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Chairman: Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Kurka (Czechoslovakia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 71

Question of Algeria (A/4418 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2) (continued)

**GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF THE
DRAFT RESOLUTION (continued)**

1. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) regretted that the French delegation was absent, especially as the French Government had not objected to the question of Algeria being placed on the agenda. That form of non-co-operation was incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations.

2. The General Assembly had just adopted a resolution on colonialism (resolution 1514 (XV)) without opposition even from France. He hoped that the draft resolution on the question of Algeria would also be adopted without opposition because of the sacrifices which the Algerian people had made in order to achieve its freedom, and also because of the situation in Africa and the importance of the question for world peace and security. That would not be a diplomatic reprisal against French policy, but a last appeal to President de Gaulle and his Government in order to let them know that the world did not look kindly upon the recent massacres. Whether or not the French Government was responsible, it was still true that Algeria was under the authority of France and that that was the only reason for the denial of its independence. It was therefore essential that the Assembly should take a decision without delay.

3. Algeria was a colony, and the United Nations thus had the right to end that colonial rule. Algeria had been conquered by force of arms in 1830, and since 1832 the Algerian people had constantly opposed French domination. He recalled the history of the Algerian people since that time, and remarked that there had never been equality between those who were called Algerian Moslems and the French, although they were all called French citizens. When President de Gaulle had promised the Algerian people self-determination, India and other countries had thought that France would not lose that opportunity to settle the question. Only by fulfilling its promise could the

French Government convince the Algerian people and the rest of the world of its good intentions. A liberated Algeria could then take its place beside the other States Members of the United Nations. The right of self-determination could not be denied to the Algerian people under the pretext that there were no Algerians to negotiate with, for the National Liberation Front (FLN) had been fighting for seven years and had made great sacrifices.

4. The members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), whether they were imperialist countries or not, were responsible for the massacres of the Algerian people, because moral and material support from NATO had allowed France, Belgium, Portugal and other countries to continue the colonial exploitation of Africa and Asia. The situation was particularly serious now that France was an atomic Power. In view of the "atomic isolation" which had been proclaimed by President de Gaulle, it might use its atomic weapons even against the Algerian people. As France had made its first nuclear test in spite of a General Assembly resolution adopted by a large majority (resolution 1379 (XIV)), there was no reason to think that it would respect public opinion in the present instance. That was why the liberation of Algeria had become a matter of urgent importance.

5. The National Liberation Army had 130,000 men, while France had more than half a million soldiers in Algeria, some of whom were Africans. Two-thirds of the French Air Force was also in Algeria, but that would have been impossible if NATO had not agreed to protect the metropolitan territory of France. Yet, if the Algerians had also obtained aircraft—an eventuality which would only have complicated the situation—what a cry there would have been in the United Nations. Half the French Navy was being used to prevent the Algerian people from getting supplies and to strike terror into them. France also had an entire police force in Algeria, together with special security units and torture squads, the civilian militia having been dissolved in January 1960. It was therefore a completely unequal combat, in which, according to French statistics, 13,000 French soldiers had been killed up to November 1959, as against 145,000 Algerian soldiers, to which should be added about 450,000 or 550,000 wounded.

6. The economic and human consequences of the Algerian war must also be taken into account. More than half a million Algerians had been displaced and forcibly settled in resettlement centres, which were really concentration camps. There were now 100,000 Algerians in military detention camps and 300,000 refugees in Tunisia and Morocco. It was clear that the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War was being violated. The Secretary-General should report on that matter to the Assembly, which had a duty to ensure that the Geneva Conventions of 1949 were being observed.

7. The Indian Government realized that General de Gaulle had made an honest effort when he had spoken of an "Algerian Algeria" and of self-determination, but it could not understand why the French Government had taken towards the representatives of the Provisional Government of Algeria who had gone to Melun in June 1960 an attitude which, as was apparent, for example, from various United States newspapers, had led to the failure of the negotiations. In the circumstances, steps must be taken to achieve the independence of Algeria. The Indian delegation therefore supported the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2). While in general it thought that the United Nations should not intervene or exercise supervision unless invited by the parties concerned, the special circumstances in Algeria justified intervention, because they involved a colonial war which endangered the peace and security of the world. France must therefore be told that the only way to settle the question was to end the thralldom of Algeria and to give that country its independence.

