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THE MEDIA COMMANDOS IN ALGERIA

I. Latif

Free or indoctrinated Press?	652
The division of labour between the journalists and the armed forces	654
'Those who are not with us are against us'	656
Terrorism is omnipresent...	658
...but on the road to extinction	659
The exploitation of the dead for political ends	661
When a painful past catches up with an equally painful present	662
In search of allies	663
'All dialogue is simply treason'	664
'Fear must change sides'	665
'Patriots', defenders of freedom	666
The manipulation of European fantasies	668
The imperialist dimension of the discourse on 'Terrorism'	670
Press: Victim or Culprit?	673
Appendix: Inter-ministerial decree for security information	678

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Free or indoctrinated Press?

Republican Algeria must be saved by any means, legal or illegal, for such is the direction of history.¹

This slogan must be considered to be the prelude to future warmongering speeches. While events moved fast the day after the halting of the electoral process in January 1992, the press, which had truly blossomed since 1989, was going to experience a decline that would sound the death-knell for the majority of the Arabic-language media and some French-language newspapers, but especially for all those opposed to the military government.

To understand precisely the role of the so-called 'independent press', one must distinguish between different aspects of the problem. The press, while being a war-horse in the discourse on democracy, is at the same time a party to a struggle being played out on several levels, and a victim of the latter. Several mechanisms have subjected the press to censorship, and economic constraints which, though far less despicable, are just as limiting.

The press was brought to heel following the interruption of the elections,² not only by being threatened with a ban on publication, but also by facing temporary or final suspension for disobeying instructions regarding 'the struggle against subversion and terrorism'³ or the confidential circular from the Ministry of Interior concerning the 'processing of security-related information', dated 7 June 1994.^A This circular represented a veritable code of practice for media manipulation. It was aimed at 'the editors and those in charge of the national press', and advised that 'at the time when all the efforts of the living strength of the Nation are directed to the eradication of terrorism and subversion, I know I can count on your positive contribution to the struggle against terrorism and subversion.' Article 1 informed those concerned that a department of communication, responsible for relations with the media and the explanation and broadcasting of official communiqués about the 'security situation', had been set up. Finally, the latest measure taken by the Ministry of Interior dates from 11 February 1996, and concerns the establishment of 'panels of readers' at the printing-presses in order to check and censure 'news regarding the security situation not officially confirmed.'⁴ Since then, around ten newspapers have been seized or suspended.⁵

^A See copy of the circular in the appendix.

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The state sector advertising market, distributed according to the newspapers, cannot hide the existence of a wish within the authorities to bring to heel publications that refuse to obey orders.⁶

Between the censorship dictated by the anti-terrorist law and the self-censorship imposed by the journalists themselves lie the struggles between the factions in power, of which every newspaper is made the spokesperson. Without patronage from within the army, no newspaper can survive, and to exist, it has to toe the patron's line of conduct. One false step can lead to a ban, whether legal or financial. Thus practically all the newspapers with an editorial line advocating reconciliation and dialogue between protagonists and political parties have been banned. To date the latest are *El Hourriya* and the *Nation*, which have been missing from the news-stands since December 1996.

Even more than the suspensions imposed for disobedience to 'directives', the state can subjugate the press organisations by the use of monopolies. Thus it is the owner of the only four printing presses in the country, and has blocked a grant from UNESCO intended for the installation of a private printing press. As for the Algerian Printing Company (SIA), it has a virtual monopoly on paper imports.⁷ Another effective instrument of subjugation and sanction is the advertising monopoly mentioned above, nearly 90 per cent of which is controlled by the National Agency for Publishing and Advertising (ANEP).

While emphasising the constraints and pressures which the private press endures every day, one must nevertheless examine closely its active role in the current conflict. To regard it only as a scapegoat would be playing into the hands of the very people who, in the name of freedom of expression, are revealing themselves as its enemies.

The control of the media in general and the press in particular have a long tradition dating back to the colonial period, passing through the period of the one-party system. A large group of journalists, whose professional and political cultures and outlooks were moulded during their practice of journalism under military-backed one-party socialist rule, today claim for themselves the monopoly of democratic culture. They are ready to take advice from the generals, patrons of the same democracy monopoly. The fact that *L'Authentique* is 'the newspaper' of General Betchine is now an open secret. '*Liberté*, the daily, run for a long time from Paris by a certain Fattani, formerly in charge of the Surveillance and Protection Office (BSP) of *El Moudjahid*'⁸, is one of the newspapers most strongly opposed to those who are committed to a political solution.

The alliances of military and cultural eradicators goes beyond objective complicity resulting from a convergence of ideological interests. The latter agree

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654

National Responses

to create the ideological cover for repression, justifying in the eyes of world opinion the eradication option and the rule of its advocates.⁹

The government press but also, in large part, the private press carry out this task either out of political conviction, 'corporatist reaction', or even as a 'professional' commitment.

Dependent on the government for its financial survival and, in short, for its existence, dominated by anti-Muslim-fundamentalist trends, it [the independent press] has been swiftly taken hostage by the government. Feeling it is at war with the FIS and then the armed groups, it has written very little about the abuse of which the Islamists have been victims. It has not been the witness of political life, but has become one of its principal actors, particularly when the armed groups have attacked journalists.¹⁰

In this psychological war waged by the military junta and its associated apparatus, the role of the press is not a minor one. The pressures that it endures, notably physical liquidation,¹¹ does not mean it is a victim or a martyr of democracy. It is playing an active part in this war waged by the junta in power.

What is more, certain publications, often quick to display themselves as martyrs for the freedom of the press, are not exempt from criticism in their treatment of information and their behaviour. Unhesitatingly, they implicate by name their critics, those they deem wrong for not thinking as they do, and those who support another point of view on the war that is ravaging our country. They have long made the choice of political commitment to the government and its allies.¹²

The division of labour between the journalists and the armed forces

As in all wars, the psychological dimension is the determining factor. At all levels it is the war option that stands out. The resulting pattern of analysis is disconcertingly simple, but fraught with consequences. Each person must make his/her choice, while knowing that there is no choice; deviation from the path marked out by the junta and its civilian allies means death, even if the supporters of total war strive to reverse the roles. Leila Aslaoui, a former minister, describes this situation perfectly when she writes about the call for peace launched in November 1996:

The call of the Saint Egidians and other reconcilers is on the contrary a call for surrender to fascism and a call for civil war... Peace is not a concept. It is built on the debris of war, with all what that signifies.¹³

The Algerian press, in coming to the assistance of the generals, uses an entire symbolic and ideological arsenal to produce a Manichean view of the situation. First of all, the demonisation of a movement that twice gained the majority through the polls was carried out by likening it to a fascist movement, comparable to the German National Socialist party, which in 1933

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established itself through the ballot-box, and subsequently by identifying it with barbaric terrorism whose only historical analogue are the barbaric Khmers Rouge; in Algeria, this press refers to them as 'Khmers Verts'. In alliance with the press, there is a panoply of small political parties and cultural organisations, portrayed as 'civil society', which, without wishing to deny their existence, represent acronyms more than significant sections of society. This 'civil society' claims to embody the backbone of 'the democratic republican state', if only the latter allowed it to develop fully. But the generals have no interest in cultural or feminist claims, of which part of the press makes itself the spokesperson. On the other hand they are extremely useful in a psychological war aimed at confusing opinions. To the democrats who support the war option is allocated a certain amount of expression – not to say gesticulation – that is tuned and sufficiently under control so as not to affect 'national trends and eternal values'. What matters to the Algerian decision-makers is not so much a 'project for society', democratic or otherwise, but the preservation of their power and privileges. It is, nevertheless, convenient for the latter to base their authority on a modernism which, although modelled on French republicanism, is only its pitiful caricature, but, all the same, sufficiently presentable as a 'bastion of resistance' and effective at arousing a 'spirit of solidarity' among Western public opinion against 'religious fanaticism'. Besides monopolising the concepts of democracy, justice, freedom and human rights (which are applicable only to a certain category of Algerians), the republican rhetoric manipulates the symbolism of a just and legitimate war which draws its imagery and language from the myths of the struggle for national liberation and French resistance to fascism.

The minds of the Algerian 'republicans', whether politicians or intellectuals, have been imbued with a deep-seated Islamophobia whose forerunners were the ethnologists and anthropologists of colonisation, and whose resemblance to current Western stereotyping of Islam is more than striking. Islam is allegedly the source of degeneration and extremism, incompatible with modernity and republican values. This colonisation of the intellect has devastating consequences in the sense that, in Algeria, universal ideas and values such as freedom, human dignity and social justice are usurped solely for the cause of war.

Algerian and foreign public opinion is hammered into shape by a unique interpretation that labels facts as 'events' or 'non-events'. Since the struggle against terrorism is declared to be the national priority, complicity with the military junta, the guarantor of democracy, becomes justified. This also means that dissenting outlooks or analyses are stifled or censored as support for terrorism. Yet war is not mentioned, for that would mean taking the enemy seriously and legitimising its existence, whereas all forces are mobilised to conceal, minimise and eradicate it. No method is more carefully used than

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656

National Responses

the slogan launched by the military forces themselves, which incites defamation, the propagation of lies, calls for incrimination,¹⁴ and systematic disinformation. As journalist Boussad Abdiche points out:

We are moving without any transition from stereotyped to vitriolic language, from the era of the muzzled press to the era of the press that is frankly wild. The greatest destroyers of the men and the system are the same people who, only yesterday, actually swore by these men and this system.¹⁵

Between 1989 and 1992, the government or privately controlled press did not have time to ponder over its role and professional code of ethics. Following the coup, it had to act fast to go back to the 'military academy'. The vast majority of journalists retrained without any difficulty in a journalism of hatred and the legitimisation of the war option.

In an article entitled 'The Last Chance' retired general Rachid Benyelles wrote: 'the media have been unleashed to condemn publicly the supporters of the political solution and reconciliation, who are again portrayed as traitors to the national cause.'¹⁶

As we shall see later from concrete examples, the Algerian press has gone beyond submission to the rules laid down by the generals to participate in active service in their ranks, accomplishing their mission perhaps unprofessionally but certainly with zeal.

