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## REACTIONS OF THE ALGERIAN ARMY TO THE MASSACRES

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## 1. Introduction

The Algerian army holds the real power in Algeria. It dominates and controls the whole political system. Hence, examining the army's reactions to the mass killings, separately from those of the government, is an issue of particular importance.

In this paper, the army's reactions to the massacres are examined through the declarations of officers, official publications such as *El-Djeich*, interviews and testimonial reports on the massacres. The military institution is made up of a number of regular forces and runs few irregular ones. Its regular forces include the air force, the navy and land forces in addition to the Gendarmerie Nationale and the Directorate of Intelligence and Security (military intelligence – DRS) and to the Directorate of Foreign Intelligence (counter-intelligence – DRE). It runs irregular forces which include death squads and militias. The latter, although dependent on the gendarmerie, are operationally managed by the army. Since the Interior Ministry, in charge of the police, falls under the control of the army in states of emergency, its statements will be considered.

The study includes two main parts: a descriptive part (sections 2 and 3) and an analytical part (section 4). In the first part, a general account of the army's statements on the massacres is presented. In the second part, the army's responses are assessed and plausible theories explaining them are suggested. In particular it will be argued that the army's reactions to the massacres should be identified as the politics of denial and they will be interpreted in the light of the history, nature and record of the Algerian military institution.

Section 2 starts with a general exposition of the army declarations on the mass killings, the perpetrators and the victims. The issue of the army passivity during the massacres is then addressed on the basis of facts and explanations given by the army. Next, the army's position on the question of an independent inquiry into the massacres is presented. Testimonies and reactions of army and police defectors are then examined in section 3. Section 4 begins with a summary of the army's responses to the massacres. Alternative explanations of these reactions are then suggested. Finally, in section 5, a summary of the study is presented and the important conclusions are drawn.

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## 2. Army Declarations and Responses

### 2.1 Massacres, Perpetrators and Victims

The Algerian military claim that 'terrorist groups', a qualification usually used by the Algerian authorities to describe the Islamist groups, are responsible for the massacres of civilians. General Zeroual declared that the massacres proved that the 'criminal groups' had been defeated and 'because of their failure they pour all their hatred out today and commit criminal acts against innocent civilians'.<sup>1</sup> He spoke of this terrorism as a 'plot by foreign powers and Algerian personalities' designed 'to break the will of the sovereign Algerian people and maintain Algeria in a spiral of destruction and degradation'.<sup>2</sup> Zeroual often referred to the perpetrators of the massacres as 'gangs of criminals, traitors and mercenaries' engaged in 'a blind terrorism never witnessed before in any time or any place'.<sup>3</sup>

The former interior minister, Mostefa Benmansour, described the massacres as 'savage acts' of 'malevolent revenge against the Algerian people who resist heroically against attempts to destroy their homeland'.<sup>4</sup>

Amnesty International (AI) reported that, according to the military authorities and security services, 'all the massacres have been committed by the GIA (Islamic Armed Group) and other such groups'<sup>5</sup> with the aim of 'terrorising the population hostile to them, or who formerly supported them but who had recently withdrawn their support or relatives and current supporters of rival armed groups'.<sup>6</sup>

A high ranking officer wishing to remain anonymous, general X<sup>A</sup>, declared that it was Djamel Zitouni, a former GIA leader, who 'launched the action of slaughtering and massacring civilians to sow terror within the population'.<sup>7</sup> He recognised, however, that 'the AIS was not as savage as the GIA which burns down schools, assassinates cold-bloodedly women and children and has become a master in the art of slaughtering'. The general denied the widely held belief that the Algerian army had created the GIA in order to destroy the AIS and to discredit the Islamic movement and added that 'the criminals who founded the GIA had been recruited by other powers to fight in Afghanistan before they decided to import their so-called jihad'. He claimed that GIA members had been to Iran and Sudan where 'they were treated as Islamic revolutionary brothers'. The general stated that as far as the army was concerned, 'getting rid of such monsters, was necessary not only for Algeria but also for the whole world'.

<sup>A</sup> *Le Monde* on 7 May 1998 identified general X as Mohamed Lamari, the chief-of-staff general.

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In an address to army officers, published in the army magazine *El-Djeich*, the chief-of-staff, general Mohamed Lamari, wrote: 'It is because of your resolute and determined action that today, the criminals and traitors to the nation are seriously weakened and confined to more and more limited areas'.<sup>8</sup> However, he warned the troops that the 'terrorists', following their 'suicidal logic', might believe that during the early presidential elections [held on 15 April 1999], the army activities would diminish and would therefore use what remains of their harmful capacity against the people.

The army, nevertheless, made a partial acknowledgement of its responsibility in the massacres when general Mohamed Lamari spoke out in an attempt to defend the 'republican army, a human rights advocate.' Recognising abuses, he pointed out that: 'one cannot rule out atrocities committed by individuals acting in isolation. [...] But this is only a minute proportion that does not tarnish in any way the military institution and the security forces'.<sup>9</sup>

Another confession by the military was reported by Algerian newspapers such as *Liberté* and *La Tribune*.<sup>10</sup> The newspapers wrote that army-led militiamen had been arrested on charges of carrying out massacres of innocent civilians in and around the Relizane region. Two mass graves containing 79 bodies, many of them buried alive, were uncovered. According to the same newspapers, El-Hadj Fergane, a member of the ruling RND party and El-Hadj El-Abed, head of the local defence unit, were arrested for committing the atrocities.

Former Prime Minister, Dr Abdelhamid Brahimi, who is currently a political refugee in England, accused three army generals for the massacres. General Mohamed Lamari (chief-of-staff), general Mohamed Mediene, alias Toufik, (head of the secret service) and general Smain Lamari, his deputy. 'They organise the massacres using the armed militias and the GIA (Islamic Armed Group), a group manipulated by the military secret service'<sup>11</sup> and then point the finger at the islamists, who according to Dr Brahimi, 'do not kill innocent people'. He criticised France for supporting the generals and accused the former colonial power of seeking 'to take revenge and to accomplish through the Algerian generals, who are close allies to France, the dirty job it could not accomplish during colonisation (i.e. keeping Algeria in the French sphere of influence)'.<sup>12</sup>

General Zeroul recognises that the massacres are criminal acts against 'innocent civilians'<sup>13</sup>, but in the army statements there is a clear lack of reference, empathetic or otherwise, to the victims. The only other statements about the victims come from the 'Algerian Movement of Free Officers' (AMFO), an organisation of dissident army officers, or defectors (see section 3.1).

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However, there are many testimonies which report statements of army officers and security forces blaming survivors for once supporting 'terrorism'. Such testimonies suggest that the targeted victims are FIS supporters who 'deserve punishment'.

In an Algiers hospital for example, police officers in plain clothes told a survivor of the Houche Khemisti massacre (Bougara region, 21 April 1997, 113 victims), a grandmother with a burnt face and fingers cut: 'You voted for these savages. So sort it out with them. Today your husband and children are killed. We hope that it will be your turn soon and then that of your dog and your cat'.<sup>14</sup>

Security forces and gendarmerie units often reproof victims and villagers asking for arms: 'you wanted the islamists, sort it out with them'<sup>15</sup>, or 'you wanted the islamists, you have them'.<sup>16</sup> A woman reported that when victimised families called for help, the security forces responded: 'Didn't you vote for FIS in this neighbourhood? Get then out of your own bloody mess. Ask the FIS to protect you'.<sup>17</sup>

Yahia, a survivor of the Bentalha massacre (Baraki, Algiers, 22 September 1997, 200 to 300 victims), reported that when people had gone to the defence ministry to ask for arms, they were told: 'when you fed the terrorists, when you sheltered them, you did not come. Now sort it out yourselves'.<sup>18</sup> An old woman from the Qasbah quarter in Algiers revealed that the assailants, who had come to attack the Qasbah but failed, said: 'It is you who sheltered them (the islamists) and you who sympathised with them. Now we are going to settle your hash'.<sup>19</sup>

After the massacre of Sour El Ghozlane (Bouira, 8 January 1998), in which 26 persons from three families had their throats slit, an army spokesman blamed the victims for refusing to take up arms. He told *El-Watan* newspaper: 'We told them to arm themselves but they refused'.<sup>20</sup> After another massacre in the Mitidja region, the head of the village militias advised the villagers to take up arms by joining his ranks. He was reported to have said: 'The state cannot put a soldier behind every citizen in danger. But it encourages you to join self-defence groups. Each person will then receive a weapon to defend his house and his honour'.<sup>21</sup>

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported also that on the morning of one of the seven massacres in Relizane on 31 December 1997 and 6 January 1998, in which 900 innocent civilians were killed, villagers had been warned by village guards and gendarmes to leave their homes on that very day, otherwise, 'you will count the lives of your children tonight in front of us'<sup>22</sup> said one of guards.

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*National Responses*

## 2.2 Passivity of the Army during the Massacres

### 2.2.1 Irrefutable Facts

That army barracks are located close to the sites where many of the massacres were perpetrated is undeniable. That the security forces did not intervene during the massacres is unquestionable. The reports of human rights organisations and press accounts confirm these facts, and raise serious concerns for the apparent inability or unwillingness of the security forces to protect civilians.

Amnesty International (AI) noted that most of the massacres took place around Algiers and the regions of Blida and Medea, the most militarised part of the country.

In many cases massacres, often lasting several hours, took place only a very short distance, a few kilometres or even a few hundred metres, away from army and security forces barracks and outposts. However, in spite of the screams and cries for help of the victims, the sound of gunshots and the flames and smoke of the burning houses, the security forces have not intervened – neither to come to the rescue of those who were being massacred, nor to arrest those responsible for the massacres, who got away on each occasion.<sup>23</sup>

AI reported testimonies of survivors who fled to the military posts seeking help. On each occasion the security forces refused to intervene, claiming that they were not under orders to do so.

