


**Volume:08, N°:01 (2024), p37 - 46****De Gaulle and the ordinance of 07 March 1944, Historical context and dimensions**

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<b>Abstract:</b>	<b>Article info</b>
<p>The follower of France's location during the fronts of World War II finds that it was defeated and in the early years of the outbreak of that war, and then that early defeat has been reflected on its colonies, which were seeking liberation, we mention Algeria, which tried the leaders of the national movement at the time to continue the struggle, where Farhat Abbas issued a statement in February 1943, which included many and varied demands, the most important of which is the denunciation of colonialism and its forms, that statement, although it came in the circumstances of the war, but it was resonated and even reached Allied officials in Algeria</p>	<p><b>Received:</b> <b>11/03/2024</b></p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> <b>14/04/2024</b></p> <p><b>Key words:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Order; De Gaulle</li><li>✓ Formal reforms</li><li>✓ Citizenship</li><li>✓ Dual nationality</li></ul>

## Introduction

Following the issuance of the February 1943 manifesto and the arrest of Farhat Abbas and his colleague Abdelkader Sayeh by General Quattro, demonstrations took place on December 02, 1943 in Algiers, Setif, Constantine and other Algerian cities, holding banners reading "**For the Atlantic Charter and a Free Algeria**" and calling for the release of Abbas and Sayeh (stora and daoued, 1995, p. 126). A few days earlier, a group of Algerians in Oran, Tlemcen and Sidi Bel Abbès carried out a graffiti campaign with slogans such as "**Release Abbas, long live Massali Hajj and the Algerian People's Party, Arabs are in their own country and want to live in Algeria**" (A. W. O., Cart 4477-1943).

It is noteworthy here that this arrest led to various reactions, including the response of the Allies, who demanded an inquiry from the French administration about these events, and the response of the occupying administration was that the Algerians had carried out a dangerous movement that cannot be tolerated during wartime, and that the arrest was in the interest of both French Algeria and the Allies. Colonial news agencies published on that day that the arrest had taken place because those concerned had committed civil disobedience and tried to disrupt public institutions and provoke riots during World War II, and some newspapers commented that the danger was more potential than real, and that none of the Americans.

## 1. The colonial policy to contain the political situation in Algeria after the February 1943 statement

In the face of these reactions and the fear of the occupation authorities that the situation would escalate to an unfortunate situation, especially in light of the continuing battlefronts in World War II, the colonial administration announced the release of Abbas and his colleague Abdelkader Sayeh from their detention in southwest Oran on December 30, 1943 (Bouaziz, 1995, p. 108), following the mediation of "**Pierre Bloch**" (Pierre Bloch) with Governor-General Quattro. (Seven days after his release, Farhat Abbas wrote a letter to Dr. Tamzali, head of the tribal branch of the Malian delegations, regarding the twelve elected officials who announced that they had broken ranks and joined Quattro, stating: "During my arrest, you presented to the governor-general in the name of the Malian delegates, on behalf of the Malian delegates This statement was dictated and imposed on you by the Department of Islamic Affairs, and the people concerned were not consulted. I have the honor to inform you, for my part, that it is null and void, and that I will remain faithful to the statement of February 10, 1943, as for the structural reforms you mentioned, they are a modest hint issued by the Committee for Economic and Social Studies of the Muslims, with the help of the Governor of the Government, in order to change the course of our Algerian policy. **"You want to return to the methods of the past, which are the source of all the troubles that have accumulated in Algeria."** Abbas thus placed the responsibility for the deviation on Dr. Tamzali, who had previously pledged to implement the manifesto and its annex (Qadash, 2003, p.650).

Through a careful reading of Abbas's statement and his use of the words "**imposed on you**", "**I will remain faithful to the statement of February 10, 1943**", "**methods of the past**", we record a development that occurred in Farhat's thoughts during the Second World War

through his aspiration to establish an Algerian state, which he denied before the outbreak of that confrontation, and the likelihood of this is the emptiness of the political scene in Algeria at the time, his return from the war fronts in France, and his talk about such matters related to the extent of the racism of the occupation administration towards Algerians and the impossibility of achieving equality with them.

