

ALGIERS FERMENT.

Is there any possible, peaceful way out of the situation in Algeria? That is the crucial question all France (indeed the whole world) has been asking. People of the capital of Algeria rebelled against De Gaulle over his intention to give the country self determination. They tore up the roadway to make barricades, in the historic French way, as soon as their idol, Parachute General Massu, was ordered back to Paris. How would De Gaulle meet this defiance?

Never has the President faced a more difficult problem. He went to the Elysee Palace, reflecting that he was put there, in power, largely by the million-strong white colony of Algeria. Now, as he told the French nation, the colony threatened civil war. Back from Algeria came Premier Debreé, reporting that he had got nowhere during his brief visit there. Just when the President would go over himself was not announced at this stage. Critics say he has waited too long before getting to grips with the right wing Algerian Frenchmen. But it was they who first said, De Gaulle to power. In Algeria, for a few days, the position would have been comic, had its possibilities been less serious. For while the troops took no action, the rebels were free to come and go behind meaningless barricades. Temporarily they had no one to rebel against. But it could be the beginning of civil war. And if it spread no further (always a big 'if' nowadays) it could be tragic both for Algeria and France.