Several survivors described how people who had tried to escape from villages where a massacre was taking place had actually been turned back by a cordon of members of the security forces who stood by while the villagers were being slaughtered and did not come into the village until after the attackers had left.<sup>24</sup>

The human rights organisation quoted the following declaration of a survivor of the Rais massacre (Sidi Moussa, Blida, 29 August 1997, 200 to 400 victims):

Why did this happen? Why didn't anyone stop it? There is no law any more. The army and the security forces were right there; they heard and saw everything and did nothing, and they let the terrorists leave... They [the army] waited for the terrorists to finish their dirty task and then they let them leave. What does this mean to you? ... I had been threatened by the fundamentalists but I almost got killed by the army. Even my friends in the army don't understand anything anymore these days.<sup>25</sup>

AI expressed grave concerns about such testimonies, which, according to the organisation, strengthen reports that 'armed groups who carried out massacres of civilians in some cases operated in conjunction with, or with the consent of, certain army and security forces units'.<sup>26</sup> For AI, the fre-

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quency and geographical concentration of the massacres 'raise serious questions about the apparent inability or unwillingness of the military and security forces to take adequate measures to protect the civilian population, and about the lack of investigations into such incidents'.<sup>27</sup>

AI accuses the army for abdicating its responsibility of protecting the population:

According to official information, the security forces – who have often swiftly caught and killed the groups responsible for murders and massacres – have consistently been unable or unwilling to intervene to stop and prevent the massacres of civilians. [...] It is clear that there has been a conscious abdication by the Algerian authorities of its responsibility to protect the civilian population in areas whose position and security and communications network should make such protection possible.<sup>28</sup>

Following the massacres, Human Rights Watch (HRW) spoke of the domestic and international outrage directed both against 'the shadowy perpetrators – initially identified as the Armed Islamic Group (Groupe Islamique Armé, GIA) – and at the security forces' failure to protect civilians'.<sup>29</sup> It reported that 'in some instances, massacres occurred within a few hundred meters of security force barracks and posts'<sup>30</sup>, and that, according to interviews with survivors, 'no effort was made by the authorities to intervene to halt the attack or to apprehend the attackers as they withdrew' despite the fact that 'the slaughter lasted for hours, generating fire, smoke, explosions and cries for help'.<sup>31</sup>

The Association for the Defence of Victims of Massacres in Algeria reported the testimony of a woman who survived the Bentalha massacre of 29 September 1997:

As the night was falling, some people who were scared wanted to leave the village but they found the military surrounding the village. They prevented them from leaving and told them: 'Go back home. We are here to protect you'. But at about 10 pm, the attackers assaulted the village. They were in large numbers and were heavily armed with kalashnikovs, grenades, axes, iron bars, picks and knives.<sup>32</sup>

The international press devoted a lot of space in its columns to these disturbing facts. The *International Herald Tribune*, for instance, reported that the Rais massacre was particularly disturbing 'not only because of the numbers and the vicious methods of killing but because nobody ever came to help or protect the villagers'.<sup>33</sup> It reported that survivors testified that the slaughter lasted more than four hours, which 'reinforced suspicions that some of the atrocities, always officially attributed to 'Islamist terrorists', were perpetrated, or provoked or colluded in, by forces from the Algerian military'.<sup>34</sup> A young ex-journalist told the newspaper: 'I can't allow myself to believe it, it would be just too awful'.<sup>35</sup>

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*La Tribune de Genève* explained that the massacre of Rais took place at the gates of Algiers and ‘the assailants who occupied the various villages all night long used explosives to destroy houses without any fear of the army’.<sup>36</sup>

*Libération* raised the question of passivity of the security forces during the slaughter that lasted not less than four hours: ‘the light from burning houses and the sound of automatic weapons should have prompted the security forces to intervene’.<sup>37</sup> A survivor told the newspaper: ‘We sought help from a nearby security forces barracks but the first to arrive later in the morning were the firemen’.<sup>38</sup> The paper stressed that according to its sources, ‘a small unit of “special forces” was even positioned 200 meters away from the spot of the massacre’.<sup>39</sup>

The *Guardian* also questioned the disturbing passivity of the Algerian security forces which, in the case of the Bentalha massacre, were less than a mile away while the killers rampaged through the night. It asked:

Was the army simply at a loss on how to deal with unconventional warfare when they deployed heavy armour to observe what was happening but failed to send in troops? Or does this willingness to tolerate a massacre almost under their noses suggest a political agenda in which the excesses of extremism strengthen the hand of military hardliners?<sup>40</sup>

Concerning the massacre of Bentalha, the *Sunday Times* reported a European special forces veteran saying: ‘The army could have gone in and killed the terrorists but they clearly did not want to’.<sup>41</sup> The paper added that, according to intelligence sources, it was believed that ‘army units in the Algiers military region have been ordered not to intervene in such massacres’<sup>42</sup> and that ‘the GIA gangs carrying out the killings have been heavily infiltrated by Algerian secret services’.<sup>43</sup>

*Le Courrier International* confirmed that the massacres at Rais, Beni-Messous and Bentalha were perpetrated in areas heavily patrolled by the army and the gendramerie. It explained:

At Beni-Messous, close to the capital, the murderers were undisturbed for four hours at a few hundred meters away from a special forces barracks housing elite troops of general Smain Lamari. At Bentalha, few hours before the tragedy, civilians had alerted the army to the presence of a suspicious group of individuals camped around the small village. It is now an open secret that the army knew but preferred not to intervene. People in Algiers speak of an order, signed by the chief-of-staff, forbidding units to leave their barracks at night without a written instruction.<sup>44</sup>

### 2.2.2 *Army Justifications*

The army justifies its failure to intervene during the massacres by invoking claims such as the difficulty of moving because of mines planted by the kill-

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ers, the fear of booby traps and the incompetence and lack of experience of its soldiers.

*Libération* questioned this *laissez-faire* of the army and reported that on several occasions the military claimed that ‘mines prevented them from advancing’<sup>45</sup> and that the soldiers who lacked experience ‘feared falling into traps when responding to emergency calls’.<sup>46</sup>

Alias About, a survivor of the Bentalha massacre said: ‘We called the army after 15 minutes. The soldiers came but halted on the other side of the road; they said they wouldn’t come closer because they believed this road was mined’.<sup>47</sup>

An old woman who managed to flee the massacre said that soldiers came closer while the killing was going on but did not intervene claiming that the assailants had sealed the area with mines and booby traps. ‘It is certain that there was complicity’<sup>48</sup>, said the frightened woman.

The explanation of mines was again advanced by general X: ‘let us not forget that the terrorists often surround their shelters with mines that our men have to locate and neutralise before launching their assault’.<sup>49</sup>

Amnesty International commented on the mine claims of the military authorities. It recalled that the Algerian authorities had not made official statements on any specific incidents, but newspapers close to the authorities had often reported that ‘the security forces could not intervene because the terrain around the villages where the massacres were committed had been mined by those who committed the massacres to prevent the security forces intervention’.<sup>50</sup> AI stated also that the army and security forces usually ‘do not come to the site until several hours after the massacres, and often not until the following morning’.<sup>51</sup> The reason most frequently cited in the past for their lack of response is ‘the security forces fear of being trapped by a false alert and ambushed’.<sup>52</sup>

But Amnesty International said it was not convinced by these claims. It remains sceptical about the excuse of mines because ‘during the massacres villagers managed to flee from the villages and after the massacres, survivors, ambulances, helpers and security services have gone in and out of the villages without stepping on any mines’.<sup>53</sup> It contends that if such movements had been possible both during and after the massacres, it would have also been possible for security forces to go into the villages and stop the massacres. It argues that the excuse of traps is untenable as ‘the massacres often last for several hours, during which nearby security forces should have ample time to intervene to stop the massacres and to apprehend the attackers’.<sup>54</sup>

Another strategy used by the army to silence critics was to plead incompetence. *Le Nouvel Afrique Asie* reported that the Algerian army pleaded in-

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competence and mediocrity in an attempt to deflect international criticism. The magazine wrote:

Is it possible that the army has neither heard nor seen anything while the massacres were being perpetrated within earshot from the barracks? Is it possible that military intelligence officers could not have predicted what was allegedly being planned in the *maquis* against defenceless villagers? Is it possible that the special forces, an elite corps armed with all-roads vehicles, night vision equipment and armoured tanks, could have let the terrorists perpetrate their crimes and leave without intervening or harrying them in their retreat or even pursuing them? These are disturbing questions – taboo queries since one cannot call into question the effectiveness and professionalism of the army with impunity – that the military chiefs have eluded for so long. They say, indirectly through hand-picked foreign personalities such as Claude Cheysson, a former foreign minister of Francois Mitterrand, or Bernard-Henri Levy, the ‘new philosopher’ of the parisian Gotha, that it is ultimately through incompetence that the army did not stop the perpetration of the massacres. They invoke in detail the ‘heaviness of the chain of command’ which prevents the officers from passing on their orders with the appropriate swiftness to the combat units thus forced to remain passive. They also put forward the difficult nature of the terrain and the extreme mobility of the assailants to excuse the mediocre results of the half-hearted counter-offensives attempted by the army.<sup>55</sup>

The magazine reported an explanation put forward by an officer from the West of Algeria for the passivity of soldiers during the massacres: ‘One has to know the history of this army; it is a stationary army. It has a ‘red army’ culture and has never learnt how to move, especially at night when faced with savages who have the benefit of surprise and the knowledge of the terrain’.<sup>56</sup>

*Le Monde* reported that in September 1997, during a secret conclave of the top military officers, general Zeroual ‘took on acrimoniously the army for its powerlessness’.<sup>57</sup> In fact, the Algerian army ‘puts forward many excuses. The main one is the weakness of its strength’.<sup>58</sup> In another article, the same newspaper casts doubt on such claims:

To believe such claims is to forget that the Algerian forces have elite units, particularly paratroopers equipped with sophisticated equipment that could have been swiftly deployed in Bentalha. Rumour has it that the soldiers were under orders not to leave the barracks at night without a formal authorisation<sup>B</sup> from the army chief-of-staff, general Mohamed Lamari.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>B</sup> In fact, the AMFO published on 5 July 1999, in its web site (www.anp.org), the a copy of the fax sent by the chief-of-staff to all army units within the first military district (*1ère Région Militaire*). This fax orders all the units to be on state alert 1, cancels all leaves and bans sorties under all circumstances. The fax reads:

MDN – EM/ANP – DOP/CPO

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Despite evidence to the contrary, the army chief-of-staff, general Lamari, avoids explanations by maintaining that instances of passivity are the exception rather than the rule. He says: 'In general, their [the soldiers] interventions were effective whenever alerts were given on time. But, when alert was not given on time due to complicity, neutralisation or deception, death tolls were heavy'.<sup>60</sup>

### 2.3 The Independent Inquiry

Algeria's military blame the massacres on the terrorists (Islamists) in general and the GIA in particular, but refuse an independent investigation into them. 'They have consistently failed to investigate, or to allow others to investigate, killings and other abuses blamed on both armed groups and security forces'.<sup>61</sup>

Amnesty International has raised serious concern about the fact that no killer has ever been arrested given that the Algerian military authorities 'consistently refuse to provide the information on the basis of which their conclusions were reached, and do not allow independent investigations to be carried out'.<sup>62</sup>

Human Rights Watch stated that the Algerian military 'allowed no international human rights organisation or UN human rights rapporteur to investigate the violence'.<sup>63</sup> On mass killings, it said 'the questions surrounding the massacres received no conclusive answers' and 'no independent Algerian body had conducted a thorough inquiry'.<sup>64</sup>

The army opposition to an investigation into the massacres is justified on the ground that Algeria would never allow foreign interference in its internal affairs: 'the military authorities have always hidden behind the pretext of non-interference in its internal affairs in rejecting the idea of an international inquiry into a civil war that enters its sixth year in ever more suspicious hidden conditions'.<sup>65</sup>

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A toute les unités 1RM. Stop. Consigne à tout le personnel militaire. Stop. Ne sortir sous aucun prétexte. Stop. Etat d'alerte 1. Stop. Communiquez toute infraction à cet ordre. Stop. Fin. Stop.