### 2. The circumstances of de Gaulle's visit to Constantine in 1943

During De Gaulle's visit to Constantine (Hamid, 2001, p. 92) on December 12, 1943 with the Governor General (Abbas, 2011, p.142), he delivered a speech on behalf of the French Liberation Committee in La Brèche Square (Ageron , 1979, p. 564), in which he announced a number of reforms, as stated in his speech **"... Therefore, the French Committee for National Liberation decided to grant full rights to tens of thousands of Algerian Muslims ... It has also decided to increase the number of Muslims in various associations... The French government is determined to reform the conditions of the Algerian masses, in addition to increasing the number of Muslims in public councils"** (de Gaulle, 1982, p. 536). It is clear from the points of reforms that came in de Gaulle's statement, especially those related to granting tens of thousands of Muslims full rights after obtaining citizenship without abandoning personal status (Stora, 2004, p. 94), he wanted to calm the situation and silence the Algerian population in general and the members of the national movement active in the political arena at the time in particular.

General de Gaulle noted in his memoirs the extent of Ibn Jalloul's interaction with his speech in Constantine: **"I could see in front of me near the podium a large number of Muslims led by Dr. Ibn Jalloul"** (de Gaulle, 1956, p. 447). It is clear from de Gaulle's speech that he rejected the statement of 10 February 1943 and its annex, especially since two days after his speech he issued a decree on December 14, 1943 stipulating the appointment of a committee to deal with preparing a reform program in the political, social and economic field for Algerians (A. de Gaulle, A. W.O., Note C.I.E., 1943), this committee was composed of 16 members, four of whom were high-ranking officials, six members of the occupying French, and seven Algerian members, namely: Sheikh al-Tayeb al-Aqbi, Dr. Ibn Jalloul, Sheikh Qassimi, Dr. Tamzali, Dr. Tamzali, Judge Abdelkader, Fadil Rene, in addition to Sheikh Si Bouaziz Ben Qana (Saadallah, 1990., p. 219). If we stop at these Algerian members, we find that their choice was deliberate because they were either loyal to France or their ideas do not pose a danger to it, and therefore their demands certainly do not conflict with its interests, as Sheikh Tayeb al-Aqbi For example, he was a supporter of France on the eve of the outbreak of World War II, following his resignation from the Administrative Council of the Association of Muslim Scholars a few days earlier, and if we talk about Dr. Ibn Jalloul, we find that he still adheres to his integrationist demands, so the occupation authorities always reject the demands made by Algerian patriots and try to introduce formal reforms that are not in line with the corresponding period to serve their interests.

As a result, on December 15, 1943, Farhat Abbas wrote a letter to the head of the financial delegations in Algeria, stating **"...on September 23, 1943, based on the decision of Mr. Wali of Algiers, I was arrested with Mr. Sayeh, head of the Arab branch of the financial delegations**

**in the southwest region of Oran...This arrest occurred against us during the exercise of our mandate, when we were in private deliberations and without offending public order or the war effort"** (Qadash, 2003, p .56). Abbas blamed the head of the financial delegations for not intervening "... Especially since this arrest was at the request of some occupation delegates who began to fear the development of Abbas's political thought during World War II, and Abbas confirmed this in a letter by saying **"...some occupation delegates on the eve of our arrest addressed the Governor General to take deterrent measures against their Muslim counterparts, and tomorrow they called for the dissolution of the native delegation, these measures are a disgrace and we find that this method has shed light on the ideas of the feudalists and their perception of freedom ... Yesterday they were involved in the national revolution to support the Vichy government, and today they were first in line to support de Gaulle ... and agreed with him to threaten, humiliate and divide the population"** (Boumaaza, 2004/2005, pp. 181-182).

The committee appointed by General de Gaulle held its first meeting on December 21, 1943 (Nouschi, 1995, p138), chaired by Ganon, the then Secretary General of the government. Dr. Ibn Jelloul insisted during his interventions on the need for Algerians to benefit from French citizenship and the right of citizenship for all Algerians, and stated that his enthusiasm was a translation of the hopes of Muslims who are waiting with honour for this citizenship (A.W.O, Dossier Réformes Musulmans, p .943).

As a researcher, we must pause at this statement by Ibn Jelloul, who appears to be defending French citizenship, and wonder when Algerians gave Ibn Jelloul the honor of obtaining French citizenship for them! Especially since the popularity of the integrationist movement was weak compared to the independence movement and the reformist trend, then Ibn Jelloul himself had separated from Farhat Abbas in 1938 and founded the **"French-Islamic-Algerian Rally"** (Chikh, 1981, p.42), and continued the same intellectual orientation, namely his desperate defense of his integrationist project, which in fact was limited to some members in the state of Constantine only.