'Those who are not with us are against us'

After the elections of January 1992 were halted, part of the self-proclaimed independent press swiftly took sides in what the government, in the words of its head, called a 'total war'. It set itself up as the mouthpiece of the factions most hostile towards the popular movements.¹⁷ The principal enemy of the republic and democracy was firstly the FIS, which by its nature could only be a terrorist party. Secondly, war was declared on all those who had direct or indirect contact with this party. The signatories to the Rome agreement, which brought together the most important opposition parties, were demonised and portrayed as objective accomplices to terrorism.

Yesterday, while Ahmed Ben Bella was warmly embracing Anouar Haddam, a member of the caliphate of the GIA, at Rome, under the benevolent gaze of Catholic Church representatives several of whose members have been assassinated by the men of the same Anouar Haddam in Algeria, a 7 year old child had his throat cut in Tazoult, in the wilaya of Batna.¹⁸

The only discourse on terrorism that is allowed is the preserve of the authorities and the authorised 'propaganda organs', private or not, both of which impose the monopoly of defining terms. State terrorism does not exist, and every 'terrorist' act, real or not, is attributed to perpetrators other than the government. Therefore it is not appropriate to speak of the torture

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and massacres of civilians carried out by government forces. It is out of the question that the existence of ‘armed groups’ might be a reaction to the interruption of the elections and the repression that was consequently inflicted on every level of society. It is above all inconceivable that an armed opposition could be linked to colonial violence: a reaction to a structural violence that has never completely disappeared. On the contrary, it is deeply rooted and latent in the power structure of a regime built on the foundations of the colonial state and on French support to the military and the self-proclaimed Algerian ‘democrats’.

The message of the majority of the politicians in power or in the ‘authorised’ opposition regarding terrorism, and circulated by the press, does not linger too long over the semantics of terms. Their conception of terrorism is so vague and yet so heavily fraught with consequences; it is above all an ideological and psychological weapon against any enemy. This enemy, the ‘terrorist’, is not simply the brutal, uncultured young man, the FIS militant who wants to impose the Islamic state by force, shedding the blood of all those thirsting for democracy and freedom.

The man who had been standing for sometime did not have the appearance of a leader of a bloodthirsty fundamentalist group. With his delicate, emaciated face, his short fuzzy hair and the appearance of an obedient child, he would make one think of the victim rather than of the executioner. He was reminiscent of a peasant in this small village... And only his threatening voice indicated the presence of the vile, ferocious beast that slept inside him. [...] His name? His name matters little. In any case. Mourad is no longer a human being. Mourad is the name of a killing-machine.¹⁹

Moreover, he is Machiavellian, since he ‘infects’ our children, searching among these unfortunate, naive victims for a relay for his criminal acts. We have to be on our guard: the terrorist can be found everywhere like ‘the fish in the sea’. He can be our colleague, our neighbour, and, why not, our sister. Once *Le Matin* carried the headline: ‘Terrorist pupils. School in the service of fundamentalism?’²⁰ In another instance, it devoted a whole page to ‘The story of two teenagers: How we became terrorists.’²¹

The notion of terrorist is a convenient holdall making little demand on intellectual precision and integrity. The terrorist is the other – the enemy. He is the rejection of everything to do with morality, culture, science, historical will, social emancipation, etc., in short, of humanity. He is the antithesis. He is only a beast, a ‘killing-machine’.

From such a perspective, it is easy to strip the Other of his will. In the Islamic opposition movement – dubbed terrorist – there are neither intellectuals nor journalists, nor artists. Even the existence of women is challenged since the ‘democrat’ female eradicators take it upon themselves to speak on behalf of all women who, because they are women, are considered to be

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658

National Responses

naturally opposed to the 'fundamentalist' movement and victims of its 'barbarity'.²²

As for those who work for a political solution, they are, according to the eradicators, dangerously close to the 'terrorists', and therefore on 'the other side'. There is no shortage of diatribes against them. One of them, Ali Yahia Abdennour, president of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights, gets 'banished from history'.²³ Hocine Ait Ahmed, secretary-general of the Socialist Forces Front, was denounced as a traitor since, owing to his participation in the Rome meeting, 'he can continue to make value-judgements to satisfy his brother, assassin Anouar Haddam'.²⁴

Terrorism is omnipresent...

A characteristic of terrorism is its mobility and its unpredictability. It can happen anywhere, strike at anyone at any time, as shown by the victims of booby-trapped cars, the massacred innocent women and children, and the bombs planted without any warning, etc. Any citizen, male or female, can be a victim, but also a suspect.

To create resentment and the rejection of any opposition to the regime among the Algerian people, it is essential to spread confusion about the various protagonists in the opposition. Generating a media hype around the acts of sabotage, murders and massacres, and attributing them systematically to the armed opposition groups, serves on the one hand to discredit the Islamic Salvation Front, from which spring all these 'terrorist' groups, and on the other hand to prove that the sole aim of this terrorism is the destruction of the state, its institutions, its infrastructures, its economy and consequently public property. Those who call for dialogue are accomplices to this annihilation plot. When Ait Ahmed is cited in *Le Matin* regarding the meeting in Rome, it is to prove his responsibility for the destruction of the state:

'The killing must be stopped, for the end will be the brutal and complete collapse of the state'. This statement made thus in the presence of the terrorist Haddam, whose movement has been working since its beginning towards the destruction of the whole concept of Algeria, state and nation, is encouraging.²⁵

Once the nature of the terrorism has been revealed, then its 'eradication' can at last be tackled. The struggle against terrorism no longer has to be justified:

The violence imposed on us must be met with a legal and even greater violence, since it is now an established fact that those taking up arms to kill Algerians and to bring the state down once and for all claim that they are positively invincible.²⁶

Thus we must get used to the fact that government forces shoot down 'terrorists' daily. The newspapers publish the figures, sometimes names and

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the type of weapon found. It has become not only commonplace to read this information but also unthinkable to challenge the version of the 'dangerous terrorist put out of action'. On the other hand, the losses on the side of government forces are never disclosed. The circular from the Ministry of Interior dealing with the treatment of information instructs journalists in paragraph 6 to:

Highlight the inhuman character of the barbaric practices of the 'terrorists' by focusing on 'the cutting of throats', the 'attacks on ambulances', the 'handicapping of children' and the 'assassination of relatives of members of the security services in front of children, even the very young'.

In the case of the journalists that have been assassinated, the press has often been able to describe the murder in convincing detail and name the culprit, yet, up to now, there has not been a fair and public trial establishing the guilt of the suspects.²⁷ Not only is it a question of 'deterrence', as is suggested by the directives of the Ministry of Interior, but moreover of sowing distrust and suspicion about everyone and of publicising the successes of the 'struggle against terrorism'.²⁸

...but on the road to extinction

The daily announcement of these successes on the security front is accompanied by claims of 'the deathbed' of 'residual terrorism', although the press does not always seem to share the government's point of view. It rather favours sensational hype around assassinations, massacres, and bomb attacks to highlight the horror and the barbarity²⁹ and to commend the increase in government forces, the call-up of reservists, the creation of community guards³⁰ and above all of the militias.³¹ Also it is a question of untiringly explaining that it is only a minority of assassins and throat-cutters terrorising the population who will be quickly eliminated once the 'patriotic forces' are mobilised.

In order to show public opinion that government forces are in control, it is necessary to spread confusion about the organisation of the armed groups. Depending on the circumstances, an armed group may have a pyramidal structure and a supreme leader, or there can be small independent groups who spread terror in order to project the power they lack. At other times the insurgents are a 'few hundred identified terrorists who are on file' or 'a thousand isolated individuals'. To put the finishing touch to these stories, newspapers are required to 'deal with the information systematically on the inside page' and to 'tone down and minimise the psychological impact of terrorist and subversive action and preserve the morale of the Nation'.³²

The aim is to persuade Algerian and, above all, foreign opinion of the necessity and effectiveness of the fight against the insurrection, and in particu-

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lar to conceal the extent of popular resistance, whether passive or active. To fulfil their commitment to the mission of 'eradicating terrorism', some newspapers call upon citizens to organise themselves into 'self-defence committees' to combat the armed groups.³³ The newspapers also call for the denunciation of 'any suspect individual', slander all those who do not entirely share their point of view,³⁴ and sense at all times a conspiracy of 'international Muslim fundamentalism' against the sovereignty of the state. Under the headlines:

Sensational revelations about the refugees from the former FIS in Germany. Bonn covers up for the GIA.

One can read:

[...] Rabah Kebir and Lounici are full members of the GIA. They were planning an attack on the Algerian Embassy in Paris in August 1993. Moreover, they are preparing along with Oussama Madani^B, an alliance with the Shi'ite movements in Iran and with Hezb-e-Islami of the Afghan Hekmatyar.³⁵

Yet, to show that the state and, above all, the army have the security situation under control is essential. And the success of the 'anti-terrorist campaign' legitimates the raids on certain districts declared to be 'hot spots', the 'tracking down of terrorists', the summary executions, disappearances and other methods, and forces the population to accept the presence of all these government forces and an increased militarisation of society.

Mount of Collo. A trip into a region that has been terrorised for a long time. Our throats are tight with fear when we discover a delivery van completely burnt out. [...] We are heartened by a large number of soldiers of the ANP mingling with the local people. The sight of a child fondly seated on the lap of a soldier is particularly moving.³⁶

But it is also a question of persuading foreign governments that the Algerian army and state have the terrorism well under control, which, after all, is not so exceptional compared with the terrorist attacks in Spain, Great Britain or elsewhere.³⁷ Democracies have had to endure their share of terrorism. As for the Algerian state, does it not manage to protect foreign interests in the south of the country? These states should rather track down FIS members in their territories, since they are, according to 'well-informed sources', behind the assassinations and organise arms trafficking to Algeria.