Le chef d'état major.

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### 3. Reactions and Testimonies of Army Defectors

Following the military coup of January 1992 and the repression it launched to consolidate the ensuing regime, the army has not kept its unity. In addition to the well known split with regard to the strategy and aim of the war between the hard-line and soft-line factions, there has been an increasing dissent against the war in the course of its prosecution. This dissent has taken various forms which include the Algerian Movement of Free Officers (AMFO) and officers who deserted individually and sought asylum in Europe.

In so far as these officers were members of the army in the course of this war, while the massacres were taking place, their response, albeit not the official one, is also constitutive of the reaction of the military. The response of the AMFO is discussed in section 3.1 and that of defectors in section 3.2.

#### 3.1 Algerian Movement of Free Officers

The Algerian Movement of Free Officers (AMFO) is composed of officers who oppose the generals in power. It emerged after the 1992 military coup to express the discontent of a part of the Algerian army at the repression and extermination of the Algerian people and at the mismanagement and corruption at the top of the military institution. It explains the aim of the movement in its introductory declaration entitled '*The shame of the harki generals*':

We, faithful officers to the oath of the first of November 1954 and faithful to the sacred principles of the Algerian people to which we belong, proclaim solemnly and loudly our indignation and our refusal to keep quiet in front of the continuing genocide of our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and children. The limits of barbarism and the incredible have once again been breached on the land of our ancestors. The National Popular Army has always been the symbol of honour and sacrifice, but the rise of high-ranking officers, former French officers or relatives, to the command, put the clock forty years backward. The clock is at the time of the occupation. For all these reasons and to follow the example of our brothers, officers and non-commissioned officers cowardly executed since the first hours of the civil war by other members of the National Popular Army, acting under the orders of Mariane, we will fight these new *Harkis* and their allies to the last drop of our blood. At the time in which the Algerians are living the darkest days of their history, we pay homage to their dignity, as they are suffering silently in their flesh and soul behind an iron curtain.<sup>66</sup>

According to colonel B. Ali, who signs the AMFO statements and declarations, the movement started to act in a structured manner in the summer of 1997 and has within its ranks about sixty officers living abroad and a considerable number in Algeria. In one of his declarations he said: 'We thought that we were fighting an enemy, but found ourselves killing innocent people and entire families for generals who have amassed colossal fortunes'.<sup>67</sup>

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For the AMFO, it is the 'trio of shame' composed of generals Mohamed Lamari, Mohamed Mediene and Smain Lamari, and other 'traitors such as Fodil Cherif, who have planned and executed the sinister destruction of Algeria. They are the *Harki* generals who have responded to the call of their masters, whom they have always blindly obeyed, who plan and organise the genocide of Algeria in all fields'.<sup>68</sup> The movement revealed that '[these generals], who are aided by mercenaries who contribute massively in the massacre of our children, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, are today terrorising people and filling their pockets'.<sup>69</sup>

In a letter addressed to general Zeroual (as president and supreme commander of the armed forces), the AMFO said: 'Commander, history is recording the suffering of the Algerian people with blood, is writing their tragedies with the tears of the orphans and is preparing its revenge on the torturers and traitors'.<sup>70</sup> In another letter to Zeroual, the AMFO drew to his attention the killings and torture practised by his forces: 'the majority of the kidnapped citizens have been executed after abominable torture by the security forces and the militias in secret detention centres and then buried in mass graves situated in zones claimed to be under the control of the GIA'.<sup>71</sup>

Commenting on the 'resignation' of general Zeroual, the movement stated that Zeroual 'is more treacherous than the traitors because he has assassinated once again the poor victims of this war of shame'. His resignation came

after the concentration camps and the huge massacres of populations whose only crime was to be simple and poor Algerians, after committing the most horrible killings, the most revolting rapes, the most unforgivable crimes and the most ruthless atrocities, after the death squads which organised kidnappings, torture and physical liquidations of Algerians and foreigners.<sup>72</sup>

On 24 March 1999, the AMFO revealed that colonel Bachir Tartague (alias Athmane), 'known for heading death squads responsible for massacres and political assassinations', had escaped death. The assassination attempt was explained as a 'cleaning operation to cover the real guilty elements who are responsible for the national tragedy, the instigators of the crimes: generals Belkheir, Nezzar, Lamari and Toufik'.<sup>73</sup>

### 3.2 Other Army and Police Defectors

*The Irish Times* on 30 October 1997 reported the testimony of Reda, a former conscript in the Algerian army. After witnessing some of the horrors of the war, Reda fled in fear for his life. He escaped to seek asylum in Britain. Reda revealed that he and other conscripts were given injections (a strange whitish liquid) before they went out on missions. 'There was a doctor in uniform called Dr Sadek, and he gave it to us. We injected one an-

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other. It makes you feel as if you are on the moon, as if you are dreaming. When we killed men, it was as if we were killing cats'.

In June 1997, Reda's unit went out at midnight with a group of regular soldiers who ordered them to wait on a ridge 3km above a small village in Sidi Moussa (Blida region). They were told to enter the village only if they saw flares, but there were no flares and Reda and his fellow conscripts went back to their barracks. Reda recalled:

The next day, we heard that 28 people had been beheaded in that place. I started to think that the soldiers were the killers [...] Two days later, we were cleaning the barracks. My friend found a fake beard in one of the soldiers' pockets. We also found musk perfume like the Islamists wear.<sup>74</sup>

This event convinced Reda that the military, the career soldiers whom the conscripts had protected around the village, committed the massacre 'to discredit the terrorists'. His alarm deepened when 26 conscripts were taken to other barracks in the mountains above Blida and were brought back later dead. Reda believes that they were executed by the army. He said: 'None of the full-time soldiers were hurt. They brought the conscripts' bodies back, and they said they died in a gunfight. Maybe they thought they talked too much. We knew they were killed - eliminated'.<sup>75</sup>

A former Republican Guard, Captain Samir Abdi, blamed in a testimony not only the group of generals but also the whole military institution for its silence. He said:

The most incredible and most shameful fact is that all the massacres and killings are committed under the banner of national interest, the preservation of the republic and the anti-terrorist struggle with the complicity of the so called civil society and the microscopic parties [...] History does not forgive, that is why despite our large number in the National Popular Army, we still suffer and regret the killings and massacres in Algeria, all this in order that a small bunch of visible and hidden opportunists remain in decision making positions [...] We hold the decision makers among the generals responsible of the crisis and its consequences because the argument of the Islamist terrorism of the 'GIA' is no longer valid and does not convince anyone anymore. We are aware more than anybody else of the reality concerning the fictitious group 'GIA' and its real limitations as well as its abilities for killing and massacring entire villages.<sup>76</sup>

Haroun, a former secret agent who defected to seek asylum in Britain, made similar allegations about the responsibility of the Algerian army in the massacres. He declared in a television programme broadcast on Swiss TV:

It is the army which is responsible for the massacres. It is the army which executes the massacres, a special unit under the orders of the generals, not the regular soldiers. It should be remembered that land is being privatised, and land is very important. One has first to chase people from their land so that the latter can be acquired cheaply. And then there must be a certain dose of terror in order to govern the Al-

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gerian people and remain in power. A Chinese proverb says a picture is worth a thousand words. I could not stand the image of a young girl with her throat slit. I could not bear seeing what happened and remain silent. I have children, imagine what this girl had to suffer, the last 10 seconds of her life must have been horrible. I think it is our duty to speak up about this. I speak today in the hope that others would do the same, so that things change, and so that these killings cease.<sup>77</sup>

Lieutenant Messaoud Alili, a pilot in the Algerian army, fled from his base in Algeria in a military helicopter and flew, through NATO air defences in the Mediterranean, to seek political asylum in Spain. He declared:

The Algerian army has pushed the entire society towards a darkness with no escape and towards a war of extermination against the whole population [...] I know that the Algerian army had bombarded with napalm the villages where armed Islamists were hiding, but I did nothing of the sort. I only attacked with launch-rockets places I was ordered to target, but nothing mattered to my superiors except results regardless of means. The strategy of the Algerian regime does not serve the people, it does rather the opposite. In many cases, the security services refused to rescue civilians during terrorists attacks [...] Let them kill me now, it is of little importance. Bullets cannot kill a man whose heart is already dead anyway.<sup>78</sup>

Another deserter, Adlane Chabane, gave his account in *Al-Watan Al-Arabi*. After finishing his university studies, Adlane joined the army and became a professional soldier. Since 1988, he assumed several duties. He served under general Lakhel Ayat, then under general Mohamed Betchine, both successive chiefs of Algeria's military intelligence in the 1980s. He also served under general Mohamed Mediene (alias Toufik), the current chief of the DRS. His duties involved liaising between the main heads of the different departments of military intelligence. He left Algeria in mid-1997 and he is now living in Europe as a political refugee. He recalled:

I have taken the decision to quit the army during the hijacking of the Air France aeroplane by a GIA group. I monitored how the army managed the crisis. It was a real disaster which I took as a personal humiliation. We had in Algeria experience in these kinds of problems because we received several hijacked planes in the seventies. I thought that we had units of commandos specialising in the liberation of hostages. After that event, I understood that we were going to lose the trust of the people.

Contrary to what circulates in the press, the massacres are not new. Since 1994, massacres have been carried out by the security services, in particular, by a special force of the military intelligence which organises and executes them (the central direction of the military security). It operates within the framework of an operational centre composed of shock troops led by colonel Othmane Tartag, known as Bachir. The aim is to terrorise the families of Islamists in their areas in order to isolate them from other families who could be of great support to them.