### **3.The content of the proposals of the Committee of 16**

After this first session, the colonial administration deliberately invited other personalities to attend the sessions of the committee in charge of reforms to liberalize the ongoing debate and evade the legitimate demands of Algerians, so Faure, Abro, Ilozeray, Serda, Constantine governor Perillier, Algiers governor Muscatelli, and Oran governor Pattistini. (Bakkar, 2009, p. 130). To complement this appointment, the occupation administration distributed to the members of the committee key themes for study and assigned participants to prepare detailed reports, and Dr. Bendjelloul participated in the committee charged with preparing a report on ways to develop the traditional industry practiced in rural and urban areas, and how to promote Muslim housing in them (Bakkar, 2009, pp. 130-131). For reference, Farhat Abbas and his friend Abdelkader Sayeh asked the French Committee for National Liberation to present this time real reforms in the service of Algeria (Collot and Henry, 1997, p. 177). For his part, Bashir Brahimi, head of the Association of Muslim Scholars, made three suggestions to the committee:

-First: reforming the justice system and allowing the application of Islamic law.

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- Second: Allowing free Arabic education.
- Third: Respect for mosques and endowments.

He also had political demands, including:

- Recognizing Algerian citizenship.
- Equality for all Algerians without discrimination in terms of gender or religion .
- The need to replace the occupation system with an "**Algerian government**", which would be responsible to an Algerian parliament (Collot and Henry, 1997, p .179-182) .

During the second session held on December 23, 1943 (Beloufa, 2011, p. 93), its members listened to Ammar Ouzkan of the Algerian Communist Party, who reiterated its previous decisions of equal rights between Algerians and French within the framework of the French Union (Qadash , 2003, p.398), as well as the demand for dual nationality (Algerian-French) (Moumen El-Omar, 2003, p. 47). With these points, we find that this party did not know a change in its orientation, but rather maintained its ideology based mainly on the idea of linking with France and preserving its interests in Algeria.

As for Massali Hajj's proposal for this committee, it was consistent and parallel to his previous demands, namely the need to grant Algeria its independence (Teguaia, 2007, p.31), the establishment of an Algerian parliament (Amoura, 2004, p.251), the formation of a national army and the release of all political prisoners (Kiouane, 1985, p.39). According to researcher Bakkar Mohamed, Ibn Jalloul intervened in the second session and criticized the Algerian manifesto, saying that its demands call for the establishment of a local Algerian nationalism without the French. He also criticized Farhat Abbas and said that he was not satisfied with the development of his ideas (Bakkar, 2009, pp. 130-131). Historian Bakkar Mohamed added that Ibn Jalloul asked oral questions during the interventions of the participants, interrupting some of the advocates of integration, and criticizing others, such as the Kabyle MP Salhi Amgran, who refused to grant French citizenship to all Algerians (Bakkar, 2009, pp. 130- 131). In the same session, Ibn Jelloul warned the colonial authority of its reliance on the Algerian elite only during elections, and that it is responsible for the policy of discrimination that exists in mixed and full-fledged municipalities, because the presence of French war veterans, intellectuals, degree holders and employers is almost limited to full-fledged municipalities without mixed municipalities, and this did not allow development, according to his belief for the spread of illiteracy among the deputies, then reassured the participants not to fear full representation of Algerians in the various elected councils, because the number of Algerians is small compared to forty million Frenchmen in Metropolis Fer. (General Government of Algeria, 1944, p.337).

In response to these proposals, Abbas argued that de Gaulle's initiative was merely a repetition of the Blum-Violette project of 1936, while at the same time reminding him that the situation had changed: it was no longer a matter of expanding the privileges of one or more classes of people, but rather the goal was to abolish those privileges and eliminate all imperialism of any kind in Algeria, which is why Abbas believed that reforms that could match the changing France should be carried out within the framework of two principles :

- First principle: People are born and live free and have equal rights.
- The second principle: Every people is free to determine its own destiny (Zubairi, 1999, p. 87).