Is the American government going to wait for a repeat of the World Trade Center [bombing] before reacting against the Algerian terrorists who live in the United States? [...] No human intellect, however devious it might be, can pretend that one who introduces himself as the leader of the parliamentary delegation of the FIS

^B Son of FIS leader Abassi Madani

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The Media Commandos

661

abroad is not one of the masterminds of the horrible attacks carried out daily in Algeria.

It will need an incredible genocide of the Algerian people and the elimination of a large part of its intellectual elite for Western opinion to begin to take a good look at the nature of the FIS and in particular at the arms trafficking it has organised out of Europe.³⁸

The exploitation of the dead for political ends

The discourse of exclusivism and eradication, devised and popularised by numerous newspapers, encompasses themes expressing a simplistic and Manichaean vision. The single line of thought developed over these last few years of war is based, above all, on hate and negation of the Other – the other being both an identifiable entity (the beard, the veil, the terrorist, the *harkî*) and an amorphous mass whose use for propaganda purposes is easy. This mass is either clearly defined and depicted as a basis for the repudiation of barbarism, for resistance, for the organisation of militias, or for patriotic enthusiasm, or else it is portrayed as turned in upon itself, gloomy and uncultivated, imprisoned in its ancestral customs and receptive to the ‘Muslim fundamentalist’ discourse.³⁹ This anonymous mass is represented as in need of a patron who would lend it an identity. When this mass is suddenly turned into a ‘victim of terrorism’, it takes shape, acquires a personality and can even become a major news topic. ‘Huge national mobilisation. The front line of resistance’ was the headline in *El-Watan* on the occasion of the demonstration on 22 March 1994, ‘high-school girls take off the hijab’,⁴⁰ ‘a paediatrician of 42, Ishaq, mother of two boys of 2 and 5, had her throat cut in complete anonymity last week in the Islamist stronghold of Bougara, near Algiers’.⁴¹ The late Youcef Fathallah, a human rights activist in the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights, was working for dialogue and national reconciliation. To express this commitment, he took part in the march on 8 May 1994, a march which was disparaged by ‘the eradicators and the press’, the very ones who ‘now want to draw political advantage from his death.’⁴²

Thus the ‘victims of the Muslim fundamentalist terrorism’, with or without their consent, are exploited by the ‘republicans’ to lengthen the list of their ‘martyrs’. ‘Algerian women’ who were raped, abducted and throat-cut, decapitated intellectuals, ‘innocent children’ killed by bombs, former mujahideen in retirement, army conscripts, or members of various governments are all presented as driven by the same faith, the desire for the same peace, freedom and democracy. Why else would they be killed? This exploitation of the dead is accompanied by a whole discourse on barbarity which consigns the dead of the Other into the category of ‘terrorists’, whose identity, even

^c Algerian loyal to the French

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when buried, can be disowned. 'X – Algérien' (X – Algerian) is the only permitted engraving on their tombstone, which brings strongly to mind the 'X – Muslim' used in colonial times.

It is the FIS that is put on trial after each car bomb attack, after each assassination. The eradicator press sets itself up as the judge and hands out the death sentences. The aim is to depoliticise a movement that challenges not only the monopoly of power and wealth, but also culture, religion and identity. The popularity of the FIS makes it 'dangerous' for the advocates of 'totalitarian democracy' and 'total war'. Therefore it must be demonised, brutalised, repudiated, and refused any possibility of political and social emancipation. The systematic discrediting of the Islamic movement and the representation of its members and sympathisers as monsters⁴³, or people who have gone astray along a path 'lit by a false light', are useful to the army in its war against all opposition in the field. The point is to distract public attention from the torture, summary executions and massacres carried out by the police, the army or the militias, and from the concentration camps and to focus it, instead, on the oppression, real or imaginary, of the opposition. One no longer asks who is the author of the crime, since he is 'known' to everyone. 'The savagery of the terrorist knows no limits and is continually nourished by the blood of the innocent.'⁴⁴ Even if a journalist should happen to 'ask himself some questions', it is to wonder why 'armed individuals did not make use of their weapons' at the time of an attack surely carried out by 'terrorists'.⁴⁵

When a painful past catches up with an equally painful present

The choice has to be made. Either one takes the good side and reaps the praise of the press and other eradicators⁴⁶ or else one is on the bad side, in which case one should not be astonished at being treated as a criminal, assassin, cut-throat, etc. A whole terminology of crime is used in order to remove from the real opposition to the regime its political substance.⁴⁷ It is only base and vile instincts which would push into crime the youths who, for a few dinars, would cut the throat of a policeman or an intellectual. Thus it is only with difficulty that one can avoid the tendency to make comparisons between the current discourse of the eradicators and that used by the advocates of the 'French Algeria' during colonisation:

The outlaw, the ordinary criminal who escapes searches and takes refuge in the mountains or in the forest, suddenly adorns himself, for the needs of a cause which is not his own, with this false heroism which is used today to stir up the masses, who cannot precisely assess the benefits of ... the French presence.⁴⁸

Today it is the benefits of democracy in the style of the Algerian generals which one is asked to praise. The Algerian government and the eradicator press go to great lengths daily to show Europeans that in Algeria one is

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fighting for the same values: a free and democratic Algeria, and against obscurantism and barbarism. This common public enemy must be fought. The line of demarcation is not the Mediterranean^D but, for scores of intellectuals on its two sides, that which lies between modernity and barbarism, democracy and theocracy. It is at this level that the discourse on Islam becomes strictly racist with colonial connotations: Islam is alleged to be incompatible with the ballot box. If it ventures out of its private sphere, it becomes the denial of 'civilisation' and thus totalitarian. This anti-establishment, identity-oriented Islam must therefore be fought, through the setting up of a 'clergy' at the disposal of the government. It is a tamed Islam, with a theology that legitimates the struggle 'against terrorism', which must be promoted. Indeed, the Interior Ministry circular did call for 'the development of a religious ideology condemning crime,'⁴⁹ the presupposition being that undeveloped Islam promotes crime. The mufti of the Grand Mosque of Marseille did declare on the occasion of a demonstration of solidarity with Algeria: 'I am for a democratic republican state as an obstacle to obscurantism. [...] Secularism frees the state from any dogmatism, and frees religion from any political take-over.'⁵⁰ As for the militias, called 'patriots', they are portrayed as being moved by a 'sheer spontaneous motivation, based on civilisational considerations.'⁵¹

In search of allies

For those who put the case for the military option, the analysis is straightforward: the FIS is a 'terrorist' party which was prevented from installing an Islamic state in 1992 and hence is taking its revenge in its bid to seize power by force. Thus 'all methods are legitimate for the partisans of obscurantism.' If the 'living strength', the 'enlightened minds' and the 'free and dignified Algerians' rose,⁵² and if all the 'patriots' took the road to the re-establishment of an 'Algerian Algeria', then the enemy would be swiftly crushed. This enemy is in the country, everywhere, in the neighbourhood, the administration and the public companies.⁵³ It is also abroad in Sudan, Iran or Hizb-Allah.⁵⁴ Yet, it is not only those states and parties dubbed terrorist by the 'World's policeman' who allegedly threaten the unity of Algeria. The European democracies, by allowing known 'terrorists' on their soil, are weakening the republican movement in Algeria. The Algerian press snaps up any information regarding the crackdown on FIS members in Europe as a means of substantiating the conspiracy theory of instigators settled in Europe and benefiting from the 'liberality of political asylum to make

^D The Mediterranean is a frontier which, for centuries, has stirred the imagination of Europeans: was it not the Romans who gave North Africa the name of Barbary? Was it not from a sense of duty, of a *mission civilisatrice*, that the colonial enterprise became attached to those poor 'natives out there'? Today, is it not the barbarism spreading 'right here' which is driving a minister by the name of Pasqua to want to 'restore law and order'?

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speeches encouraging murder in their country.⁵⁵ There are cries of 'No interference' when a French politician appeals for dialogue between all the parties concerned including the FIS:

In a communiqué, the signatories to the appeal [...] pointed out that at a time the Algerians resist against the terrorist hordes so that 'Algeria remains a sovereign state', in the French Assembly Mr Giscard d'Estaing's thundering voice calls for the participation of those behind the crime in the next legislative debate. Has Mr Giscard d'Estaing, struck down with amnesia, forgotten that Algeria has been an independent country for 35 years?⁵⁶

There was jubilation when the French Minister of the Interior, Charles Pasqua, launched the pirate-watch plan which makes it easier to track down not only 'terrorists' but above all illegal refugees. Thus there is not much to choose between them, even if the latter upholding the French racist policy is a reminder of the round-ups of forty years ago^E. Today, Algerian and French 'democrats' are united in a common cause. Together they fight for the republican values which have to be against the 'Muslim fundamentalists', 'inquisitors', 'obscurantists' and 'anti-civilisational forces'. There are ample opportunities for the 'democrats' on both sides of the Mediterranean to get together. The Algerian press publishes them in Algeria, as was the case on the occasion of 'a meeting on solidarity with Algeria' in Paris, on 3 February 1997, in which political personalities, Algerian and French intellectuals and artists took part.⁵⁷ All were in agreement both on causes of the current situation and on the war to be waged to conquer 'terrorism'. The incantation of the secular 'democrats': 'Stand up to barbarism until democracy triumphs', 'Boudiaf is Algeria', 'Algeria's majority identifies with the democratic plan', etc. The same war is being waged on both sides of the Mediterranean and, if from time to time, the 'Algerian democrats' wave the nationalist flag in the face of the former colonisers, it is to conceal their hypocrisy better. The leitmotiv of the latter has been expressed by the French philosopher, Pascal Bruckner:

I support dialogue between the government and the democratic forces. Asking democrats to have a dialogue with the Islamists is to ask the victims to embrace their executioners before they cut their throats.⁵⁸

'All dialogue is simply treason'

It is a closed debate that centres exclusively on 'Muslim fundamentalist terrorism'. This means that 'it is not discussed' and that all those who do 'discuss it' are up against the wall. The biggest media campaign on the subject of treachery was waged at the time of the meeting between the main Algerian opposition parties in Rome. In January 1995 these parties signed a platform

^E During the Algerian war of liberation.