This special unit is based at Ben Aknoun, Algiers. At the beginning it had 6 to 10 bearded elements wearing '*Qashabiya*' or '*Jallaba*' [clothes often worn by the armed groups]. Their method of work is as follows: in the middle of the night, they are taken in unmarked cars to Islamists areas such as Cherarba, Eucalyptus, Sidi Moussa, and Meftah. When the elements of the unit arrive in these localities they

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target precise families, those of the wanted Islamists. They knock on doors shouting: 'open, we are the mujahidīn'. As soon as the doors are open, the occupants of the house are killed. By dawn, tens of persons are killed. The houses are then burnt during the day. Such actions became worse with the arrival of police and militias reinforcements. The situation has become tragic and there have been murders, theft and rape on a large scale. Thus, the country has been caught in a dangerous web. The most dangerous fact is that there are increasing numbers of individuals who commit massacres as if they are hit by a massacre epidemic. Often, the killers use drugs to calm their nerves [...] These retributive expeditions are also considered preventive actions aimed at dissuading the FIS sympathisers from joining the armed groups after their release from the camps in the south.<sup>79</sup>

Captain X was an officer of the secret services in the Algerian army before deserting. He is also one of the few defectors who revealed to newspapers the implication of the army in the crimes perpetrated in Algeria. On 12 January 1998 the German *Der Spiegel* published his statement:

It was the events of Badjarah that pushed me to give up my privileged position of captain and to escape. On a morning of May 1994, the inhabitants of this suburb of Algiers were horrified when they discovered a dozen of corpses on the sides of the road, all poor young people of the neighbourhood. I was there when a lieutenant of Badjarah announced this collective murder to his superior in the ministry of defence. The first question from the latter was: 'what are the people in the street saying?' 'They suspect the military security' replied the lieutenant. The chief calmed him down: 'But, this is not serious, tell them that it was a settling of scores between the terrorists'. Soon after the soldier left, the officer exploded with laughter and expressed his satisfaction: 'Bachir and his men have done good work. I have to call him right away to congratulate him'. Bachir is the pseudo-name of an officer of the secret services, colonel Atmane Tartag. His general headquarters were in a military barrack on the heights of Algiers. His speciality was the execution of collective murders. He was pushing the families of Islamists to go into hiding. Not long after the massacre of Badjarah, the commandos of Bachir continued the killings in the Eucalyptus neighbourhood. There have been many of such attacks. I saw myself these groups of killers in action and I am ready to testify before international commissions of inquiry.

The latest atrocious massacres such as those of Relizane, the torture, the mutilations and the kidnappings of young women, raise the question whether, apart from fanatic Islamists, the soldiers are responsible for the fall of Algeria in barbarism. My answer is: yes, it is certain.

In order to infiltrate these groups and set them one against the other, the military have helped in the creation of a new group, the GIA, where the toughest and most dangerous elements are to be found. Former volunteers of Afghanistan, but especially big criminals amongst whom murderers convicted of death sentences joined the GIA under the command of self-proclaimed emirs [commanders]. The extreme brutality of the GIA killers who slaughter men, cut women with axes and burn children in ovens, indicate that the presumed fighters cannot be religious warriors but sadistic criminals.

Often, the night massacres, which result in the elimination of entire villages, occur very close to military posts, without the soldiers intervening to help the victims.

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This is an indication that the army tolerates the GIA. In this way, the army justifies bloody retributive actions and takes advantage of the generalised panic.

In the beginning, the operations of the fundamentalists targeted mainly members of the security services. The military wanted the terror to affect the whole population. This gave them some legitimacy and increased the chances of survival of the regime. This is why the security forces decided to take revenge on one family from this Islamists for every dead amongst their ranks. In this way they have driven the whole population into a dirty war [...] The policy of an ex-minister of interior, Meziane Cherif, who used to say 'fear has to change the camp', has been accomplished in a terrible way. The military and the police kill relatives of the suspects in the 'hot' neighbourhoods so that people in the area do not let a brother or a son of a fugitive find a hiding place. In this way, the foundation of the terrorists is destroyed and the people are separated from Islamist rebels.<sup>80</sup>

The London *Observer*<sup>81</sup> published on 9 November 1997 revelations of Youssef, an ex-agent of the Algerian military secret service who is now a political refugee in Britain. According to Youssef,

- The bomb attacks in Paris were fomented by the Algerian intelligent services.
- The massacres being perpetrated in Algeria are also the work of the military secret services, especially the death squads of general Smaïn Lamari.
- The climate of terror is orchestrated mainly by two persons: Mohamed Mediene (alias 'Toufik'), head of the Algerian secret service 'DRS' and Smaïn Lamari, head of the 'DRE' (Counter-Espionnage) and the 'GIS' (Special Task Force) known under the name of 'death squads'. Smaïn Lamari participates personally in torture sessions in the headquarters of his services.
- The GIA (Islamic Armed Group) has been infiltrated, manipulated and then hijacked (controlled) by the secret services.
- The FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) is not involved in the massacres. Western intelligence agencies know it very well but keep silent to protect the interests of the western countries.

## 4. Explanations of the Army Response

### 4.1 Outline of the Army Reactions

In essence, the army statements

- speak of the massacres as blind and inhuman acts motivated by a defeated terrorism which takes revenge on a population that has withdrawn its assistance;
- identify the killers as criminal groups of terrorists, meaning Islamists who took arms to fight the government;

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- mention very little the victims but blame them for having once supported the terrorists (i.e. the FIS and later the insurgent groups);
- attribute the inability of the army to prevent the massacres perpetrated close to their barracks to mines planted by the killers around the massacre sites and a lack of experience and incompetence of the troops;
- reject calls for an independent inquiry into the mass killings because this would mean accepting foreign intervention in the country internal affairs.

The defectors from the army, however,

- describe the massacres as genocide, coward executions and horrible killings;
- describe the victims as simple, poor and innocent Algerians;
- accuse the army of committing the massacres pointing in particular to former officers in the French army, the secret services, special death squads and the militias.

#### **4.2 Apologetics for the Army Reactions**

The response of the army is accepted at face value by the Algerian and French media as well as many Western intellectuals and diplomats. For instance, André Soulier of the European Popular Party, who headed a delegation of members of European Parliament (MEP) to Algeria, found causes for the Algerian army brutality and said in his mission report: 'The instrument of repression is an army that is badly trained and poorly equipped for fighting the changing forms of terrorism'.<sup>82</sup>

The former French foreign affairs minister, Claude Cheysson, explained the failure of the Algerian army to protect the population during a visit to Algeria as follows:

There is the fact that the authorities do not have a remarkable efficiency. There is poor coordination between the gendarmerie, the police and the army. [...] The conscripts, on the eve of their last day in the army, do not really want to go into a village where slaughter will be the rule if one is captured.<sup>83</sup>

The French minister rejects the allegations against the army: 'I reject totally the idea suggested by many that the Algerian authorities have a direct responsibility in the massacres or the bomb attacks which occurred'.<sup>84</sup> He offered the following elucidation of their passive proximity to the killings:

I have tried to understand why the security forces stationed close to a massacre place do not intervene quickly. There are understandable cases, even if these are not

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pleasant to recall [...] There are also purely technical reasons which are difficult to understand by civilians. When a military company has as a mission the guarding of a post, it is not equipped to go out in pursuit of attackers'.<sup>85</sup>

Jean Audibert, ex-ambassador of France to Algeria, who was put in charge of re-establishing links between Algeria and France through the civil associations of the two countries, absolves the Algerian army from the crimes and gives the following justification: 'I am disappointed by the fact that I do not understand how the army cannot afford the means to occupy the field, to recall the reservists, for example, if its manpower is not adequate'.<sup>86</sup>

Werner Hoyer, German delegate minister for foreign affairs, who visited Algeria three times since 1996 to promote economic cooperation, deplored the 'dangerous reflex concerning Algeria' and invited Europe 'not to fall into the trap laid by terrorism'. He told *El-Watan* newspaper:

When we criticise the armed forces for often arriving too late at the sites of the massacres, one has to realise that Algeria is a country eight times bigger than Germany but has only one third of the Germany population. It is impossible to put police forces in every small village.<sup>87</sup>

The European MEP Daniel Cohn-Bendit declared that 'what is more dramatic, is not that the army, for example, would dirty its hands by committing massacres, but that people believe in it, not because it is the truth, but because there is a huge hatred towards the army'.<sup>88</sup> He does not believe those who accuse a faction of the army of being responsible for some massacres in Algeria:

I believe, however, that there are on one hand, the inability and the fear of the young soldiers, and on the other hand, the Soviet style organisation of the Algerian army. The army is not mobile enough to fight efficiently against terrorism. I think that, in some areas, soldiers did not want to protect villages which attacked them for years, because they were linked to the AIS (Islamic Salvation Army). This is possible. [Murder of some individuals by factions within the authorities is possible], but I do not believe in the massacres of children and populations because the army would come out stripped off its legitimacy. The role of the army is nevertheless primarily to protect people.<sup>89</sup>

A number of intellectuals such as the French André Glucksmann and Bernard-Henry Levy defended the army. They praise its role and deny its involvement in the massacres. They put the blame of all the atrocities on Islamists. For instance, Glucksmann defends the army as follows:

Despite their advantage in strength the government forces did not know how to attack, nor did they know how to capture or to follow the killers. This was certainly a triumph of confusion, unpreparedness and lack of co-ordination. For sure, for when slaughterers and slaughtered intermingle in the dark, one would not know where to

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shoot. Furthermore, objective obstacles are multiplied by the bureaucratic weight of an apparatus modelled on the Soviets from which it inherited lack of initiatives, and an operational paralysis that the ex-Red Army has often experienced in the last decade. The Algerian army has also among its ranks many young and modern officers trained in the best military schools of the West. Unfortunately, they are not intended to this type of combat.<sup>90</sup>

Glucksmann is not only a good advocate of the military but blames also the West for not supporting the Algerian army: 'Strictly conventional in its training and mission, the Algerian army does not have the adequate technical means of anti-guerrilla warfare [...] France, followed by the United States, refuse to sell Algeria such means'.<sup>91</sup> He added that the Algerian army did not have the morale to fight:

One does not mobilise an army against 'hooligans' and 'rascals' [...] In order to risk one's life, one has to have more stirring motives. Saving Algeria, maybe. Playing the cop, without the advantages of the job, certainly not. A gendarme is certainly tired by the multiplication of tasks and risks, but above all, he is consumed by the uncertainty of the objectives.<sup>92</sup>

