

ALASTAIR HORNE. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962*. 606pp. Macmillan. £8.95 0 333 41398 9. □ This is the story of the Algerian struggle for independence from France, between the Moslem revolutionaries of the FLN and the counter-revolutionary *piednoirs*, the European settlers, with their cry of *Algérie française!*, though Alastair Horne informs us that only one-fifth of them were of French origin. It is a sickening story of escalation, of an atrocity on one side provoking greater atrocities on the other, with the bomb outrages of the FLN being followed by collective punishments of Moslem communities, by the execution and torture of the terrorists, and lynching of Moslems by the *piednoirs* – which drove many of the previously passive Moslems to support the FLN. But public opinion in France was shocked by the savagery of the repression, above all by the use of torture by the army. It is interesting to note that many of the leaders of the agitation in France against torture were former members of the French resistance who had themselves been tortured by the Gestapo. Most of them were left-wing, but none were members of the Communist Party, because the FLN, for all its semi-Marxist doctrines, was always anti-Communist. Once, when they captured a local Communist Party secretary, they cut off his hands. This book deserves all the praise and prizes which it received when it was first published in 1977. It was reviewed in the *TLS* on April 21, 1978.