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agreement to find a way out of the crisis. ‘Oh treachery!’ cried the eradicator press, ‘Algeria must not be put to death!’, ‘Down with capitulation!’

The expression ‘internal and external conspiracy’ is often used by the Algerian president when referring to the signatories to the platform agreement of Saint Egidio and the appeal for peace. The latter are implicitly accused of being responsible for the deteriorating situation.⁵⁹

The roles seem to be reversed: those who try to bring together as many political persuasions as possible in order to find a common solution are treated as ‘traitors’ and accomplices to ‘terrorism’, whereas those who call for the population to be mobilised for a relentless war are heroes and true ‘partisans’. The media hype, the crackdown on the parties signatory to the Rome agreement and the censoring of everything that relates to the latter are such that to express one’s approval of the initiative suggests support for ‘terrorists’.

The aim of the psychological manipulation is to prevent a public debate on this agreement and to silence all its supporters, either by absolutely banning them from access to the newspapers, or by fabricating stories of popular demonstrations against the agreement, i.e. fictitious events described as so large as ‘to be mistaken for national independence parades.’⁶⁰ The supporters of dialogue with the FIS endlessly endure the diatribes of the eradicator press and are pushed to keep their distance from this party, and to ceaselessly condemn ‘violence’ – dubbed exclusively Muslim fundamentalist – simply to have the right to speak. There too, the aim is to distract attention from the basic questions about a way out of the crisis, and to enlist the Algerian public in discourses obsessed with ‘terrorism’. Above all, it is a matter of blurring sight and mind so that state terrorism, its crimes, its practices and its henchmen vanish behind all the horror attributed to the Islamists. ‘Fear must change sides’, the slogan launched by the former prime minister Redha Malek, is taken up by the whole eradicator press, which has undertaken to turn it into a reality.

Fear must change sides’

This slogan heralds an upsurge of the war, as much on the ideological as on the military front. It means involving the civilian population in the fight ‘against terrorism’ by creating militias. While the gendarmerie sets up the ‘self-defence committees’ – a euphemism for militias bent on bloodshed – some politicians and newspapers mark out the ideological and political ground. On one hand public opinion needs to be persuaded that a general mobilisation is unavoidable; and on the other hand, involving a large number of civilians in the killings is the best guarantee of collusion with government forces and loyalty towards the military junta. The drift towards civil war is

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666

National Responses

the consequences of the army and the government increasingly delegating its 'dirty work' to the militias.

The media campaign makes use of all the available records to confuse, manipulate and indoctrinate the public. The press does not worry about portraying two women who had their throats cut as victims of Muslim fundamentalist terrorism even when they are members of a family of mujahideen.⁶¹ The same applies to another victim whom the eradicator groups use in their inflammatory campaigns; as it turned out she had been assassinated by her ex-fiancé whom she wanted to leave.⁶² Thus, it is rare that any doubt remains about the authors of the crimes and their ideological motives. The citizen Bouregua was portrayed by the daily *Liberté* as a member 'of a terrorist group comprising 30 criminals directed by Bouici and including among others Ali Bouregua and his brother, sons of Harki'⁶³; in fact he had been in prison since 31 October 1993, and therefore could not have been implicated in the events which took place in June 1994.

We are told that these people know only one language: violence and terror. Their medieval and old-fashioned 'project for society' would attract only a few 'madmen' who, being so few, could not access power except by force. They would rape, cut throats, start fires, massacre, and plant bombs, their sole aim being to terrorise the people to attain their objectives.

On the national scale, does organised crime (terrorism) limit its activities to gambling, brothels, the seizure of land, mugging, racketeering, and other forms of extortion? No, it goes far beyond this series of 'challenges'; moreover, it claims an ideology whose *project de société* it intends to bring about using destruction, violence and murder.⁶⁴

Since 'the enemy' can appear in any shape and at any time, citizens are called upon to organise their own defence. Thus, taking up arms will be only a legitimate act of defence, and the 'mistakes' and the 'excesses' are only unfortunate incidents.

'Patriots', defenders of freedom

The media regularly broadcast written or visual reports on the 'self-defence committees' made up of peasants or workers who, armed and paid by government forces, lay down the law in their district. They glorify, as new national heroes, these combatants about to rescue the people 'who suffer a daily living death: the unbearable heat and terrorism.'⁶⁵ These 'patriots', organised into militias, are not accountable for their deeds, and no one asks them to do so. What is essential is that they are on the 'right side': the camp of the 'democrats', the 'Algerian women', 'the intellectuals', the police officers, the community guards,⁶⁶ the gendarmes, the special forces and... the army, which is the sole guarantor of the republican option. It is thus on the action of the army that hopes and fears will be hinged.

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The Media Commandos

667

The decision of Zeroual to pursue a dialogue with officials of the FIS, a party that was dissolved, could put the unity of the army at risk... The basic question facing Algerians today is whether the army is going to support a step which will wipe out Algeria in a few months time.⁶⁷

If it is the country which risks being wiped out in the case of dialogue with the opposition, then the commitment to a 'total war' is justified. The participation in the struggle 'against terrorism' becomes a patriotic duty. But to express concerns with the danger of arming the population is dismissed as smacking of defeatism, desertion and treason.

When the report of Amnesty International was published in November 1996,⁶⁸ the Algerian press was scandalised by the fact that the organisation did not conform to the eradication semantics.

The persistence of AI in, on the one hand, regarding terrorism as an armed opposition and, on the other hand, the groups of patriots as 'militias' whose existence threatens the existence of the country has other consequences even more serious. It frees the terrorist groups from any restraint and encourages them to shout from the rooftops abroad their alleged victories [...]. On the other hand, the tendency of Amnesty to portray the Algerian institutions and the authorities as being particularly hasty in moving on to the physical liquidation of every presumed terrorist without any trial can partly explain why certain countries hesitate to extradite terrorists.⁶⁹

While the president of the army-backed Observatoire Nationale des Droits de l'Homme (ONDH – National Observatory of Human Rights) maintains that the 'civilian self-defence groups' operate 'under the control of the security forces and the law to fight against barbaric terrorism', the chief editor of *El Watan* asserts that the 'self-defence groups are not the creation of the government, but a reaction basically comparable to a survival instinct of the population in the face of the ruthless extremism of the armed Islamists.⁷⁰ It is in reading the testimonies of 'militiamen', reported by some journalists or human rights organisations, that one grasps the full extent of this 'dirty' war and the responsibility of the press for its justification.

The 'republicans' and the self-proclaimed democrats monopolise the symbolism of the struggle for liberation from colonisation not only to establish themselves as the exclusive heirs of the latter, but, also and above all, to legitimate the 'total war'. In a commentary entitled 'Resistance' (reference to the resistance to Nazism in France being one of the favourite topics of this press), Salim Ghazi writes:

The former mujahideen, who know the precise meaning of this word [freedom], have decided to organise themselves [...] into self-defence committees. Thus they intend to wage a second national 'war of liberation'.⁷¹

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668

*National Responses**The manipulation of European fantasies*

Being very concerned about its impact outside Algeria, especially in France, the Algerian French-language press skilfully manipulates the European fantasies about 'Islam'. It reproduces their perception of a clash between 'modernity' and 'archaism', which is so dear to every ardent republican. In fact the idea of religious fundamentalism serves as a foil for those who seek to distinguish themselves from their opponents, real or imaginary, and to find followers of their cause outside Algeria. This is done by drawing on the Western imagination, appropriating myths about the war mongering, tyrannical and misogynous nature of Islam, by conflating Islam, fundamentalism and terrorism, and, above all, by prompting a widespread but deeply entrenched fear among Westerners. But it is just as much a question of taking over the religious domain by advocating a concept of Islam stripped of its spirituality and vitality, and reduced to a skeleton of folk traditions:

Of course it was a rather pagan Islam, but so sincere, and pious. When I compare it with these Ramadans that the fundamentalists offer us, my hair stands up on the back of my neck! Their version is mortifying. They take upon themselves the unlimited control of the observance of religious precepts, such as they understand them. No singing, no candles, no dancing, no Sidi Ramdan and no hours.⁷²

The reinvestment of age-old fears and stereotypes with new life resonates with European political and intellectual personalities and journalists who identify themselves with the Algerian 'democrats'. They act in Europe as the resonance chamber of the struggle the latter claim to wage against an outdated and medieval movement.

That political Islam has declared war on our democracies is something of a truism today. But it is already waging it elsewhere more savagely, on Muslim soil. [...] In the meantime we are abandoning without resources and without support democrats who swear only by the values that we are supposed to uphold and defend, who talk of the equality of the sexes, of the separation of the mosque from the state, of the reform of education and the judicial system that have fallen into the hands of the Muslim fundamentalists.⁷³

The command of Western values and discourse on democracy, human rights, pluralism and individualism has enabled certain Algerian newspapers and journalists to be seen in Europe as the representatives of 'civil society', so dear to those very people who are rightly moved by the announcement of the assassination of a journalist but who keep quiet in the face of the thousands that have been tortured, imprisoned, killed or that have disappeared, and for whom the regime is indisputably responsible. Thus, it is in the name of this common cause that malevolent and racist remarks are accepted, and even encouraged, when coming from individuals of the like of Rachid Boudjedra or Khalida Messaoudi deemed in the front line of the 'fight for freedom'.

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The Media Commandos

669

The pavements are once again invaded, and chapters of misery multiply in a hellish chaos. Lorries swarm about with their brutish cargo. I can see only fearsome processions, from which rise incantations. There they are, brandishing the Quran and intoning at the top of their voices slogans that rouse the beggars. Revolt of the down-and-outs, of the miserable wretches who ask for nothing except to sleep endlessly. Timelessly. The eunuchs, in their turn, pour forth their vibratos, The whole of the day has shivered with dismal ululations.⁷⁴

Every kind of manipulation of information is allowed, and magnified in Europe. Every demonstration by ‘democrats’, ‘feminists’ or any ‘appeal of intellectuals’, however insignificant they may be, is taken over by the media, amplified, and followed by messages of solidarity from France in particular, and Europe in general. On the other hand, the efforts of individuals and associations to expose the flagrant violations of human rights by government forces are generally concealed.