Another French philosopher, Bernard-Henri Levy, who spent the 1997 Christmas in Algeria, declared his admiration to the army and the militias when he left the country: 'I leave Algiers with the feeling that you will win because of the patriots, the village guards, the army as well as the resistance of the people and the courage of the journalists who have chosen to stay in Algiers'.<sup>93</sup> He also cleared the army of any responsibility in the massacres by claiming that the bomb attacks and the atrocities committed in Algeria 'are not the work of a victorious army but the actions of deviant groups'.<sup>94</sup>

The Algerian former interior minister, Mostefa Benmansour, explains the reason behind the non-intervention of the army in the massacres as follows:

The National Popular Army (ANP) is a popular army. One has the tendency to forget that, during more than a quarter of a century, the army was given the task to construct roads, socialist villages, dams, the trans-saharian road and the green desert-block. It really has not been trained for an offensive war and it has not been prepared to confront the form of terrorism facing the country. Since 1992, the ANP has been performing mainly 'knuckle-duster' operations. Now, it is going to systematically occupy the terrain.<sup>95</sup>

When asked whether the passivity of the army, especially during the summer 1997, was due to helplessness because of fear of falling into traps through passive or active complicity, and whether orders had been given in that direction, Hachemi Cherif, the leader of the MDS communist party, answered:

On this question, one has to be extremely careful to avoid grave contemptuous accusations [...] Whatever the mistakes committed in its name, the army remains the

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only institution which still enjoys an important capital of trust, even if this capital has been shaken by changes and deterioration in the war situation and tarnished by the discredit of the regime. Personally I am not aware of any instance in which the army was present at sites of massacres or in their proximity and did not intervene while it was possible. This accusation is nonsense from the point of view of its implications. The army cannot tolerate enemy forces since they would return against it, redeploy and increase in strength [...] Let us not neglect some parameters: the extent of the national territory (so many cities, villages, market towns and nerve centres of international frontiers, in particular the Moroccan frontier where the best troops are deployed); a terrorism which knows what it is doing, where to go to indoctrinate and mobilise to the extreme, conquers fearing neither God nor man, booby-traps access roads and dead bodies, threatens to blow up inhabited buildings and fires on the security forces while taking crowds as hostages.<sup>96</sup>

In an answer to a similar question, Redha Malek, the leader of the Republican National Alliance party, accounted for the army negative response by explaining that there was no such a thing as a perfect anti-terrorist war. He said: 'there are deficiencies in the anti-terrorist struggle; a strategy adopted in this kind of combat is not always implemented without setbacks'.<sup>97</sup>

### **4.3 Politics of Extermination and Denial**

The explanations, rationalisations, and pleas reviewed above can be argued to be unconvincing apologetics.

For instance, the argumentation of the army in justifying its attitude during massacres is very shaky. For example, the excuse of mines and booby traps around the sites of massacres is invalidated by the fact that the flow of circulation never ceased, and as soon as they were authorised, ambulances went in without taking any precaution, took the dead bodies and evacuated the injured. To hinder the army's movement, thousands of mines were required to ring the targeted sites, a logistical enterprise beyond the capacity of rebels who were constantly on the run.

The excuse of the army's incompetence is bizarre, to say the least. Bruno Etienne (a specialist of the Maghreb) refuted the causal link between 'lack of mobility' and 'incompetence'. He argued that since the seventies (when it was comparable to the model of the Red Army), the Algerian army has evolved: 'The young officers of the army belong to a new educated and effective generation which has proved to be operational in anti-guerrilla warfare'.<sup>98</sup>

In fact, there is evidence that the response of the army falls into a wider and classic pattern of official denial which aims at sowing confusion. The army had nothing to do with the massacres, was unable to protect the population and yet accepted that the victims deserved what happened to them. This position reflects the ideology of state terror that justifies mass killings whose existence is never officially admitted.

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In a study of responses of governments to human rights reports, Stanley Cohen<sup>99</sup> demonstrated that killer-states often deny responsibility of the killings, provide justifications for the killings or try to rationalise them. Killer-states use also counter-offensive tactics to respond to accusations of murder by attacking the sources of information, casting doubt on the truth of the allegations and questioning the right to criticise. When ignoring allegations, crude denial, ideological justification or aggressive counterattack are no longer possible to sustain, the killer-states respond by partial acknowledgement. This is rare but can happen when, for example, the evidence is too embarrassing to be explained away.

In the face of strong visual and testimonial evidence the Algerian army could not sustain the strategy of ignoring allegations completely, crude denial or technical justification were difficult to sustain indefinitely, so it had to resort to the partial acknowledgement that those killed were innocent civilians and that the army failed to protect them only on very few occasions. At the same time, the army made use of the 'denial of the victim' tactic to displace blame onto those who were harmed. Victim blaming of the targeted population took the form: 'you got what you deserved', a justification accusing the victims of being implicitly co-operative perpetrators or complicit bystanders, deserving therefore punishment.<sup>100</sup>

For the evaluation of the army's response, rather than categorising and analysing the rhetorical strategies of the army's statements, explanations which account for the politics of denial are proposed, i.e. interpretations are suggested for the contents of the army statements on the massacres, victims, alleged perpetrators, and inquiry, on its passive proximity to the sites of the killings, and the apologetics it deployed to justify it.

A basic interpretation of the denial is that the army is the actual perpetrator of the massacres. This position is sustained in two stages. First, the common *a priori* assumption that armies protect their citizens is challenged by showing that the notion of a killer-state is not a peculiarity. This is done in section 4.3.1. Second, the history, nature, warfare doctrine and practice of the Algerian army are invoked to support the assertion that the army is perpetrating the mass killings and lying about them. This is discussed in sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3.

#### *4.3.1 On Killer-States*

The notion of a cut-throat state or a killer-state is not an anomaly at all. Murders of civilians ranging from individual assassinations to mass slaughter of whole opposition movements or entire ethnic groups have been committed by states in different parts of the world.

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In his research on democide (genocide, massacres, extrajudicial executions), Rummel stated that 'political regimes - governments - have probably murdered nearly 170,000,000 of their own citizens and foreigners in this century, about four times the number killed in all international and domestic wars and revolutions'.<sup>101</sup> He argues that

The less democratic a regime, the more unchecked and unbalanced power at the centre, the more it should commit democide. Democide becomes a device of rule, as in eliminating possible opponents, or a means for achieving one's ideological goal, as in the purification of one's country of an alien race or the reconstruction of society.<sup>102</sup>

Based on a survey, Helen Fein calculated that 'genocides and politicides between 1945 and 1980 have caused (maximally) over twice as many deaths as have wars during that period'.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, Fein found that 'state-sponsored massacres killed up to 2.6 times the number of people dying as a result of natural disasters between 1967 and 1986'.<sup>104</sup>

Amnesty International reported in the early eighties that 'political killings by governments have been committed in most, if not all, the regions of the world' and that these killings 'are not confined to any one political system or ideology'. Examples of such killings since 1980 were believed 'to have been carried out by official forces or other linked to the government'. According to this organisation,

The victims - individuals and entire families - have come from all walks of life and from many political persuasions and religious faiths. Politicians, government officials, judges, lawyers, military officers, trade unionists, journalists, teachers, students and school-children, religious workers and peasants: all have lost their lives. In some cases well-known political figures have been publicly assassinated; in others whole villages have been wiped out, and the news has not reached the outside world for weeks or months. Often the victims belonged to a political opposition - often they were simply members of a particular ethnic group or lived in an area targeted for security operations [...]. Several governments in the past two decades have decided on the wholesale liquidation of political opposition. The death toll in these purges has run into the tens and hundreds of thousands, sometimes in a matter of months.<sup>105</sup>

In such killings the powers of the state are deliberately used to suppress or systematically eliminate members of distinct ethnic, religious, national or political groups. In most cases ruling authorities use violent strategies and tactics in an attempt to quell politically active opposition groups. When state repression is met with resistance, violence is often returned disproportionately by the state. Barbara Harff and Ted Gurr observe that:

Sometimes what starts as a brief violent encounter between military forces and citizen groups may lead to a coherent policy of repression ending in geno-politicide... The worst of all possibilities is that in which a state systematically seeks to destroy, as a matter of policy, all members of a communal group irrespective of their actions.

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'Guilt' is established not by action or association, but is assigned to all those who share the defining ascriptive characteristics [...] The state's involvement in genocides and politicides may be more or less direct. Not all are carried out by uniformed agents of the government. In others, leaders assist or knowingly acquiesce in the killing of undesirable groups by vigilantes, 'death squads' or militia. And in some instances governments simply neglect their obligations to protect vulnerable minorities who are attacked by murderous mobs or profiteers.<sup>106</sup>

The target of state terror may be an entire people, a large crowd to which the opponents belong. The conceptual excuse for such 'blind' mass killings may be found in the following general principles of states terror:

- The whole population must be subjected to terror to prepare the environment for the elimination of one part of the population;
- Anyone who does not side with the state is considered a potential opponent, or seen to favour the 'terrorists' by his passivity. Therefore, the entire population must be terrorised by domination and/or extermination.
- In case there is doubt that a certain group of people embodies a single 'terrorist' who cannot be identified, the entire group must be eradicated.

The psychological perspective is also important in understanding how killer-states emerge and evolve. According to Ervin Staub<sup>107</sup>, decision makers (and their war experts) are different from direct perpetrators. In the case of Argentina for example, decision makers were guided by 'ideology and their need for defence against threats mainly to their self-image and world view' and also by 'self-interest and maintaining privilege'. They did so 'as part of a belief system and world view in which their long-held elite status had become their inalienable, "natural" right'. For Staub, the direct perpetrators 'had more mixed motives' in which 'obedience to authority was involved'. They were also 'exposed to a different progression along the continuum of destruction, through their experience with victims', and 'their ideological and identity-related motive became integrated with other personal motives (e.g. power, stimulus seeking, sadism)'. Over time, 'their respect of human life had to diminish' and 'it became acceptable to torture and murder teenage girls, nuns and pregnant women'. They reached the stage where they 'talked to the victims about this absolute godlike power and the victims' total dependence on them' and the violence could result from 'a desire for money, sex or pleasure'. By then, 'whatever "higher morality" may have been as initial motive, ideological purity is lost'. The criminals (kidnappers, torturers and killers) 'were regular members of the military and paramilitary units', and conscripts 'were kept on the fringes of the secret detention centres'.