Sir Claude Corea (Ceylon) took the Chair.

8. Mr. DELGADO (Philippines) said that he had already stated during the general debate in the Assembly (888th meeting) how much the Philippine delegation regretted that General de Gaulle's policy in favour of an "Algerian Algeria" had not so far produced any positive results. Recent developments in Algeria had sharpened that regret to anguish. The French military forces appeared to have taken such violent action against the Moslem population of Algeria that the United Nations could no longer confine itself to the expression of pious wishes. There was also a danger that the number of casualties would mount as the situation deteriorated. The massacre of the Algerian demonstrators was deplorable in itself, but the fact that they had gathered to greet General de Gaulle who had promised them self-determination made it even more so. While General de Gaulle undoubtedly deplored the acts of violence, a number of things were proved by those tragic incidents. The first was that contrary to what was claimed by the "ultras" the Moslem population of Algeria did not prefer integration or association with France to independence. The second was that, as General de Gaulle himself had said, Algeria was not a province of France. Thirdly, the failure of the French Government to protect the lives and interests of the Moslem population of Algeria made the Algerian question a legitimate concern of the United Nations. The General Assembly must therefore call upon the French Government to desist forthwith from further acts of repression and to respect the desire of the vast majority of the Algerian people for independence.

9. Because of the turn of events, the referendum through which General de Gaulle wished the French people to support his policy of self-determination would not change the developments taking place in Algeria. The same thing might almost be said of the referendum proposed in the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2). There was no longer any doubt that such a referendum would result in a massive vote in favour of Algerian independence, for people who were ready to die for their liberty could scarcely be expected to vote against it in a referendum. If, however, a referendum was held, the French Government should ensure the Algerian people of a genuine freedom of choice through some kind of United

Nations participation. If the French Government was not willing to allow the United Nations to hold the referendum, the dispatch of a team of United Nations observers, with the agreement of the French Government, might perhaps be considered as an alternative.

10. No one who had watched the sustained efforts of General de Gaulle to solve the Algerian question could be insensitive to his sincerity and devotion. General de Gaulle had realized that the Algerian war was merely weakening France, whereas he was determined to restore his country's greatness. He had likewise been incapable of remaining indifferent to the economic difficulties and the loss of life that the war had imposed. It was therefore essential to grant Algeria its independence and thus end a conflict that was dividing the French people themselves. The principles enunciated by General de Gaulle were unexceptionable, and long before the French Government had embarked upon its policy of self-determination, the Philippine delegation had gone on record as favouring the application of that principle to Algeria. There was a danger, however, that the cold war might extend to Algeria. It was therefore imperative for the United Nations to tell General de Gaulle, who was facing the Algerian problem with unparalleled courage, and the vast majority of the French people, who supported his policy, that the only just and practicable solution to the problem was to grant Algeria independence.

11. Mr. BRUCAN (Romania) said that the recent tragic events at Algiers and in other towns of Algeria and the savage repression by the French Army of peaceful Algerian demonstrations had reminded the world and the United Nations that that unhappy country was undergoing a colonial war waged not only against the National Liberation Army but against the Algerian people as a whole. Algerian men, women, children and elderly people had shown that they preferred to die rather than remain under the colonial yoke.

12. The Algerian question, although complicated by extraneous elements, was a clear-cut colonial issue. General de Gaulle had recognized as much when he had said on 4 November 1960 that the Algerian problem had been pending for 130 years, or, in other words, ever since French colonizers had taken over the country by force and subjected its indigenous people to foreign domination.

13. Two elements made the problem more difficult: the French settlers and NATO. Although it had been said that the presence of 800,000 European settlers in Algeria was a factor that complicated the Algerian problem from the military, political and economic point of view, it should be noted that that factor was being exaggerated in order to block independence for Algeria. The presence of the European settlers was even being used as an argument against any United Nations action in Algeria. However, the 10 million Algerians who were unable to leave their country were ignored.

