwalHouriya and arrested on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> nearly 100 of its patriots.

**Second evidence:** Algerians were forced to demonstrate and protest against past actions and thus to be harmed and arrested, thereby breaking the national movement's thorns.

**Third evidence:** the statement made by "Murphy" the American Ambassador in Algeria, who, according to Abdelrahman Al-Agoun, quoted Sheikh Kheiruddin, who stated that the American Ambassador had contacted the Office of Ahabab Al bayanwalHouriya Movement after the demonstrations of May 1<sup>st</sup> 1945 and warned them with these words: "I warn you of the seriousness of the game that the party wants to play, by raising Algerian flags and demanding independence. The French are determined to deal with this situation with all intensity and violence. In this case, the United States of America cannot intervene due to the political circumstances of the war. And I would like to inform you of the situation in order to eliminate any responsibility or blame that has yet been imposed on my Government". The Governor of Constantine acknowledged to Dr. Saadan that some events might occur and that a major party might be resolved.\*\*\*\*\*

It seems that the Black Feet are primarily responsible for this. They have been in a continuous and public effort through their newspapers and their hidden endeavors with the administration to urge it to dissolve the party, punish its leaders and remove the Algerian elites from entering French local councils. And this is for fear of applying the project of reforms promised by de Gaulle, This was confirmed in the Home Minister's report immediately after the incident, which stated that they wanted to take the opportunity to prevent the reforms announced by De Gaulle.

In this context, Saâdallah says: "In any event, Abbas is not the only Algerian who accuses the Black Feet of orchestrating the crime. As Al-

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\*\*\*\*\* Abbas, Night of Colonialism, Ibidem, p. 114





contemporary peoples, as acts against humanity or classified as crimes against humanity, whose provisions are not obsolete and contrary to human values. It is a reality, which cannot go beyond Algerian memory, and despite the horror of the massacre, it has enabled Algerians to discover the true face of France, convinced them of the futility of the political struggle and seriously contemplated the need to move to armed action.

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