The notion of a killer-state should also not be surprising from the point of view of military doctrine. Several military doctrines prescribe massacres as a tactical instrument. One such a doctrine is Counter-Insurgency (COIN), otherwise known by the euphemism of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC). The

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policy relies on killings and massacres, is coherent and has its ideologues, executors and budgets. It is nowadays the main weapon deployed by states to crush popular insurgencies:

[the policy of massacres] is theorised and taught in the same boat as counter-insurgency under the heading of 'low intensity conflict'. From Mexico to Algeria, from Colombia to Sri Lanka but also in Birmania, Tchad, Burundi, Kurdistan in Irak and Turkey, Palestine, Ireland and Euzkadi, the teaching given in the military academies is practised by specialists training teams of killers who become quickly professionals once they are caught up in the system.

Despite its apparent archaism and reactionary barbarity, the war said to be of low intensity, special or dirty is the most modern form of warfare for plunder and domination. Its fundamental objective is the eradication of all forms of resistance of local civil societies against the project of global domination of men, resources, bodies and minds. It is a multi-dimensional war: multilateral, multiform or polymorphous, and hence a carrier of all perversions. It involves many and seemingly changing forces: regular armed and security forces, intelligence services, special commandos, paramilitary groups, death squads, 'patriotic' militias, mercenaries, militarised corps of postmen, telecommunication agents, railwaymen, civil servants, journalists, teachers, students and doctors.<sup>108</sup>

Practically, this kind of war is based on conducting counter-revolutionary campaigns by adopting and reversing the principles of political and military struggle and organisation of the insurgents.

Counter-insurgency strategy appropriates by inverting what it perceives the counter-insurgency model to be: it seeks a counter-ideology to compete with the revolutionary ideology; its 'strategic hamlets' are the counterparts of the popular base areas, 'psychological warfare' seeks to counter the propaganda of the revolutionaries, and the teams of 'pacification' seek to reproduce the revolutionary cadres in the 're-education camps' and overturn the political commitments of the guerrilleros.<sup>109</sup>

LIC is a war that relies mainly on terror and intensive black propaganda. Its objective is 'to spread the biggest possible confusion amongst the targeted population and at the international level by a well measured amount of horrible images and incomprehensible and incoherent explanations'.<sup>110</sup> The success of this type of war depends greatly on the success of its propaganda. 'The most striking example and the most recent aspect of this form of war is Algeria'.<sup>111</sup>

The LIC strategy seeks to blur the facts surrounding killings and make them hard to ascertain. The killers often try to conceal or distort the facts. A killer state often denies any responsibility, remains silent or gives false or misleading/confusing explanations in response to the killings:

The facts about political killings by governments are often hidden or distorted by those in charge. The official cover-up can take many forms: concealing the fact of the killing, for example, by making prisoners 'disappear'; blaming killings on opposi-

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tion forces or independent armed groups; or passing off unlawful killings of defenceless individuals as the result of armed encounters or escape attempts. One means of covering up political killings by governments is by concealing the identity of the perpetrators, claiming that the killings are the work of clandestine groups over whom the government has no control.<sup>112</sup>

In LIC strategy, state terror and repression are justified, but never admitted officially. The victims are the ones who are accused of being liars.

#### *4.3.2 On the History and Nature of the Algerian Army*

The Algerian army has inherited much of French military tradition, culture and war doctrines. A commitment to COIN military doctrine, which is taught in Algeria's military academies, is an important part of its colonial legacy. Historically France implemented COIN strategy in Algeria in its effort to crush opposition to the occupation of the country. The French COIN doctrine was in fact founded by generals Bugeaud, Lyautey, Savary and Cavaignac during the first genocidal campaigns to colonise Algeria, and was later developed by other generals such as Allard, Baufre and Massu to counter the wars of liberation in Indochina and Algeria in the 1950's.<sup>113</sup>

General Bugeaud, for example, used a policy of massacres as a carefully implemented war strategy in all the military operations. He said:

The only way to defeat these supporters [of the freedom fighters] is not by chasing them but by starving them by destruction or confiscation of crops and animal flocks, burning hamlets and villagers, massacring the largest possible number of inhabitants – combatants or otherwise - and spreading such terror everywhere so that they should ultimately surrender or disappear.<sup>114</sup>

The counter-insurgency strategy of Bugeaud inspired much of French counter-revolutionary warfare against the Algerian armed resistance (1954-1962). The doctrine had by then developed following the Chinese and the French experience in Indochina. It prescribed also massacres as tactical instruments to isolate the armed resistance from the population, i.e. 'to isolate the fish from water', and counter-mobilise the population against the revolutionaries.

Most of the officers presently commanding Algeria's armed forces were exposed to the French war doctrines, strategies and tactics. Many of them actually served in the French colonial army and defected to the resistance only in the late 50's, on instruction from their French commanders, when it became clear that Algeria was to gain its independence. Officers of this kind include Generals Khaled Nezzar, Larbi Belkheir, Mohamed Lamari, Abdelmalek Guenaizia, Mustapha Chelloufi, Mohamed Touati and Benabbas Ghezaiel.

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For instance, General Khaled Nezzar, born in Batna in 1938, studied in the military school of Kolea and became an officer of the French army in the 13<sup>th</sup> RTA (*Régiment des Tirailleurs Algériens*<sup>C</sup> – Regiment of Algerian Infantrymen), which he ‘deserted’ in April 1958 to join the Algerian National Liberation Army (ALN). He later trained at the Frounze Military Academy (ex-USSR) in 1964 before leading an Algerian battalion to Egypt during the 1967 six-day war. He then joined l’Ecole Supérieure de Guerre of Paris. He commanded the 3<sup>rd</sup> military region in 1979, became general, vice-chief of staff in 1984 and commander of the land forces in 1986. He was in charge of the state of siege during the October 1988 bloody events and became chief-of-staff of the army in November of the same year before entering the government in 1990.

General Mohamed Lamari, the present army chief-of-staff, was born in 1939 in Algiers. He was an officer in the French army before ‘defecting’ in 1958 to the ALN. He played a major role, with Khaled Nezzar, in the repression of the October 1988 events. He was promoted major-general in July 1992 and headed the corps of special elite forces created in September 1992 for the sole purpose of fighting the Islamists.

General Mohamed Touati was an officer in the French army during the Algerian war of liberation. He was in the 64<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment which he ‘deserted’ in 1961, shortly before independence. In 1963 he underwent a training course in a French gendarmerie school. He is known as a fierce eradicator who has the confidence of Said Saadi and Redha Malek. He is their link with France. He was also an advisor to Khaled Nezzar.

Many other officers were exposed to the French COIN doctrine, strategy and tactics during their training in French military academies throughout the late seventies and eighties.

The first major indiscriminate use of violence against the population by the military disciples of the French army was practised in 1988. In October of that year, general Chadli Bendjedid imposed a state of siege and granted the army the permission to make use of automatic weapons against demonstrating civilians. The civilian, administrative and security authorities were placed under the orders of major-general A. Belhouchet, vice-defence minister and head of the army, and Khaled Nezzar, vice-chief-of-staff of the army. Orders were given to the security forces to fire on crowds. More than 1000 civilians were killed (the official death toll was 200). The repression was savage. Several hundreds young people were arrested. Mass torture was practised in police and gendarmerie stations and in military intelligence bar-

<sup>C</sup> See section 4.9 of A. Aroua, *Reading Notes on French Colonial Massacres*, paper No. 26 in part V of this book. An account of some of the activities of the Batna-stationed RTA is given.

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racks. During these events the security service was led by general Mohamed Betchine.

An observer of the Algerian scene commented on the situation as follows:

The riots of October 1988 and the response to them<sup>115</sup>, the brutal interruption of the electoral process in December 1991, the subsequent raids and the repression which has been going on since then with its procession of death and suffering reveal the nature of this army and at the same time reflect its overwhelming weight on the Algerian society. The Algerian army remains an ineffectual Third World army where negligence, anarchy and internal power struggle make the best battle plans.<sup>116</sup>

Since the cancellation of the 1991 parliamentary elections, drilling in COIN doctrine and tactics has increased in intensity and scope. The implementation of the COIN strategy in the ongoing war was inadvertently revealed by general X when he said explicitly: 'Our men lacked training and equipment adopted to this type of low intensity conflicts (LIC)<sup>117</sup>, and by *Demain L'Algerie* newspaper which revealed the creation of 300 death squads by general Belkheir.<sup>118</sup>

*Le Nouvel Afrique Asie*, quoting a former French foreign affairs minister, wrote about Algerian special army units being 'organised along the French model'<sup>119</sup>. Luis Martinez said that in 1993 a real armed body specialising in anti-guerrilla warfare was set up and has developed since<sup>120</sup>. This body is made up of 15 000 men from the army, gendarmerie and police units and led by general Mohamed Lamari, an ex-officer of the French army, elevated in July 1993 to the post of chief-of-staff of the armed forces.

This corps, made up of elite units, has become the pillar of the anti-guerrilla struggle. Its strength has increased steadily and reached 60 000 men in 1995. It is run by the co-ordination of the security of territory created in March 1995 to take charge of centralising the activity of the anti-terrorist forces. The army has had to introduce the principles of anti-guerrilla warfare in the training of its officers and non-commissioned officers. Four years after the beginning of the civil war, the Biskra Training School of Special Forces witnessed the graduation of the first-batch of special troops.<sup>121</sup>

Martinez explained further that the creation of the militia forces follows a classic anti-guerrilla war model similar to the one devised by general Challe during the Algerian war (1954-1962).

Foreign mercenaries contribute also to the training programme. Algeria is part of an increasing trend of governments hiring mercenaries to assist them in fighting the insurgency. There are international organisations supplying mercenaries who specialise in COIN warfare. One such an organisation is Executive Outcomes (EO), a South African military consultancy firm.

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It is Africa's best known private army and its mercenaries are deployed in Angola, Sierra Leone, Algeria and elsewhere.