14. The colonial Powers spent their time preaching about freedom, democracy and human rights, but when it was a question of choosing between the interests of 800,000 settlers and the cause of 10 million Algerians, they still came out in favour of the settlers. While the situation of the European settlers could no doubt be regarded as one of the problems of social

adjustment in an independent Algeria, it could not be used as an argument against the sacred right of the Algerian people to be free in their own country.

15. Some speakers had established the fact that the French forces operating in Algeria were equipped with weapons, aeroplanes and helicopters made in the United States. It was interesting to note that, in recent years, France had always been at the top of the list of recipient countries under the United States military assistance programmes; in fact, the Congressional Record showed that France had received twice as much in military aid as any other country. The principal theatre of military operations by the French forces was Algeria. The inevitable conclusion was, therefore, that the Algerian war was substantially subsidized by the United States.

16. There was also the question of Saharan oil. In January 1969, the Rockefeller group, through Standard Oil of New Jersey, had been the first of the American companies to sign an agreement with France to participate in the development of Saharan oil. The French Government had granted Standard Oil a 50 per cent interest and other concessions. In August 1960, the United States and France had ratified an agreement^{1/} designed to serve the interests of United States companies and businessmen who had commercial dealings with France. Article XV of that agreement provided that it would apply, as concerned the French Republic, "to the metropolitan departments, the Algerian departments, the departments of The Oasis and Saoura, the departments of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guiana and Réunion". If, therefore, the United States was exerting its influence to oppose the draft resolution submitted by a group of African and Asian countries (A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2), its object was not only to help France, but primarily to help itself. The draft resolution must, therefore, be adopted, since it would to some extent prevent the Western Powers, and particularly the United States, from continuing to subsidize and give political support to the Algerian war.

17. The objections raised by the United Kingdom representative (1130th meeting) to the draft resolution were easily understood. The fact that a relentless war was being waged on the Algerian people seemed to make no impression on the United Kingdom delegation which had seen worse. If, however, in matters of war or peace, the United Nations adopted the British watchword "wait and see", one might ask what was the use of the United Nations.

18. There was no doubt that, if adopted, the resolution would contribute to a settlement of the Algerian problem. In the first place, it would have a considerable impact in France. It was no mere chance that the principal French official statements on Algeria during the past three years had been made just before the debate on Algeria in the United Nations. That showed that the French Government paid great attention to the United Nations debates and decisions on Algeria. The resolution would also strengthen the French position in favour of self-determination, the need for which had been recognized by General de Gaulle. Secondly, the resolution would strengthen the Algerian position for self-determination and would

have a moderating effect on the French settlers. Thirdly, it would destroy, once and for all, the aberration that a referendum in Algeria could be held under the control of the colonial administration and of the French Army, which had just given a tragic example of its impartiality and restraint. Fourthly, the resolution would to some extent prevent the NATO allies of France from continuing to supply weapons, or to subsidize and give diplomatic support to the Algerian war. All those effects would help a great deal towards a settlement of the Algerian question. Finally, the adoption of the draft resolution would rehabilitate the United Nations, which so far had shirked its responsibility in regard to the Algerian question.

Mr. Kurka (Czechoslovakia) took the Chair.

19. Mr. AIKEN (Ireland) said that he deplored the tragic events in Algeria. If there was to be true peace in the world, the Algerian people must rule itself according to its own wishes. The sooner that came about, the more peaceful would be the transition, and the better it would be for the whole world. Ireland had welcomed the constructive declarations of President de Gaulle. It did not doubt that he could negotiate a just settlement, the necessity of which was recognized by all. There must be an end to the present situation, with the opportunities it presented to trouble-makers who were not concerned with the welfare of the Algerian people or the French people.

20. The Irish delegation appealed for the setting aside of all obstacles to peaceful negotiations that might lead to a solution guaranteeing the rights both of the majority and of minorities. Minorities had their rights, but any attempt to secure advantages for them to the detriment of the majority would be unjust and would create conditions prejudicial to all concerned and dangerous for world peace. The minorities could not, for example, make a mockery of the rights of the majority by partitioning the territory. At the same time, members of minority groups who wished to remain in Algeria were entitled to constitutional guarantees, and those who wished to leave the country had the right to just compensation.