Manipulation also serves to inform the public, national as well as international, that reducing freedom, imposing censorship or declaring prohibitions does not interfere with the smooth functioning of democracy. On the contrary, without these restrictions, the very integrity of the state itself is threatened. In addition, this freedom of expression, on which the Algerian state congratulates itself, grants to certain journalists the privilege of every kind of journalistic excess and abuse, as long as this benefits the military interests. It is in the name of this freedom of expression that the call to war, denunciation, creation of militias, and defamation have become commonplace. The loss of dozens of colleagues ‘assassinated by Muslim fundamentalists’ endows the profession with an aura of martyrdom and a strong credibility in the eyes of foreign observers. Although it is a fact that visas can be obtained only in dribs and drabs, by greasing someone’s palm or by ideological affinity, foreign journalists fall back on the Algerian newspapers or the National Press Agency (APS), which are in the hands of the various military factions and controlled by the Département de l'Action Psychologique (DAP – Department of Psychological Warfare) of the Direction du Renseignement de la Sécurité (DRS – Directorate of Intelligence and Security). Thanks to the efforts of the French Press Agency (AFP) and other Western agencies, which act as conveyor belts for the junta’s war propaganda, disinformation in Europe is pervasive.

The course of events was confirming everyday the rumour among the ordinary people that the army organised counter-*maquis* and set up the GIA. The aim was to discredit the Islamists by sending faxes claiming responsibility for the murder of journalists, intellectuals, foreigners, etc. The operation consisted in portraying them as bloodthirsty fanatics, criminal extremists, and Godless and lawless rapists. This propaganda has been effective in France where it resonates with the fantasy of the Arab cut-throat.⁷⁵

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670

National Responses

The spectre of 'Muslim fundamentalism' surging through the Maghreb and threatening the heart of Europe remains very much alive and effective as long as economic interests govern political decisions in these countries with regard to Algeria. It is the trump card of the Algerian eradicators, who nourish this ancestral fear and exacerbate it excessively.

Then, when the Muslim fundamentalists were allowed to be eligible, they used the official state buildings. I emphasise this because I can see the same process becoming established in France and among your European neighbours. Not at the top level throughout the whole country [...], but in your suburban ghettos, which have become mini-Algerias.⁷⁶

These are remarks which match perfectly those of the French politicians, who do not hesitate to harness this discourse and propagate further the conflation between Islam, Islamism and terrorism:

Our responsibility as Mediterranean Europeans is to take every measure to prevent the export of terrorism. [...] Today, the Islamists represent 4 million people in France: it is the second religion in France, a religion that is not organised, a religion that has political aims, and this is one of the big questions that must be shouted at political leaders today, whoever they may be.⁷⁷

Despite the efforts of the junta to equip itself with pseudo-democratic institutions, over which in fact it has full control (elected president, made-to-measure constitution, submissive parties, puppet parliament, muzzled press, domesticated ONDH, and a society terrified by the massacres), state terrorism is spreading to an extent that is difficult to justify. However, it is still supported by its domesticated intellectuals, who are prosperous and highly respected in Europe, and who do not tire of repeating the same discourse. It is acceptable, it reinforces the supremacy of the Western vision and justifies the eradication option.

Do the humanists in Europe not see that a genocide of the Algerian people is taking place? They become guilty of a crime against humanity when they compare the crimes of the terrorists with state violence. This is a provocation for if the Islamists had taken power in 1992, if the elections had not been interrupted, I think that they would have killed 2 million people by cutting their throats with a knife in public. [...] I can see only one solution, and that is the military option. [...] We must support President Liamine Zeroual.⁷⁸

The imperialist dimension of the discourse on 'Terrorism'

The war that is raging in Algeria with its torments and its corpses requires that it be understood from an international perspective. The 'terrorist hunt' is not just an Algerian, Egyptian or Palestinian affair, but is an important tool in defining, under the American aegis, a common enemy called 'terrorism'. It serves as a focus for mobilising international co-operation for main-

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taining the 'new world order' and justifying the 'anti-terrorist' struggle against any challenge to this order. The relative military and security unanimity shown during various conferences, of which one of the most important took place at Sharm-el-Sheikh, is in accordance with a standardised and watertight propaganda on the nature of 'terrorism'. Movements of popular dissent do not deserve understanding; their grievances are not worthy of empathy. The approach is to anticipate, suppress and reject in its entirety all that which interferes with the smooth functioning of this 'order', governed by the division of international labour, administered by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, and controlled by the multinationals.

The Western discourse on terrorism imposes a fixed framework of analysis and reference. It allows the discussion of numerous subjects, but in the end every conclusion only serves to justify the very fundamentals of the discourse. The aim of most of the debates is to bring into line and absorb the thoughts and comments regarding the event under discussion. This intrinsic imbalance confirms the dogma of 'the West as the defender of human and civilisational values threatened by terrorism', whose only desire is to undermine the international order. It is the framework itself, its implicit certainties, the explicit ideas that it expounds, and the semantics that it uses which need to be studied.

The discourse on terrorism is important for imperialist expansion and control. This order must be upheld and imposed, especially in countries where the hegemony requirements of former or new colonial powers stumble against strong popular opposition. In their struggle against economic and cultural annihilation, the latter are a threat to the elite in power who serve the interests of the invasive and destructive West. An objective alliance is established between the cultural and military elites on the one hand and the upholders of this 'imperial' order.

Edward S. Herman and Gerry O'Sullivan, who analyse the discourse⁷⁹ on terrorism, wonder if the excessive media attention given to this subject is due to an upsurge of terrorist activity or else to the fact that it is in the service of Western politics and interests. In the latter case, terrorism comes first and foremost from the West, and is a reaction in response to the original violence from the West. The dominant discourse on terrorism can be accounted for and summed up by a number of axioms. According to Herman and Sullivan, these axioms include:

- a) The West is an innocent target of terrorism;
- b) The West only reacts to the violence initiated by others;
- c) Terrorists use barbaric methods to gain power and to create a reign of terror. In contrast to Westerners, they have no concept of civilised behaviour;

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672

National Responses

- d) When the West supports insurgents, it is because the latter are fighting for democracy and do not use terrorist methods;
- e) The democracies are rejected by, and vulnerable to, terrorists;
- f) Terrorists are organised into an international network.

The broadcasting of this discourse on terrorism is done successfully thanks to a whole 'cultural industry' which elaborates, adapts, produces, distributes and sells information on terrorism and thus responds to the needs of the imperialist states. The objective of this industry, comprising experts, specialist institutions, government and mass media consultants, is to distract attention from the primary state terrorism, by making use of the ideological weapon against real or imaginary violence of popular movements which threaten Western supremacy. The role of the media is to disseminate and reproduce incessantly the image of this deep-rooted enemy: the 'terrorist'. Since this enemy is found outside the West as much as inside it, identifying the 'evil' is easier.

The 'terrorist hunt' can only serve the interests of Western governments and security services, who finance and maintain this industry. As the two authors mentioned above explain:

the industry comprises, first, a public sector of government agencies and officials, who establish 'policy' and provide official opinions and selected facts on terrorist activity in speeches, press conferences, press releases, hearings, reports and interviews. It includes also a private sector of think tanks and research institutes, security firms that deal in risk analysis and personal and property security and protection, and an associated body of terrorism 'experts'. [...] Governments play a major role in the terrorism industry, both directly and indirectly. Directly they fix policy, implement it, and explain and justify the policy to the public. [...] The government also has played a very important indirect role in the production of information (and disinformation) on terrorism.⁸⁰

The discourse on terrorism is taken up in all the states subservient to imperialism, since it is the power of the elite serving Western interests in these states which are threatened. The 'security co-operation', at the logistics and military levels, is supported by an 'ideological co-operation' providing its framework, the propaganda arsenal and access to Western mass media.

The Western propaganda laboratories (agencies, experts, think-tanks, information services) supply an inexhaustible repertoire of themes and tools that the Algerian media import, take up or adapt for the current needs. The confidential circular, quoted a good many times in this paper, illustrates perfectly the adaptation of the axioms of the discourse on terrorism to the specific situation in Algeria.

One might think that to speak of an 'industry' in Algeria would be a mistake. However, the intelligence services, press agencies and government ex-

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perts are adept in propaganda activities, a legacy of the one-party system, but the government monopoly on information (banning any interference that might disturb the dominant discourse) allows it to substitute itself as the sole source of information, at home as much as abroad. Thus, the division of labour goes beyond the manufacture of the discourse on terrorism by the West and its passive consumption by the Algerian media. In controlling the broadcasting and interpretation of information, the local 'experts' at the level of the intelligence services or the newspaper editorial offices endlessly adapt and sharpen the weapons of this 'industry'. They zealously revive the Manichaeic views necessary for maintaining the power of the military regime and the cultural supremacy of the West.

Press: Victim or Culprit?

The majority of Algerian journalists knew that the GIA was a product of the security services, dependent on the Ministry of Defence, but they could not write it.⁸¹

Does not being able to write *it* explain the fact that when the massacres – the biggest post-colonial Algeria has ever known – are at last raising the alarm on the international scene and triggering serious questions about their perpetrators and intents, the so-called independent press is trying desperately to blame the victims? For instance *El Watan* writes:

What can government forces do when some populations continue, despite the misfortunes which strike the citizens, to lend their support to terrorist groups, thus allowing them to take advantage of extensive collusion to escape raids and security operations.⁸²

Or else:

The armed Islamic groups, most of whose members have come from the FIS, have declared war on the Algerian people. They want to establish the Islamic republic by means of 'jihad', by massacring thousands of Algerians.⁸³

But who decreed 'total war' shortly after the interruption to the electoral process? Who stripped the state of all its legal institutions? Who governed the country by decrees justified by the fight against terrorism? Who issued the slogan of eradication (official terminology)? What is the responsibility of those journalists who served the regime in its 'total war option'?