The London *Observer* published an article entitled 'Corporate dogs of war who grow fat amid the anarchy of Africa' in which it provided evidence for an EO multi-national mercenary force operating in Algeria with a 'training and advisory role with the army'.<sup>122</sup>

This has been confirmed by the Algerian Movement of Free Officers (AMFO).<sup>123</sup> The latter revealed the following list of foreign mercenaries operating in Algeria, most of whom are French, South African and American:

- *Christian Le Breton*: Born on 17 April 1955 in Grenoble, France. Rank: major. Service: The RAID. He is in Algeria to assist general Fodil Cherif (collaborator of the chief of the Army), he is one of the most important officers in Algeria. His mission number is 38 ALFSMD99 and has an official status as a manager in a Franco-Italian drilling company.
- *Alain Robert Cholet*: Born on 25 January 1958 in Metz, France. Rank: Captain. He is responsible for training the Special Forces in Algiers. He is nicknamed by the ninjas as 'Errūji' (the redhead). He was the assistant of Major Favier (GIGN, French Assault Force) during the storming of the airbus of Air France at Marseilles Airport.
- *Jean Michel Pourtnes*: Born on 31 December 1951 in Paris, France. Rank: Captain of Communication and Transmission Services, specialising in telephone bugging techniques for the secret services.
- *Armand Pierre Lafarge*: Major of the 42nd French RT (Transmission Regiment). He deals with transmissions and bugging using the most modern and effective equipment (RITA and Satellite Systems). Three of his men drive vans full of electronic devices (for electronic detection in the greater Algiers) under the cover of employees of ART (Algerian Radio and Television). It is worth mentioning that this is done in close collaboration with the French listening submarine stationed near the Algerian coasts.
- *Pascal Chotte*: born in 1960. Rank: Captain. He assists General Smain Lamari. He is an officer from the DGSE (French secret service) but his influence goes far beyond his rank.
- *Daniel Cariben*: born in 1966. Rank: Chief-Sergeant. He was a member of the first Armoured Division of Baden-Baden, the strongest division in the French army.
- *Marcel Lehman Jean*: born in 1960. Rank: Sergeant. Comes from the same corps.
- *Damink Emanuel*: A major without mission (portfolio). He is one of the most secretive officers, assigned to General Mohamed Mediene, known as Toufik, (he enters his office without even knocking on the door).
- *Stefan Desmond*: Rank: Captain, a South African and a personal friend of General Sadek Kitouni (Algerian Ambassador to South Africa). He is assigned to the opera-

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tional services of the DCSA, namely Colonel Bachir Tertague alias colonel Atman, a specialist in torture and massacres.

- *Barsony Uri*: Rank: Major. He is a former member of the Apartheid army and a close friend of general Fodil Cherif (who presented him with US\$ 45,000, an order signed by the general secretary of the ministry of national defence, general Mohamed Ghenim).
- *Taylor Peter*: A retired CIA Colonel, former head of the CIA section in Europe and a personal friend of Smain Lamari. He is behind the shift in the US policy vis-a-vis Algiers. He has pocketed a huge commission after the completion of an armament contract with South Africa. He follows general Lamari as does his shadow, even abroad. He never misses out on any commission after every business deal.
- *Coblence Michael*: Rank: Major, aged 48 years old and has American citizenship. He enters the ministry of national defence from the big gate and moves about as if he is at home. He is in charge of the army computing service (SCIA) and has full power to do what he likes. His official job is as an adviser to the director general of Sonatrach (the Algerian national oil company). He had a reward of (01) million dollars in January 1998.

According to the AMFO, these mercenaries are professionals hired by the powerful army top brass to 'fight the war in exchange of market shares in the oil wells, arms, diamond ores and other important resources'. They 'act on behalf of generals Mohamed Lamari, Mohamed Mediene and Smain Lamari'. The movement further stated that

The visits of Smain Lamari to Paris since 1993 have borne fruits; he has succeeded to acquire the services of Jean Louis Chana, an ex-officer of the French intelligence services (DGSE) and a veteran of the Lebanon war. Jean Louis Chana is the director of the ARC Consultants, a company specialising in high level security and anti-terrorist wars. He started his co-operation by sending ex-légionnaires and former elite members of the GIGN to support general Smain Lamari in operations.<sup>124</sup>

During the 1998 world cup in France, the *Sunday Telegraph* in London revealed that battalions of the French Foreign Legion (Légion Etrangere) flew to Paris from 'their headquarters in Algeria resplendent in full-combat gear whereupon they brutally confiscated the cameras of a number of tourists'.<sup>125</sup> The rank and file of the French Legion was described as 'hardened criminals on the run from justice in their own lands [...] They are ruthless mercenaries whose job is war'.<sup>126</sup>

Such foreign military schools and consultancies have produced Algerian officers who are expert in controlling and brutalising their own people. Claude Cheysson, former French foreign affairs minister, compared 'the brutality of the Algerian security forces to the 'excesses' of the French colonial army in Algeria and to the American army in Vietnam'.<sup>127</sup>

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General Khaled Nezzar uses the word ‘terrorists’ (i.e. Islamists) as ‘fish in the water’, a concept typically used by LIC experts. This notion was originally used by Mao Tse Tong, and was later appropriated and reversed by counter-insurgency strategists. General Nezzar said:

Let us put ourselves in the place of the waiverers and the opportunists; they joined the ranks of the terrorists en masse. A large segment of the population was still waiting thus making terrorist actions easier. This explains why the Islamists moved like fish in water.<sup>128</sup>

This constitutes a clear policy statement by one of the pillars of the Algerian military establishment. How is the army going to isolate the fish from the water? Here resides the solution: LIC strategy. On the ground this policy can only be classically implemented through massacres like in the wars of Indochina and Algeria.

This propensity for eradication and massacres has been apparent in the army statements since the beginning of the war. General Khaled Nezzar, for instance, was reported to have said: ‘to those who have dirtied their hands with the blood of the defenders of order I say that the most implacable war will be waged against them until their total eradication’.<sup>129</sup> Meziane Cherif, another wielder of the terror weapon, declared during a press conference on 14 March 1995 in Algiers: ‘Does a gardener speak of weeds? No! He merely destroys them. Terrorists are like weeds’.<sup>130</sup> On another occasion, he mentioned explicitly to a journalist the ‘dirty job’ he and his eradicationist friends were doing for ‘the Westerners, especially the Europeans’.<sup>131</sup>

Amnesty International drew attention to this ‘eradication of roots’ mentality within the Algerian army when writing about the massacres perpetrated in Algeria:

There have been allegations that some of the massacres have been committed by groups acting on instructions, or with the consent, of certain army and security forces units and paramilitary groups, with the aim of eradicating the grassroots base of armed opposition groups.<sup>132</sup>

#### *4.3.3 Cut-throat Warfare of the Algerian Army*

The analysis of the army reactions to the massacres reveals a logic which supports the contention that the army generals use massacres as part of a well thought COIN strategy. A logic which explains also the army military-political interests and objectives in committing mass killings.

The army statements on its ‘inability to protect the population’ in response to accusations of complicity in the mass killings are an elaborate industry of excuses that find easily their way to the Algerian and French press. There is, however, one missing theory, that of operational co-ordination –

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technically known as ‘frozen areas’ – between the army and the killers (the GIA, a counter-jihad organisation reportedly operating in contiguity with, yet unopposed by, the army forces). The army statements form also part of a strategic propaganda campaign aimed at forcing the population to take up arms, in other words to counter-mobilise into militias. Blaming the victims supports the above views, meaning that the army statements are part of a COIN strategy.

J. Smith backs the thesis which explains that the massacres are the work of the Algerian regime and are part of its COIN war strategy. She explains:

Is this passive proximity accidental and contingent ? No. From the testimonies at our disposal the massacres have a common structure and this passive proximity of the armed forces of the regime is repetitive and systematic. In counter-insurgency tactics this passive proximity is called operational coordination, it is named the ‘frozen area’. This very passive proximity was also observed in the massacres of villagers by the military juntas of Latin America, Salvador, Guatemala and Rhodesia in the 70s. The GIA is a counter-guerrilla organisation (i.e. a false guerrilla camouflaged as a real one) which is totally controlled by the DRS which manages the coordination of its ‘special operations’ with the regular units of the army. These ‘special operations’ seek to discredit the real guerrilla, to build up the atrocities to swing society and hence to cut the genuine armed islamist groups from the civilians that support them. This is what explains what the military say to the survivors of the massacres: ‘You voted for islamists; sort it out with them’, or ‘it is the rebellious against God (al-ghaḍībūn ‘ala Allah)’ etc.<sup>133</sup>

John Sweeney stated that the Algerian generals had launched their own version of what the British in Malaya and the Americans in Vietnam called the ‘strategic hamlet programme’, a policy masterminded by two shadowy generals of the military security, the only effective centre of power in the country. Sweeney reported what he learnt when he visited Jijel in Eastern Algeria. Jijel was under the authority of general Boughaba. One day soldiers came to a village and told the inhabitants to take up arms to defend themselves against the terrorists. But the villagers declined the offer. For two weeks, the village was sealed off by the army. No food or vehicles were allowed in and their documents were confiscated. The pressure continued but the people still resisted it. Then, one night, 14 people were massacred. The next morning everyone made a decision. They either took up arms or fled to the city. General Boughaba then moved to Algiers to do the same work.<sup>134</sup>

There is another rationale which has been suggested to explain the militaro-political interests of the army in the mass killings. The suggestion is that they are used as tactical expedients in a power struggle between rival factions within the military institution. The massacres are instigated by ‘hardline’ factions within the army with the aim of undermining the power and political initiatives of rival ‘softline’ factions and thus dominating the military institution and the whole political order. One observer says ‘One can distinguish a

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bipolar structure within the Algerian military power. The utility of the massacres in this war is therefore clear. The massacres are used as an instrument of war of one faction against the other'.<sup>135</sup> This thesis is strengthened by the fact that the intensity and frequency of the massacres increase whenever the differences between the various factions become acute.

During the massacres of the summer and autumn 1997, the faction led by general Lamari was at loggerheads with that of general Liamine Zeroual and remained powerful, a fact which could explain the passivity of the armed forces during the massacres. 'By preventing the troops from intervening, those who oppose Zeroual have clearly indicated that whatever the chosen option nothing can be done without or against them. Such is the cynical reality'.<sup>136</sup> Thus, while the 'GIA' was committing terrible massacres of civilians practically under the eyes of a passive army, 'at the level of the military hierarchy each faction was negotiating with the FIS and the AIS, each faction trying to "counter" its rival'.<sup>137</sup> According to a prominent and well-informed Algerian human rights lawyer, the summer and autumn 1997 campaign of massacres was waged to weaken the power of Zeroual and thwart his dialogue initiative with FIS:

The troops within the *1<sup>ère</sup> Région Militaire* (first military district) were ordered not to intervene without prior authorisation from eradicator General Fodhil Cherif. This prompted strong protest from a number of officers who sent copies of the order to Liamine Zeroual. The president hit the roof at the news of this order and dismissed forthwith General Said Bey from his command of the 1<sup>st</sup> military district. The response of the eradicator faction was swift. A group of these generals went to Zeroual's office and asked him why he had dismissed Said Bey without involving them in the decision. To his reply that his position of president and supreme commander of the armed forces granted him the power to do so without their consultation, the generals asked him 'who granted you this power?' He said: 'Seven million Algerians who elected me!' General [...] retorted: 'It is seven generals who nominated you to this position and from the 7 000 000 you have nothing but the six zeros.'<sup>138</sup>

## 5. Summary and Conclusions

The Algerian army resorts to a classical discourse of denial in reacting to the massacres. Its statements

- describe the massacres as criminal and savage acts, a blind terror committed by defeated terrorists that take revenge on the population for withdrawing support from them;
- identify the perpetrators as gangs of criminals, traitors and mercenaries, meaning Islamists in general and the GIA in particular;
- blame the victims (innocent civilians) for once supporting the 'terrorists' and suggest the punishment is deserved by the victims;

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- justify the army's failure to protect the population during massacres that took place close to barracks by the fear of mines, booby traps, the lack of experience and the incompetence of the soldiers;
- reject the idea of an inquiry into the massacres, be it national or international, and justify this by a refusal on the ground of opposition to interference in Algeria's internal affairs.