Through these proposals made by members of the national movement to the committee appointed by General de Gaulle, we found that most of the demands made by these leaders during this period were parallel to, if not identical to, their demands at the time of the founding of their parties, before the outbreak of World War II, although the ideas of Farhat Abbas were not as profound. Thus, the founding principles of these parties continued to influence them until now (1944), as evidenced by the adherence of each movement to its ideas and decisions.

In January 1944, De Gaulle went to Brazzaville, Africa, and gave a speech in which he spoke about French policy, saying that it aimed to make the colonized peoples govern themselves, within the framework of a federal union with France (Nouschi, 1995, p.138), but he did not mention Algeria, because he considered it part of French territory (Saadallah, 1990, p.219).

#### **4.The content and fate of the March 07, 1944 order**

After deliberation and interpretation of the demands proposed by the leaders of the national movement to the Committee on Economic and Social Reforms formed by de Gaulle, the decree of March 07, 1944 was issued (Collot and Henry,1997, p.185), which is a set of decisions issued by that committee in favor of the Algerians, which included the following:

-Algerians will enjoy all rights and have the same duties as the French and all official positions, both civilian and military, will be open to them (Stora, 1997, p94).

- The law will be applied without discrimination between Algerians and French (Djillali Sari, Qadash, 1987, p. 76), and all exceptional laws imposed on Algerians will be abolished (Abdelwahab Ben Khalif, 2009, p. 163) .

-Expanding the representation of Algerian Muslims in local councils, increasing their number from one-third to fifty, and to half in the General Assembly, which replaced the general councils, and in rural areas from one-fourth to half (Bouaziz, 1995, p. 109).

-Granting French citizenship to more than 60,000 Algerians, without giving up their personal status (teguia, 2007, p. 67) .

-The following categories will be considered French citizens and placed on the same voting register as non-Muslim male citizens 21 years of age or older:

-Veterans and holders of one of the following degrees: Certificate of Higher Education Baccalaureate of Secondary Education, Higher Qualification, Primary Qualification, Higher Primary Qualification, Higher Primary Qualification, Secondary School Certificate, Certificate of Graduation from a National High School or from a National Vocational School, whether industrial, agricultural or commercial, Arabic Language Certificate.

-Civil servants or professionals employed by the state, states, municipalities or authorized departments.

-Holders of permanent positions in accordance with regulations to be determined by law.

-Members of chambers of commerce and peasantry, pashagwat, aghwat and qayyad who have held their positions for at least three years and have not been removed from them.

-Members of labor union councils in legally established labor federations, after they have been in office for three years, in addition to members of notary boards and legal agents (Saadallah, 1990, pp. 273-274).

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-Other Algerians will be allowed to acquire French citizenship, and the National Constituent Assembly will determine the manner in which this change will take place. Thus, as of March 07, 1944, all Algerians of this category - here we mean males 21 years of age or older - will benefit from the articles of the law of February 09, 1919, and will be placed on the list of the electoral district that selects the special deputies for municipal councils, general councils and financial councils as before (Bouaziz, 1995, p. 110), and these deputies in the general and financial councils will be 50% of the total number of members of these councils, and in the municipal councils it will also be 50%, except in cases where the ratio between the Algerian Muslim population and the total population does not reach this number, in which case they will be in proportion to the size of the Muslim population (Saadallah, 1990, p. 275).

-The French have the right to sit on Algerian councils without discrimination, regardless of the electoral district to which they belong, and are subject only to the normal conditions.

-The laws in force regarding the inhabitants of the Oued Mzab and the inhabitants of the desert regions known by that name will remain in force (Saadallah, 1992, p. 275).

In addition to these political reforms, the Committee of Sixteen presented to the Algerians, it also had a number of social decisions, including

- Study the living conditions in cities and villages, health conditions, as well as medical assistance.

- Apply the social security system to Algerian workers.

- Work to industrialize Algeria and take care of the indigenous traditional industry.

- Universalizing education for all Algerian children and developing rural life (Saadallah, 1992, p. 221).