On the ground, 'the fight against terrorism' has not been limited to armed groups but applied to a whole population hostile to the military government and declared potentially supportive of subversive and terrorist designs. It has used all available methods. This programme of eradication cannot be the

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work of the military alone. Even if they are its instigators and organisers, a whole machinery must be developed and be operational at every level of the state apparatus. This machinery also depends on a division of labour between all the professional bodies: an expeditious *justice d'exception* ('special' law), a corrupt administration that is both manipulated and manipulating, doctors and psychologists covering up torture, while intellectuals and journalists in the regime pay-roll popularise the ideological foundations of this war programme. According to authors who studied the phenomena of massacres and genocide perpetrated during this century, propaganda plays a predominant role since it prepares the ground and justifies crime.

War presents the murderer with the double advantage of erecting a smoke-screen in front of international public opinion and of disguising his crime as a military necessity. Moreover, in a climate of tragedy where death is commonplace, his behaviour is all the less restrained by conscience that the targeted group has for a long time been made out by propaganda to be responsible for the present calamities.⁸⁴

It is in working their way through a series of conceptualised myths with the aim of defining and delimiting the enemy that the propaganda organs develop a genocidal language accompanying the eradication on the ground. The experiences of Rwanda and Bosnia have shown its devastating repercussions. First of all, it is a question – as shown in the section 'Those who are not with us are against us' – of locating the adversary. It is vital to imagine and re-create the group representing the Other as the antagonist, the negative, the enemy, the fundamentalist, the fascist, the terrorist, etc. It is this mechanism of exclusion, of rejection of the Other, which carries within it the seeds of extremism. The Other is not looked at, nor listened to, but feared. The Other is the threat, the diffuse mass, the 'vile beast' or these 'mobs' in opposition to the 'citizens', as the chief editor of *El Watan*, quoted above, would say. The fear of this Other must be aroused by turning the latter into a monster, an aggressor. The reversal of roles justifies rejection and aggression. As Zazi Sadou, leader of the RAFD (Algerian Rally of Democrat Women) put it: 'one does not fight fascism with arguments, one fights it with arms.' Former prime-minister, Redha Malek, stated: 'Fear must change sides'. These are scathing slogans when they are pounded out by all the press and followed on the ground by summary executions and uncontrollable militias.

In the face of such a danger threatening the sovereignty of the state, the eradication programme inevitably becomes a duty. Yet it must be continually explained and justified, for the threat remains imaginary. The methods are basic and are a repeat of colonial teaching, but unfortunately a large number of Algerian intellectuals and journalists have become imbued with them. The task of dehumanising the other leads to borrowing from the dictionary of animals that need to be put down or crushed (the vile beast, the multi-headed hydra, the octopus, the rabid dog, the insect), or from the lexicon of

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diseases and plagues that have to be dealt with before healthy bodies become infected.⁸⁵

Every stage of the genocide carries the marks of negation. The latter is found implicitly in the use of words, in the dialectic reversal of dehumanisation, which allows the suppression of groups by in the name of the protection of civilisation and respect for human rights. To avoid explaining his infamy, the criminal makes use of the opportunity of a war or muffles the pandemonium by lowering the iron curtain of censorship and of the closing of frontiers; he disguises his crime under *justice d'exception* ('special' law): state of siege, state of emergency, martial law. When murder is planned, the criminal state manufactures the elements of misinformation which will form the network of its future defence system.⁸⁶

This process of dehumanisation, turning the other into a degenerate, a 'sub-human', a wild beast, and a public menace is indispensable for justifying the fight against 'terrorism'. The more that Algerian and European public opinions are bombarded with degrading descriptions, slander, lies and contempt about the alleged 'terrorist', the more this notion divests him of his human character. The terrorist is an outlaw. His physical elimination is unavoidable. There is no need to trouble oneself about legal or moral considerations. It is an evil that is being eradicated from society. Liquidating, torturing and getting rid of 'non-humans' is an act of bravery, patriotism and solidarity. It is a commitment that must be continually encouraged and revived as is shown in one of the recent appeals from Algerian intellectuals:

Let us support with the strongest resolution and without any doubt the action taken by our republican security forces. In the terrible war that they are waging against hardhearted sub-humans, we are telling them that they are not alone and that they have the support of society and the nation's intellectuals.⁸⁷

These 'murderous words' have their direct and tangible repercussions. Thus, during a demonstration of the mothers and wives of the 'disappeared' by the security forces, one of the policemen, who had orders to use brute force to turn them back, said casually:

There are no 'disappeared' persons. There are only terrorists. Even their families are terrorists.⁸⁸

Since the 'hunt for the Muslim fundamentalist' was launched, stigmatising and discriminating against bearded men both in words and in cartoons have become commonplace. Above all, journalists have striven to identify 'terrorists' from their facial features and have wilfully assumed police duties. Not only has this media manipulation been accompanied by the interrogation and arrest of bearded men by the security forces, but the testimonies of the victims of torture certainly show with what brutality and hatred the torturers relentlessly target the beards. They burn them, pull out the hairs by hand or with pincers, and coat them with plaster so as to rip them out.⁸⁹ Since the

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676

National Responses

distinguishing mark of the 'fundamentalist terrorist' is the beard, little wonder that during the massacres the attackers have beards – even very long ones.

Notwithstanding the fallout of their propaganda, certain inflammatory newspapers are not content with registering the tens of thousands of dead. They are preparing for new battles.

But it seems to be forgotten that terrorism is but the armed wing of religious fundamentalism, which has inducted several institutions in the country: schools, the judiciary, mosques, and even parliament, from where it can influence political decisions. Furthermore, it would be a mistake to think that the advocates of terrorism have diminished considerably in number, or have renounced violence for good. In the face of the combined action of the security services and the self-defence groups, they have been forced to back down and retreat. But those who remain in action, be they leaders or underling, are waiting for the right moment to act, for violence is embedded in their politico-religious beliefs.⁹⁰

These newspapers are preparing to provide the ideological and psychological foundations of future war expeditions. They are accessories to the massacre of hundreds of civilians hacked to death at the gates of Algiers. They are staunch apologists of the categorical refusal of any inquiry into the massacres. Yet, the Algerian state must one day face the accusation of committing crimes against humanity. Similarly, the level of responsibility of journalists 'who kill with the pen' will have to be established one day. The Algerian government ratified on 12 September 1989 the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of which Article 20 prohibits 'all propaganda in favour of war'. Yet the Ministry of Interior circular, which is aimed at the media, resembles – as we have seen – a code of war propaganda.

When consulting the codes and charters of the journalists' professional duties in different countries, one realises that Algerian journalism contradicts most of their principles: respect of the truth, upholding the freedom of information, not to use underhand methods, refraining from calumny, defamation and unfounded accusations, not to confuse the work of the journalist with that of the propagandist, rejecting all pressure, not to confuse one's role with that of the police officer, etc. Hence there is a need to investigate the responsibility of the Algerian journalists in the deterioration of the situation in Algeria: those who launched malevolent calls, incited people to take up arms and praised the killers in the name of the 'Republic' and 'Liberty'; those who have developed a language designed to touch 'dark places' at the centre of human beings to exterminate those who oppose military dictatorship, to motivate obedience to the victimisation of sections of society and to render this victimisation socially and internationally acceptable. It is necessary that an independent and impartial court be set up one day to bring, openly and fairly, charges against those who, for many years under the pretext of the 'green peril', have been covering up the 'khaki peril'. Once peace is re-

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The Media Commandos

677

established in Algeria, such proceedings will contribute to shedding light on the mysteries which have shrouded these nightmarish years and to establish the truth. The credibility of a profession which has placed itself in the service of a war logic is at stake. This profession will have to strive hard to regain the trust of those whose honour it has ridiculed for years on end.

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Appendix: Inter-ministerial decree for security information

الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية

MINISTRE DE L'INTERIEUR
DES COLLECTIVITES LOCALES,
DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT
ET DE LA
REFORME ADMINISTRATIVE

وزارة الداخلية
والجماعات المحلية
والبيئة
والإصلاح الإداري

Le Ministre

الرئيس

A

07 JUIN 1994

CONFIDENTIEL
RESERVE

MESSIEURS LES EDITEURS ET LES RESPONSABLES
DE LA PRESSE NATIONALE

OBJET : - Sécurité intérieure et information-presse
- Cellule de la communication sécuritaire.

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser l'arrêté interministériel relatif au traitement de l'information à caractère sécuritaire.

Cet arrêté institue une cellule de communication dont la mission première est de vous faciliter l'accomplissement de votre mission.

La cellule de communication est localisée au Palais du Gouvernement. Ses numéros de téléphone et de fax sont :

- Numéro de téléphone : 63.10.85
- Numéro de Fax : 64.44.55

Au moment où tous les efforts des forces vives de la Nation sont tendus vers l'éradication du terrorisme et de la subversion, je sais pouvoir compter sur votre contribution positive dans la lutte antiterroriste et antisubversive.

Le groupe de travail pluridisciplinaire qui a étudié tous les aspects du traitement de l'information à caractère sécuritaire a associé à sa réflexion de nombreux journalistes et s'est enrichi de leur apport tout en prenant en charge leurs préoccupations et leurs problèmes dans le domaine visé.

La complexité de ce domaine nous impose à tous une concertation permanente, une compréhension mutuelle des impératifs et contraintes qui pèsent sur chacun de nous et une entraide efficace pour surmonter les nombreux obstacles et écueils qui se dressent sur notre chemin.

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Translation of the document in French (opposite)

Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Interior,
Local Communities, the Environment, and Administrative Reforms

The Minister

Confidential Restricted

7 June 1994

**To the Editors and Managers
of the National Press**

Subject: - Internal Security and Press Information.
 - Security Information Unit.

I am writing to provide you with the inter-ministerial decree relative to security information.

This decree establishes an Information Unit whose primary task is to facilitate the carrying out of your mission.

The Information Unit is located at the Palais du Gouvernement. Its telephone and fax numbers are:

- Telephone number: 631085
- Fax number: 644455

At a time when all the efforts of the nation's forces are directed towards eradicating terrorism and subversion, I know that I can count on your positive contribution in the fight against terrorism and subversion.