It has been shown in this paper that the notion of a cut-throat state is not an anomaly. Killer-states slaughtering entire groups of people are today a sad reality. Such states implement military doctrines which prescribe massacres as a strategic instrument of war. One such a strategy is COIN (Counter-Insurgency) or LIC (Low Intensity Conflict). This massacre-based doctrine is being implemented in Algeria. It is based on French military teachings and its implementation is supported by French-trained officers assisted by French and South African mercenaries.

The analysis of the army's reactions to the massacres leads to two main concluding remarks:

- The Algerian army, led by French army-trained, has a history of using violence for political aims. It has acquired a 'culture' of genocide and cover-up. The massacres of October 1988 reflect such a criminal nature. It has a mentality of grassroots eradication.
- That the army does not intervene during massacres should not be seen as incompetence but as an operational co-ordination between the perpetrators and the security forces.
- The massacres are used by factions within the military institution as a weapon for political, military domination and economical gains.

There is a movement within the army which denounces and opposes the cut-throat strategy adopted by the military establishment. The response of this movement to the massacres is reflected in the statements and testimonies of some defecting officers who

- describe the massacres as a genocide, barbarism, cowardice and crimes against humanity;
- see the victims as fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and children (humble innocent civilians, entire families of Islamists);
- blame the pro-French army generals who are assisted by foreign mercenaries, the secret services, special units, and militias for the massacres.

For this movement the Islamists are not the perpetrators of the massacres and the GIA is no more than a tool controlled by the military secret service.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Le Monde*, 26-27 January 1997.

<sup>2</sup> *AFP*, 27 January 1997.

<sup>3</sup> *AFP*, 25 January 1997.

<sup>4</sup> *L'Authentique*, 30 August 1997.

<sup>5</sup> Amnesty International, 'Algeria: Civilian Population caught in a spiral of violence', AI Index: MDE 28/23/9, November 1997.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Amir Taheri, Interview with general X, *Politique Internationale*, No 79, Spring 1998.

<sup>8</sup> *El-Watan*, 20 September 1998.

<sup>9</sup> *Libération*, 30 October 1997 (taken from an interview in *El-Djeich* magazine).

<sup>10</sup> Reported by *CNN* on 14 April 1998 and in *Libération* of 15 April 1998.

<sup>11</sup> *Le Monde*, 11 February 1998.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> See note 1.

<sup>14</sup> *L'Express*, 29 May 1997.

<sup>15</sup> *Libération*, 30/31 August 1997.

<sup>16</sup> *Libération*, 22 September 1997.

<sup>17</sup> *Le Monde*, 23 October 1997.

<sup>18</sup> *Libération*, 23 October 1997.

<sup>19</sup> *Radio Orient* (Paris), A testimony obtained through a telephone inquiry into the massacres, Zaki Chihab (London correspondent), 23 September 1997.

<sup>20</sup> *The Sunday Times*, 'Algeria sees 1,000 die in holy month', 11 January 1998.

<sup>21</sup> Salim Zaoui, Testimonial report, *Le Monde*, 26 March 1997.

<sup>22</sup> Human Rights Watch, *World Report 1999*.

<sup>23</sup> See note 5.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> See note 19.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>32</sup> The Association for the Defence of Victims of Massacres in Algeria, PO Box 208, 1800 Frederiksberg, C. Copenhagen, Denmark, 10 October 1997.

<sup>33</sup> Flora Lewis, *International Herald Tribune*, 5 September 1997.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> *Tribune de Genève*, 30/31 August 1997.

<sup>37</sup> José Garçon, 'Algerie: L'onde de choc de la tuerie', *Libération*, 1 September 1997.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Editorial, *The Guardian*, 21 October 1997.

<sup>41</sup> *The Sunday Times*, 26 October 1997.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> *Courier International*, 2-8 October 1997, p. 10.

<sup>45</sup> *Libération*, 8 September 1997.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 October 1997.

<sup>48</sup> *The Sunday Times*, 26 October 1997.

<sup>49</sup> See note 7.

<sup>50</sup> See note 5.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> *Le Nouvel Afrique Asie*, No 101, February 1998.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> *Le Monde*, 21 October 1997.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Jean-Pierre Tuquoi, 'Lourdeur ou la chaîne hiérarchique', *Le Monde*, 11 November 1997.

<sup>60</sup> *Libération*, 30 October 1997.

<sup>61</sup> See note 5.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> See note 19.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> *Le Nouvel Afrique Asie*, No 101, February 1998, p. 11.

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<sup>66</sup> The Algerian Movement of Free Officers, Website: <http://www.anp.org>.

<sup>67</sup> François Campredon, AFP (Spain), 18 May 1999.

<sup>68</sup> See note 66.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> *The Irish Times*, 30 October 1997.

<sup>75</sup> *The Irish Times*, 30 October 1997.

<sup>76</sup> See Note 66.

<sup>77</sup> Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Switzerland, January 1998.

<sup>78</sup> Juan Carlos Sanz, *El-Pais*, N°767, 9 June 1998.

<sup>79</sup> *Al-Watan Al-Arabi*, 02 January 1998.

<sup>80</sup> *Der Spiegel*, N°3, 12 January 1998.

<sup>81</sup> John Sweeney and Leonard Doyle, *The Observer*, 09 November 1997.

<sup>82</sup> *Libération*, 13 March 1998.

<sup>83</sup> *L'Humanité*, 25 December 1997.

<sup>84</sup> *L'Humanité*, 5 January 1998.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> *El-Watan*, 19 January 1998.

<sup>87</sup> *El-Watan*, 27 January 1998.

<sup>88</sup> *Maroc Hebdo International*, Interview by Mustapha Tossa, February 1998.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> *El-Watan*, 31 January 1998.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> *L'Humanité*, 30 December 1997.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> *Confluences Méditerranée*, N° 25, Printemps 1998, Edition L'Harmattan, pp. 73-78.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, pp. 83-92.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Bruno Etienne, Interview, *Le Figaro*, 29 February 1997.

<sup>99</sup> Stanley Cohen, 'Government responses to human rights reports: claims, denials and counterclaims', *Human Rights Quarterly*, N° 18, 1996, pp. 517-543.

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<sup>100</sup> The army rhetoric of denial is consistent with the government's responses to the massacres, as explained by A. Zerouali, in paper No. 7, in part III of this book.

<sup>101</sup> R.J. Rummel, 'Democracy, Power, Genocide and Mass Murder', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 39, N° 1, March 1995, pp. 3-26.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Helen Fein, 'Genocide: a sociological perspective', *SAGE Publications*, 1993.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Amnesty International, 'political killings by governments', *1983 Report*, AI Index: ACT 03/26/82.

<sup>106</sup> Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, 'Victims of the state: genocides, politicides and group repression since 1945', *International Review of Victimology*, Vol. 1, , 1989, pp. 23-41.

<sup>107</sup> Ervin Staub, 'The roots of evil: The origins of genocide and other group violence', *Cambridge University Press*, USA, 1989, pp. 225-226.

<sup>108</sup> 'Une guerre mondiale contre l'humanité', *BASTA*, N° 1, January 1998.

<sup>109</sup> Eqbal Ahmed, 'Guerre révolutionnaire et contre-insurrection', quoted from N. Miller and E. Aya, 'National Liberation and Revolution', *The Force Press*, New York, 1970.

<sup>110</sup> See note 66.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> See note 103.

<sup>113</sup> See A. Aroua, *Reading Notes on French Colonial Massacres in Algeria*, paper No. 26 in part V of this book.

<sup>114</sup> Charles-Andre Julien, 'Histoire de l'Algerie contemporaine', Vol. 1, p. 62.

<sup>115</sup> According to official sources, there were at least 500 persons killed by the bullets of the National Popular Army, among whom many were children. The brutality was such that young witnesses were in a state of shock when they were asked to describe the scenes: 'It is worse than South Africa, it is worse than Chile' and 'They are worse than the Zionists! The Zionists do not shoot at mosques, it must be written, you should write it'. Cited by *Le Monde*, 11 October 1988.

<sup>116</sup> Ahmed Rouadjia, 'L'Etat algerien et le problème du droit', *Politique Etrangere*, N° 2, Summer 1995, p. 357.

<sup>117</sup> See note 7.

<sup>118</sup> *Le Jeune Independent*, Interview with Me Ali Yahia Abdenour, 22-23 September 1998.

<sup>119</sup> See note 65

<sup>120</sup> Luis Martinez, *La guerre civile en Algerie 1990-1998*, Edition Karthala, Paris, 1998.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> *The Observer*, 19 January 1997.

<sup>123</sup> See note 66.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Robert Philip, 'French bolster their defence', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 June 1998.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>127</sup> *Le Nouvel Afrique Asie*, N° 101, p. 15, February 1998.

<sup>128</sup> Ahmed Semiane, *October 1988: Ils Parlent*, Interview with Khaled Nezzar, 1998.

<sup>129</sup> See note 79.

<sup>130</sup> A. Taher, 'L'Algérie déchirée', *Politique Internationale*, N° 68, Summer 1995, p. 19.

<sup>131</sup> *Le Nouveau Quotidien* (Geneva), 4 April 1995.

<sup>132</sup> See note 5.

<sup>133</sup> J. Smith, 'GIA is a counter-guerrilla force', *Africa Human Rights*, Vol. 2, N° 7, 9 September 1997.

<sup>134</sup> *The Observer*, 18 January 1998.

<sup>135</sup> R. Meziani, 'On the politics of Algerian Massacres', *The News Review*, London, 3 October 1997, p. 6.

<sup>136</sup> *Courrier International*, 'Comment les services spéciaux ont contré le président', October 1997.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Private communication.

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