After a careful reading of these reforms, we agree with Farhat Abbas that the decisions issued by the Committee for Economic and Social Reforms on March 07, 1944 are identical to the reforms of the Blum-Violette project presented by the occupation administration in 1936, which included a policy of integration and equality between Algerians and French - without abandoning personal status this time - but with the political development of members of the national movement during World War II, De Gaulle's order did not live up to their expectations (Qadash, 2003, pp. 653-655), and the content of what it contained is in fact a late implementation of an old project, as we have seen, and then these reforms became sterile and outdated (Stora and Daoud, 2004, p. 135), and as Abolghasem Saadallah said, they came late, and did not mean immediate implementation, as the law stipulates that things will take a long time and a transitional period, and although it tried to satisfy the elite group, MPs and veterans, it did not provide solutions for the Algerian people (Saadallah, 1992, p. 221). Abbas himself considered these reforms to be incompatible with democracy and social rights when he commented on the March 07, 1944 decree: **"The decree of March 07, 1944 did not bring anything new because it was in its content derived from the Blum-Violette project. These reforms are outdated, the Algerian people rejected this decree, and only the colonialists accepted it in order to preserve their interests"** (Abbas, 2003, p.142).

### 5.The National Movement's position on the March 07, 1947 decree

The project of March 07, 1944 disappointed the hopes and aspirations of the Algerian people, as it did not take into account the proposals of the representatives and poles of the

national movement (Collot and Henry, 1997, p 185), and therefore it was directed to a class that is linked to France, while the project maintained the French policy towards the population based on the exploitation and enslavement of one people to another (Qadash, 2003, p. 654-64), and thus the occupation administration remained in control of Algeria, while the landowners, despite their majority, could not influence the fate of their country . Accordingly, the majority of the leaders of the national movement, headed by Farhat Abbas - who belonged to the elite group - rejected De Gaulle's order, even though most of its decisions were integrative (Meynier, 2003, p.63), the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars, through its president Bashir al-Ibrahimi, also rejected De Gaulle's project, stating that these reforms were formal and not in line with the nature of Algerian Muslim society (Teguia, 2007, p. 67), as did the leader of the independence movement, Massali al-Hajj, who said that these measures were superficial and outdated and stated that the main demands of Algerians were to obtain full independence (Mahsas, 2003, p. 173), Ibn Jalloul, for his part, criticized the order of March 07, 1944 and said that it did not include all the demands proposed by Algerians in their interventions during the deliberations of the reform committee (Hamid, 2001, p. 93), but at the same time he thanked the French Committee for National Liberation for taking the initiative for reforms according to his words (Qadash, 2003, p. 684), which is not surprising to us, especially since we stopped by the man's ideology earlier, and we said that he was pro-French and remained committed to his demands for integration and equality.

As for the parties that supported the reforms of the order of March 07, 1944, we mention the communists, where Ammar Ouzkan stated that he supported granting the people political rights (Chaieb Ghazouani- Kadadra, 2007, p. 169), and called for the need to include employees, workers and all categories of people within the scope of these rights because this ensures the link with the French system (Souleiman, 2010 - 2011, p. 82). I agree with Ahmed Mehsas when he said that this party has no influence on Algerian public opinion (Souleiman, 2010-2011, p. 82), because the popular base for this movement was weak, especially since it speaks on every occasion about such matters that do not recognize the existence of an Algerian state and support the association with France.

The Committee for a Free France also considered this order as a proof of the practical reforms undertaken by France to develop Algeria and improve the standard of living of its inhabitants, and the British newspaper The Times welcomed it as a demonstration that France still believes that it can integrate people of all faiths and colors under the unity of freedom, equality and brotherhood, and stated that the Islamic world and France's friends everywhere will accept this reform project (Saadallah, 1990, pp. 222-223) This is because the popular base of this current is weak, especially since it speaks on every occasion of such matters that recognize the existence of an Algerian state and support association with France.

The student must stop at what was stated in this newspaper and wonder on what basis the Islamic world welcomed this project, especially since its content contradicts the principles of the peoples of the Arab and Islamic region. This is because, as we have seen, the provisions of the order, as a whole, provided for thousands of Algerians to obtain French citizenship and nationality, thus calling for integration. As for its belief that France can integrate everyone despite ideological and customary differences, this is possible for the editors of this newspaper, given their affiliation with the same imperialist colonialist.



### CONCLUSION

The points made by Charles de Gaulle are similar to such matters related to past reforms dating back to the third decade of the twentieth century by French leaders, and it is clear that such solutions always come at a time when the occupying administration is in a dilemma and presents these points for the purpose of either silencing the popular base or to gain time, as is the case this time, the aim of these measures brought by de Gaulle is clear: World War II is still ongoing and France is in an unenviable position, so it offers such solutions for appeasement only.

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