The multi-disciplinary task group which has studied all the aspects of the treatment of security-related news sought the views of a number of journalists and has taken into account their concerns and problems.

The complexity of this issue calls for permanent exchanges of views, a mutual understanding of the requirements and constraints that apply to each one of us, as well as an effective co-operation to overcome the numerous obstacles and pitfalls that are on our way.

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680

National Responses

Ministry of Interior
and Local Communities

Ministry of Culture
and Communication

Inter-Ministerial Decree Relative to Processing Security Information^F

The Minister of Interior and Local Communities and
The Minister of Culture and Communication

- In view of the law no 90-07 of 3 April, 1990 regarding news information;
- In view of the amended presidential decree no 92-44 of 9 February, 1992 whereby the state of emergency was decided;
- In view of the amended presidential decree no 93-02 of 6 February, 1993 whereby the state of emergency was extended;
- In view of the amended presidential decree no 92-304 of 8 July, 1992 whereby the prime minister was nominated;
- In view of the executive decree no 92-307 of 19 July, 1992, whereby the members of the government were nominated;

DECREE

Article 1

Under the provisions of the presidential decree no 92-44 of 9 February 1992, mentioned above, an Information Unit is established at the Ministry of Interior and Local Communities. It is in charge of relations with the media regarding information, the production and dissemination of official communiqués about the security situation.

Article 2

The communiqués produced by the Unit described in Article 1 above are the only ones to have an official status and are broadcast exclusively by the Algérie Press Service news agency(APS).

Article 3

As regards terrorism and subversion news items, all media of every kind are required to broadcast nothing apart from the official communiqués mentioned in Article 2 above and the content of public briefings made at press conferences by the Unit mentioned in the present decree.

^F The French original version of this text is also available in Amnesty International, Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme, Human Rights Watch and Reporters sans Frontières, *Algérie: Le Livre Noir*, La Découverte, Paris 1997, pp. 52-57.

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The Media Commandos

681

Article 4

The broadcasting of any security-related news by any means other than official communiqués or communications made publicly during meetings with the press as mentioned in Article 3 above is strictly forbidden. Any violation of this ban is punished under the current law and regulations.

Article 5

The present decree will not be published and its provisions are notified only as extracts to whom it may concern (physical or moral person).

Algiers, [date.....]

THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR
(illegible signature)

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION
(illegible signature)

PROCESSING SECURITY-RELATED INFORMATION
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NATIONAL MEDIA

A.

REMINDER OF THE MAIN AXES OF THE AUTHORITIES' INFORMATION POLICY RELATIVE
TO SECURITY

- 1) To communicate, systematically and in a timely manner, information:
 - to present, counter and defeat [enemy] rumours and propaganda;
 - to develop a healthy and credible relationship in this domain with citizens and the media.
- 2) To reduce the psychological impact expected by the leaders of terrorists by:
 - trivialising any information about terrorist and subversive acts, and avoiding any exaggeration of their results;
 - seeking to achieve the opposite effect to that expected by the terrorists: *no panic, self-control and determination not to let political violence prevail.*

B.

RULES OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND DEFENCE OF THE NATION'S HIGHER INTERESTS

The importance of what is at stake in the struggle against terrorism and subversions and its vital role for civil peace in our country requires us all to search for ways to contribute to the eradication of political violence.

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682

National Responses

- 1) Information relating to security should not be part of the realm of competition between press organisations.
- 2) Scoops, excessive publicity and the exaggeration of legitimate emotions caused by any attack must be forbidden.
The violation of collective discipline by any press organisation cannot be used as [pretext or justification] by any other organisation for failing to abide by this rule.

C.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) TERMINOLOGY

An appropriate terminology will be made available to the media by the Information Unit.

[Its use is recommended] to avoid any unconscious use of a terminology which might serve the enemy's ideology and propaganda.

2) PROTECTION OF PEOPLE

The publication of pictures of non-public personalities known for their enmity to the fundamentalist ideology and to the use of political violence purposes must be avoided.

3) IMPORTANCE OF NEWS ITEMS

- Barring exceptional cases, news items should invariably be printed on inside pages.
- Where a news item is treated on the first page, owing to the importance or novelty of the event, the space devoted to it should be limited.
- Psychological impact of terrorist and subversive acts should be trivialised and minimised and the morale of the Nation should be preserved. The terrorists must understand that they will never reach their goal of [creating a psychological climate leading to the] paralysis of some institutions or prompting public reactions that would put pressure on the state to make compromises or to fatal errors.

4) FIGHT AGAINST THE ENEMY'S IDEOLOGY AND PROPAGANDA

- Avoid publishing of pictures of the *leaders* of violent action or gratifying them by giving them uncalled for terms or titles.
- Publicise atrocities committed by the Islamist regimes in Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan.
- Emphasise the cheating and swindling of those who, in the name of religion and purification of society, take to criminal practices such as:
 - the use of drugs by the perpetrators of terrorist crimes;
 - the use ex-convicts and bandits as contract killers;
 - the forcible enrolment of unprotected youth and the exercise of pressure on them to make this involvement irreversible;

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The Media Commandos

683

- the cowardly practices of the *political leaders* who send gullible young men out to die.
- etc...

5) DETERRING VOLUNTEERS AND THOSE FORCED TO ENROL

Emphasise:

- that no crime will go unpunished and that at the end of the road there is no outcome other than prison or death;
- the efficiency of the security forces which, even if unable to prevent all crimes, do always manage to find the culprits;
- the losses suffered by the enemy;
- the cowardice of those arrested, and that they become informers;
- the severity of the sentences pronounced in the special courts;
- that public opinion rejects the use of violence for political aims;
- that citizens give up supporting the generous ideas of certain people immediately after the latter turn to terrorism.

6) PROMPTING REACTIONS OF REJECTION OF TERRORISM

Emphasise the inhumane nature of the terrorists' barbaric acts:

- slitting throats;
- attacks on ambulances;
- killing and maiming of children;
- killing of relatives of members of the security services, even in the presence of small children;
- etc...

7) HIGHLIGHTING THE COLLUSION WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS

- Financial, logistical, etc... support by Iran, Sudan, etc.
- Training of *Afghans*.
- Calls to boycott Algeria and harm its vital economic interests.
- Contacts with foreign powers to negotiate for their support in return for promises or commitments to serve the interests of these powers in Algeria.
- Secret deals with the enemies of Algeria;
- Etc...

8) DEVELOPING INSTINCTS FOR COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENCE

- To instil in society an instinctive rejection of terrorism; continuous use of the motto 'Terrorism will not win'.
- To prevent the impact anticipated by the terrorists on all or some categories of the population by:
 - highlighting the positive reactions of the families and relatives of the victims;

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684

National Responses

- supporting the citizens' participation in the fight against terrorism;
- showing that terrorist activities in a number of advanced democracies (Italy, Spain, Britain, France...) have not changed the order of things;
- explaining to public opinion that violence is an endemic phenomenon of modern nations and that it causes thousands of deaths every year (nearly one thousand violent deaths in Washington D.C., in the USA alone during the first half of 1993);
- making terrorist instigators understand that their crimes will not affect in any way the natural development of our society and the normal functioning of its institutions.

9) FOSTERING A RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY THAT CONDEMNS CRIME

- Terrorism in Algeria kills in the name of religion and on the basis of fatwas, and this represents a double crime: *against the human being and against Islam.*
- Organise interviews and panel discussions with religious scholars and intellectuals on this subject;
- Publicise the positive stands adopted by national or foreign religious authorities;
- Put pressure on those Algerian religious scholars who, out of fear, have kept silent in front of terrorism, to have the courage to express their views, the defence of one's country being incumbent on all its citizens.

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NOTES

¹ *Alger Républicain*, 6 January 1992.

² The promulgation of the law on the media of 3 April 1990 puts an end to the State's monopoly on the press. As a result, tens of titles are launched. However, from January 1992, the authorities carried out 58 acts of censorship (seizures, suspensions or bans). The first newspapers targeted were those of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front]. See 'Algérie, la guerre civile à huis clos', *Reporters sans frontières*, March 1997.

³ The declaration of the state of emergency on 9 February 1992 'which aims at maintaining public order, protecting the people and their belongings, as well as ensuring the normal functioning of the public services' was crowned by the decree 92-03 of 30 September 1992 'relative to the struggle against subversion and terrorism'. This decree contained 'most alarming dispositions in the definition of 'subversion' and 'terrorism' giving the authorities the possibility to prosecute anyone accused of verbal support.' Human Rights Watch report, Middle East, 1994, and 'Livre noir de l'Algérie', *Reporters sans frontières*, Paris 1996, p. 152.

⁴ *Reporters sans frontières*, op. cit., p. 10.

⁵ *Reporters sans frontières*, op. cit., p. 11.

⁶ *La Tribune*, 20 February 1995, quoted in Ghania Mouffok, *Etre journaliste en Algérie*, Paris 1996, p. 46.

⁷ *Human Rights in Algeria*, a report by the US Foreign Ministry, February 1987 and *Reporters sans frontières*, pp. 21-23.

⁸ *El-Moudjabid* was and still is the voice of the government: 'The BSPs [Bureaux of Surveillance and Protection] were created in State companies during the time of the Boumedienne dictatorship, to monitor the staff and to denounce any "political unrest". Their members were agents of the *Sécurité Militaire* and were recruited on the spot.' *Livre blanc de la répression en Algérie* (1991-1994), vol. 2, Planes-Ouates, p. 213.

⁹ François Burgat, 'L'Islamisme contre les intellectuels' in *L'Islamisme en face*, Paris 1995, p. 160.

¹⁰ Abed Charef, *Algérie, Le Grand dérapage*, La Tour d'Aigues 1994, p. 480.

¹¹ More than fifty journalists from all political tendencies have been killed. Despite the fact that the version of the 'Islamist commandos' has been refuted for some of the murders, as in the case of the highly publicised assassination of Tahar Djaout, the 'eradicationist commandos' still persist in their accusations. See Ghania Mouffok, 'Qui a tué Tahar Djaout' in *Etre journaliste en Algérie*, Paris 1996, p. 91.