21. In the prevailing circumstances, the idea of international supervision of the referendum should be universally welcomed. It was important that the results should not be open to question either by men of good will or by mischief-makers. Some years previously, the Irish delegation had proposed that the elections in Algeria should be supervised by nationals of countries accustomed to free elections.

22. His delegation would prefer the operative part of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2) to be replaced by the following:

"Urgently recommends that immediate negotiations take place for the implementation, under adequate and effective guarantees, of the right of the people of Algeria to self-determination for their entire country, and decides that the services of the United Nations be available for the working out of such guarantees."

23. That would make the draft resolution more realistic, for the United Nations did not have the power to carry out a decision that elections should be held. The amendment would make it easier to attain the desired goal, namely, self-determination and pro-

^{1/} Convention of Establishment between France and the United States of America, signed at Paris on 25 November 1959 (see Department of State Bulletin, vol. XLI, No. 1067, December 7, 1959, p. 829).

gress for the Algerian people, with the co-operation and active good will of the French people.

24. It was also important that the questions put to the electorate in a referendum should be so formulated as to indicate clearly the alternatives between which they could choose. Consideration might be given in that regard to the establishment of a constituent assembly which would be freely elected by all the Algerian people and would have the power to negotiate a detailed, comprehensive agreement on which the people of Algeria could vote. In that way the passions aroused during a bitter struggle might be abated, and all sectors of Algerian opinion could make known their views concerning the details of the agreement.

25. In conclusion, he wished to appeal for an immediate and unconditional truce. He trusted that urgent efforts would be made to begin negotiations for a peaceful and lasting settlement of the problem in keeping with the rights of all elements of the Algerian population and in the interests of France.

26. Mr. ILLUECA (Panama) recalled that his delegation had been one of the sponsors of resolution 1495 (XV) on co-operation of Member States, which the General Assembly had adopted unanimously on 17 October 1960. He thus felt it incumbent upon him to participate in the current debate in the hope of contributing to the search for a peaceful solution which would put an end to the bloodshed and suffering which the Algerian conflict entailed.

27. The Algerian problem had taken on international significance for a number of reasons, several of which had been set forth in General Assembly resolutions 1012 (XI) of 15 February 1957 and 1184 (XII) of 10 December 1957.

28. The crux of the present debate was the exercise by the Algerian people of the right of self-determination proclaimed by General de Gaulle on 16 September 1959. At the fourteenth session (1076th meeting), the Panamanian representative had observed that General de Gaulle's statement, objectively interpreted, also recognized the Algerian people's political capacity freely to decide their own future and to administer their own national affairs and international relations. That was a prospect which had opened to them the way to complete independence.

29. It should be recognized that President de Gaulle had tried in good faith to settle the Algerian problem. Despite the considerable obstacles which he had had to overcome, he had never gone back on his promise. That was demonstrated by his recent visit to Algeria and by his statement at Blida on 10 December 1960 in which he had recognized the following facts: first, that as a result of the insurrection the Algerians, the great majority of whom were Moslems, had acquired a self-awareness which they had not possessed before; secondly, that a liberation movement worldwide in scope had swept over Africa and all the lands formerly under imperial rule and could not but affect Algeria; and thirdly, that France must take a decision regarding Algeria, for the sake not only of its own honour and conscience but also of its role in the world. General de Gaulle had added that it would be vain to pretend that Algeria was a province such as Lorraine or Provence. Algeria, he had said, was Algerian, and with every passing day the force of

circumstances was making it more Algerian than the day before. The United Nations should therefore make every effort to bring its action into harmony with the lofty intentions of the President of the French Republic.

30. Mr. Illueca recalled the debates in the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly concerning international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination, as also the resolutions on that subject that had been adopted by the General Assembly beginning with its fifth session. Of particular interest was resolution 637 (VII) of 16 December 1952, which stated, *inter alia*, that Member States should facilitate the exercise of the right of self-determination, the wishes of the people being ascertained through plebiscites or other recognized democratic means, preferably under the auspices of the United Nations.