¹² Report by *Reporters sans frontières*, p. 19.

¹³ 'La compromission surnommée paix', in *El Watan*, beginning of December 1996. The representatives from parties such as the FIS, the FLN and the FFS who met in Rome under the umbrella of the Saint Egidio community to set up a platform of talks to get out of the Algerian crisis, were called 'Saint-Egidians'. They restated their quest for a political solution in this call for peace launched in November 1996.

¹⁴ 'In an interview, Kamel Belkacem acknowledged that 80% of the letters published in the weekly magazine *Algérie Actualité* of which he was the director, were related to manipulations and doubtful denunciations of all sorts.' *Jeudi d'Algérie*, 17 September 1992, in *Algérie: Raison et déraison d'une guerre* by Abdennour Ali Yahia, Paris 1996, p. 60.

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¹⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁷ These publications have however no chance of survival, because, although they are the 'voice' of the government in its struggle against the Islamic movement, they have to face many conflicts on other fronts. Examples of newspapers of this kind are *Alger Républicain*, *Liberté*, *Le Matin*, *El Watan*, *L'Authentique*, *Le Soir d'Algérie*, *Hebdo Libéré*, etc., without mentioning the government press.

¹⁸ *Le Matin*, 22 November 1994.

¹⁹ *L'Hebdo Libéré*, 23-29 March 1994.

²⁰ 'Secondary school girls as contact agents. [...] In the course of their interrogation, they have claimed that they have been indoctrinated by their mathematics teacher, a militant from the ex-FIS [...]. The latter is on the run and is wanted.' *Le Matin*, 29 May 1994.

²¹ *Le Matin*, 5 June 1994.

²² Ghania Mouffok, 'Les Femmes algériennes dans la guerre', in *Peuples Méditerranéens*, January-June 1995.

²³ *Liberté*, 15 October 1994, in *Livre Blanc, Supplément*, p. 176.

²⁴ *Le Matin*, 22 November 1994.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ *Hebdo Libéré*, 23-29 March 1994.

²⁷ Ghania Mouffok, *Etre journaliste en Algérie*, p. 93. Regarding the murdering of journalists, *Reporters sans frontières* reports that 'the security services have never revealed the results of their investigation, and the only trials of the journalists' murderers which were made public took place in absentia.' p. 5.

²⁸ Paragraph 5 of the memorandum in question recommends to stress 'the efficiency of the security forces who, even though they have not been able to prevent all crimes, they always manage to find the culprits'. One of the latest victims of the recent wave of assassinations is the presumed murderer of Abdelhak Benhamouda, president of the UGTA [the Algerian national workers' union], killed on 28 January 1997. Rachid Medjahid, who has 'admitted' being the author of the crime on the Algerian TV, was killed in prison on 26 February 1997.

²⁹ The aim, according to paragraph 6 of the confidential memorandum, is 'to make people reject terrorism' by demonstrating 'the inhumane nature of the barbaric acts of the terrorists.' One of the favourite issues is the rape of women and girls, playing on the psychological impact this sort of information has on the public. 'Despite the propaganda of the fundamentalists [sic], the ten terrorists have indeed raped the *gendarme's* two young daughters before slaughtering them.' *Le Matin*, 3 July 1994, and 'When the terrorists legalise rape', *Le Matin*, 17 May 1994.

³⁰ '15,000 local guards ready to go into action', *El Watan*, 16/17 December 1994.

³¹ See paragraph 8 of the above-mentioned memorandum: 'Development of the collective reflex of self-defence'.

³² Paragraph 3 of the above-mentioned memorandum.

³³ 'Citizens hunt down terrorists', *Le Matin*, 2 August 1994.

³⁴ 'This barbarian act proves once again that armed groups, made up mostly of *Harkis* and sons of *Harkis*, stop at nothing to attain their despicable ends.' *Le Matin*, 17/8 June 1994.

³⁵ *Le Matin*, 18/19 November 1994.

³⁶ *Horizons*, 12 February 1995.

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³⁷ Paragraph 8 of the confidential memorandum advises to 'reveal to the general public that violence is an endemic phenomenon of modern nations which causes thousands of deaths each year'.

³⁸ *El Watan*, 12 March 1995.

³⁹ Moussa Ait-Embarek, *L'Algérie en murmure, Un cahier sur la torture*, Plan-les-Ouates, 1996.

⁴⁰ *El Watan*, 6 April 1994

⁴¹ It was fortunate that *El Watan* made this very anonymous crime known to the public on 14 October 1994, as the victim herself did not even know about it. She later complained to the newspaper.

⁴² Ali Yahia Abdenour, 'Il est vrai que le ridicule ne tue pas en Algérie', *Livre Blanc*, vol. 2, p. 180.

⁴³ Rachid Boudjedra excels in vulgar slandering in his book *FIS de la haine*, Paris 1992.

⁴⁴ *El Watan*, 2 November 1994.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 12 December 1994.

⁴⁶ Whether it is at the occasion of the demonstrations organised by a group of women speaking on behalf of 'all Algerian women' on Women's Day; or of the tribunal against fundamentalism organised by these very same 'democratic' women who do not hesitate to condemn the FIS leaders to death - a sentence that even the military court did not pronounce; the demonstration of the 'democrats' on 22 March 1994; the support rallies to Liamine Zeroual during the meeting of the opposition in Rome, etc.

⁴⁷ The change of wording noted by *Le Soir d'Algérie* on 26 February 1995, for instance, the use of 'criminal' instead of 'terrorist', would have 'occurred since the announcement of a bill of law relative to the modification of the procedure and the criminal law, and of the measures of clemency under conditions for repentant terrorists.'

⁴⁸ François Mitterrand in the official journal of 12 November 1954, quoted in Henri Alleg (ed.), *La Guerre d'Algérie*, Vol. 2, Paris 1980, p. 442.

⁴⁹ This 'ideology' focuses on the condemnation of terrorism by showing that, in Algeria, one 'kills in the name of religion and on the basis of *fatwas*, which constitutes a double crime: against a human being and against Islam.' Then it is a matter of giving the religious leaders ready to legitimise the government a platform of publicity, and finally, by putting the pressure on the other religious leaders so that they rally to the cause.

⁵⁰ Minutes of this meeting of 3 February 1997 in *El Watan*, 5 February 1997.

⁵¹ *L'Authentique*, quoted in the report by *Reporters sans frontières*, p. 18.

⁵² *Alger Républicain*, 21 March 1994, at the occasion of the call to a demonstration.

⁵³ 'The public authorities have -finally!- decided to fight fundamentalism which has spread like gangrene in administrations and public companies.' *El Watan*, 9 April 1995.

⁵⁴ 'Tehran promises to assassinate Ali Kafi', *El Watan*, 6 July 1992.

⁵⁵ *El Watan*, 18 December 1996.

⁵⁶ *El Watan*, 5 February 1997.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *El Watan*, 10 February 1997.

⁶⁰ 'According to well-informed sources, nearly 20,000 people have taken part this Thursday in Barika ... in the march in support of President L. Zeroual and against terrorism.' *El Watan*, 17/18 December 1994.

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⁶¹ François Burgat, *L'Islamisme en face*, Paris 1995.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ The right to answer requested by the man's wife was refused. *Livre Blanc, Supplément*, p. 186.

⁶⁴ *Le Matin*, 17 May 1994.

⁶⁵ 'Ex-Mujahedins set up self-defence groups. Chlef fights terrorism.' *El Watan*, 25 July 1994.

⁶⁶ 'An initiative which meets the citizens' approval: the local police deploys'. The latter is composed of relatives of ex-mujahedins and 'reflects the image of a resisting and hopeful Algeria', *El Watan*, 13 April 1995.

⁶⁷ Omar Belhouchet, in *El Watan*, 18/19 March 1994.

⁶⁸ Amnesty International, *Algeria, Silence and Fear*, November 1996.

⁶⁹ *Le Matin*, 23 November 1996, quoted in the report by *Reporters sans frontières*, p. 32.

⁷⁰ *El Watan*, 21 November 1996, quoted in *Reporters sans frontières*, pp. 29-30.

⁷¹ *El Watan*, 1 August 1994.

⁷² Khalida Messaoudi, *Une Algérienne debout*, Paris, 1995, p. 30.

⁷³ Elisabeth Schemla (Editor of *Le Nouvel Observateur*), in *L'Express*, 30 May 1996.

⁷⁴ Fériel Assima, *Une Femme à Alger*, Paris, 1995, pp. 33-34.

⁷⁵ Larbi Ait-Handoula (Journalist in Algiers). 'L'Opacité du drame Algérien', *Monde Libertaire*, 30 October-5 November 1997.

⁷⁶ Khalida Messaoudi, op. cit., p. 148-149.

⁷⁷ Jean-Louis Debré (President of the RPR [Rally for the Republic] party) at the French National Assembly, *Agence France Presse*, 28 September 1997.

⁷⁸ Rachid Boudjedra, *Der Spiegel*, 20 October 1997.

⁷⁹ '“Terrorism” as Ideology and Cultural Industry', in *Western State Terrorism*, UK, 1991.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 52-53.

⁸¹ Larbi Ait-Handoula, op. cit.

⁸² *El Watan*, 17 September 1997.

⁸³ Omar Belhouchet, *El Watan*, 29 August 1997.

⁸⁴ Yves Ternon, *L'Etat criminel, Les Génocides au XXe siècle*, Paris, 1995, p. 99.

⁸⁵ Moussa Ait-Embarek, op. cit., pp. 152-157.

⁸⁶ Yves Tournon, p. 103.

⁸⁷ Call 'to finish with terrorism' published in various Algerian dailies around mid-October 1997.

⁸⁸ *Le Monde*, 24 September 1997.

⁸⁹ Moussa Ait-Embarek, op. cit., pp. 152-157.

⁹⁰ *El Watan*, 22 June 1997.

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