31. Furthermore, resolution 1188 (XII), which the General Assembly had adopted on 11 December 1957, reaffirmed the principles embodied in resolution 545 (VI) that all States, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing Territories, should promote the realization of that right, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

32. The French Government, under the leadership of General de Gaulle, had stated that on 8 January 1961 a referendum would be held in Algeria and in France to determine whether the metropolitan population and the Algerian population authorized the President of the French Republic to revise the structure of the Algerian public administration with a view to the establishment of an autonomous Government. It had announced at the same time that a second referendum would be held in Algeria to enable the Algerians to decide their political status for themselves.

33. As President de Gaulle had proclaimed the principles set forth in the General Assembly resolutions referred to, there were ample grounds for anticipating that an arrangement could be found which would ensure the exercise by the Algerian people as a whole of its right to self-determination and independence and would put an end to the violence which had plunged so many Algerian and French homes into mourning. That was a duty which the conscience of the United Nations would not allow it to evade.

34. Mr. ADAM (Somalia) thought that the situation in Algeria had become so tragic that the Committee should proceed immediately to adopt recommendations on the action to be taken. The Algerian war had now entered its seventh year, and the reason was that the Algerian people, unlike their African brothers, had been denied the opportunity to express by peaceful means their desire to become independent. It was vital to put an end to the massacre of a people whose only crime had been to fight for a freedom which all independent countries, including France itself, took for granted. The part being played by NATO in the Algerian war was particularly disquieting. It was distressing that that alliance had come to the point where it was suppressing the very principles for the defence of which it had ostensibly been established. Some members of NATO had, moreover, been active in the political arena in attempting to restrain the United Nations from taking any action designed to

restore peace and freedom to Algeria. That was why, at the fourteenth session, a draft resolution on Algeria had not obtained the necessary majority.

35. It was clear that General de Gaulle, sincere though he might be, faced formidable opposition and that his visit to Algeria to ascertain the state of mind there had unavoidably provoked serious disturbances. The settlers had demonstrated against his policy and had not hesitated to shout "de Gaulle to the gallows".

36. On the other hand, the overwhelming majority of the Algerian people had come out in favour of self-determination, thus showing to the whole world that they were solidly behind the FLN. It was sad that the French Army, which had been indifferent to the settlers' demonstrations, had fired on the helpless masses whose only weapon was the flag of the national movement. Just once had the Army opposed the rioting of French settlers.

37. It had been said that it would be better to leave the settlement of the question to President de Gaulle so as not to add to his difficulties. It might be asked, however, whether he would be able to overcome the avowed enemies of his policies who could rely on the backing of the Army. It might also be asked whether the failure to act immediately might not imply legalizing the continuation of hostilities. The fact was that to leave matters to France could only mean allowing it to continue the massacres. A great number of intellectuals, in the United States as well as in France, had denounced the war in Algeria and had called for the translation into practical terms of the Algerian people's right to self-determination. The Assembly could not keep silent when others who did not bear the same responsibility had seen fit to speak so clearly. Nothing short of United Nations action could help President de Gaulle and the Algerian people to ensure the peaceful exercise of the right to self-determination. That was the only way to avoid a failure which would have serious consequences not only for Algeria, but also for France itself.

38. The problem of Algeria was essentially a colonial problem. Its international character had been recognized from the moment when the General Assembly had placed it on the agenda. The Algerians knew what their choice would be if they were given the chance to express themselves freely. Those who opposed self-determination also knew it, and they were clinging to the false hope, to a fiction which no intelligent person could accept, that Algeria could remain part of France. When a referendum had been held by France in what was called "French Somaliland", the inhabitants had allegedly chosen integration with France, yet they were still agitating for independence and integration with the Republic of Somalia. That was an example of a referendum held under unfair conditions to ensure compulsory integration with France.

39. President de Gaulle's policy of self-determination did not exclude the possibility of partitioning Algeria. That was merely another version of the idea of a French Algeria, limited, to be sure, to certain parts of the territory. The Prime Minister and the members of the Algerian Provisional Government, and before them the leaders of the FLN, had stated, however, that there would be no discrimination of any kind in a free and independent Algeria and that all the Europeans there would be treated on the basis of

equality with the other inhabitants of the country. There was accordingly no reason why Algeria should be dismembered. Because his delegation was convinced that a referendum held by France could not be fair to the cause of the Algerian people and thus could not be regarded as binding on them, it urged the adoption of the draft resolution of which it was a sponsor.

40. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) read out a Tass Agency bulletin published on 15 December 1960. The recent events in Algeria, it said, had shown the true nature and purpose of the French Government's policy, as well as the reaction which that policy had provoked among the Algerian people. The "ultras", together with units of the French Army and "security forces", had proceeded to a mass repression of the Algerians who had demonstrated peaceably in favour of a just and peaceful settlement on the basis of self-determination. Tanks and armoured cars had been used against the demonstrators. The head of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, Mr. Ferhat Abbas, had on 12 December 1960 asked several Heads of State, and various United Nations delegations, to take steps to end the massacre and the flagrant act of genocide against the Algerian people which that repression involved. He had said that the Arab quarters of the main Algerian towns had been surrounded by French troops and that their inhabitants, particularly in the Casbah of Algiers, were threatened with mass extermination. Those incidents showed that French ruling circles, who professed to be in favour of a peaceful settlement and of self-determination, were in reality seeking to impose their will on the peaceable people of Algeria, whom they intended to keep under colonial domination. They emphasized the need for the taking of urgent steps to settle the question, as requested by the peace-loving States, with an immediate termination of the war in Algeria and a guarantee for the exercise by the Algerian people of its right to independence and self-determination. The repressive measures taken against that people constituted another disgraceful episode in the history of colonialism. The massacre of peaceful Algerian civilians was arousing anger and indignation throughout the world, and even among a large section of the French public. The Soviet people, whose sympathies went out to all peoples that were struggling for their freedom and independence, strongly condemned those criminal acts and demanded their cessation. The Tass bulletin concluded by saying that the leaders of the Soviet Union were convinced that joint efforts by all peace-loving countries would make it possible to end the colonial war which was raging in Algeria and which threatened peace throughout the world.

41. The USSR delegation believed that action must be taken without any more delay, in order to prevent a further deterioration of the tragic situation in Algeria.

42. Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) said that he could not remain an indifferent spectator in a debate which affected the future of every Mediterranean people. Italy needed to extend its relations of friendship and co-operation with all those peoples, among whom large numbers of Italians resided. The Algerians were one such people, and the Italian delegation sincerely hoped that they would be enabled to determine their own future in peace. It was a question,

no longer of propping up crumbling walls, but of building new ones with an eye to the future.

43. The United Nations could contribute to a solution of the problem only if it displayed moderation, realism and wisdom. If it allowed itself to be carried away by emotion and sought to promote Algerian independence against or without France, it would merely make Algeria's evolution more difficult. It was important to pave the way to co-operation between two peoples which, despite their suspicion and resentment in regard to each other, had more reason to unite than to diverge. That was the guiding principle of President de Gaulle's present policy.

44. The President of the French Republic had repeatedly acknowledged that Algeria would have to decide its own future; he had arranged for a referendum to be held in January 1961, and had opened the electoral campaign by personally speaking in favour of an Algerian Algeria. Those facts must be recognized, even though his recent journey had been marred by bloodshed, and irrespective of any attempt to apportion blame for the incidents in question. President de Gaulle had acted in that way because of

his realization that his historic mission was to lead Algeria to independence with the consent and collaboration of France. The statement made by the representative of Senegal (1129th meeting) in that connexion could not be bettered. Italy for its part hoped that independence would come about as speedily as possible, but in co-operation with France. For that reason the Italian delegation could not approve the last two operative paragraphs of the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.265 and Add. 1-2), although it appreciated the spirit and motives of its sponsors.

45. The impatience of certain delegations could readily be understood. But it was doubtful whether the harsh decisions advocated, decisions which the French people could hardly regard as friendly, were likely to facilitate a peaceful solution. Whatever might be said, the years that had gone by had not been entirely barren. Like the seed which put forth its shoots beneath the soil, generous and productive ideas always took time to mature.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.