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## WORLD PRESS PHOTOS

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*Edited by M. Hocine and M. Dellali*

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The scale of the Algerian massacres and the brutality of the killings have shocked people around the world. Words and numbers have captured some reality of these unspeakable crimes but they did not do more than graphic images to bring home the horror and suffering. It is a selection of such world press images that are presented here.

The number of world press photos available is rather small. Given the duration, scale and geographic spread of the massacre campaign, it is safe to say there have been more massacres than photos. This is a hidden war. Furthermore, access to massacre spots is restricted and, when allowed, selective. As *Agence France Presse* photographer Hocine put it, 'in Rwanda or Somalia, you can see the violence unfold. In Algeria, you can't see anything until after it's over. I have never seen such atrocity as in Algeria, with the exception of Rwanda. Well, may be – just may be – Rwanda was worse.'

The photographs<sup>A</sup> of the massacres were taken for specific purposes. The camera's eye belonged to the journalist with his own audience in mind. Here the intention behind the selection and order of the photos is to illustrate some key facts.

Photos 1-4 capture scenes of random mass killings that have terrorised the population in cities: bomb attacks.

The next set of photos portrays selective mass killings. Photos 5-6 depict the scale of the massacres. Photos 7-9 portray how the victimisation targets all ages, genders and both individuals and families. In photos 10-14 the camera focuses on the most reported method of killing. Photos 15-16 illustrate the blunt and sharp weapons used for this method. Photos 17-18 depict how fire is used to destroy the victims and their properties. The vulnerability of the victims is captured in photos 19-20. Photo 21 represents the weaponry used by the independent vigilance committees that appeared in autumn 1997 after the regime failed to protect the population from the most intense wave of mass killings. Photo 22 describes the weaponry used by the army run self-defence militias. Photos 23-24 depict aspects of the mass exodus of victimised peasants to towns and cities. Photos 25-33 catch some of the emotions of survivors and relatives of the victims: pain, sadness, fear, anger.

<sup>A</sup> © ABC, AFP, AP, Boomerang, Cosmos, EPA, New Press, Reuters, Sipa Press, Stringer, Sygma.

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*Photographic Account*

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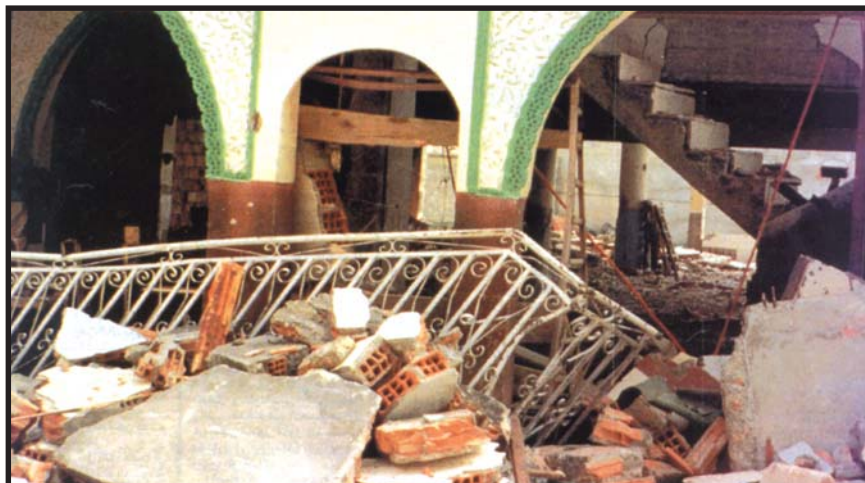
1. Bomb attack in Belcourt, a popular neighbourhood of Algiers,  
19 January 1997, 42 dead and more than 100 injured.



2. Bomb attack on a bus in Algiers, 20 January 1998,  
4 dead and over 20 injured.



3. Bomb attack on a residential area in Algiers, 1997. Death toll unknown.



4. Bomb attack on a mosque in Algiers, 1997. In 1997, 33 people died and 211 were injured in 8 bomb attacks on mosques.





5. Sidi-Hamed cemetery.  
Sidi-Hamed massacre, 11 January 1998, over 350 dead.



6. Street in Raïs.  
Raïs massacre, 29 August 1997, over 300 dead.



7. Street in Raïs. No gender or age is spared.

8. Sidi-Hamed cemetery.  
Several graves of the *Lemloum*  
family.



9. Bentalha cemetery. The grave reads: Sarah  
Henni, 3 month old. Bentalha massacre,  
22 September 1997, over 200 dead.





10. Bedroom of a slaughtered woman.  
Raïs massacre.



11. A young woman from Sidi-Hamed.



12. One of 19 civilians massacred in Blida, in September 1997. His hands are tied behind his back and his throat is slit.



13. A young victim of a massacre is pulled from a well. Blida, September 1997.

14. A survivor of the Raïs massacre.







15. Blunt weapons. Ouled Benaïssa massacre, 3 October 1997, 38 dead.



16. Sharp weapons. Relizane massacres, January 1998.



17. A house in Sidi-Hamed.  
Calcined remains of a child.



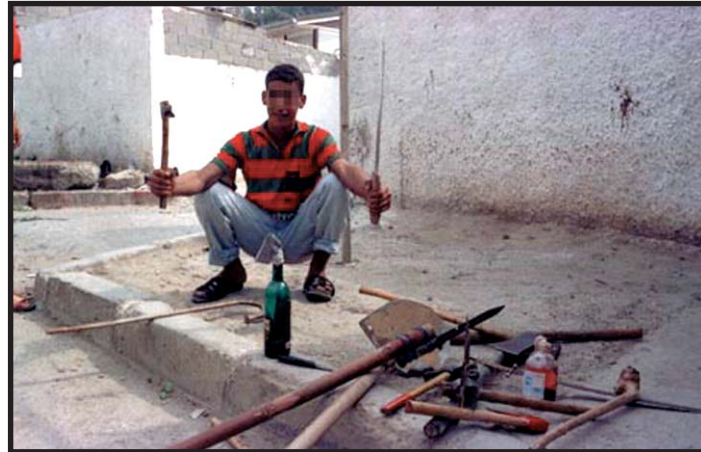
18. A burned house in the aftermath of  
the Si Zerrouk massacre, 27 July 1997,  
51 dead.



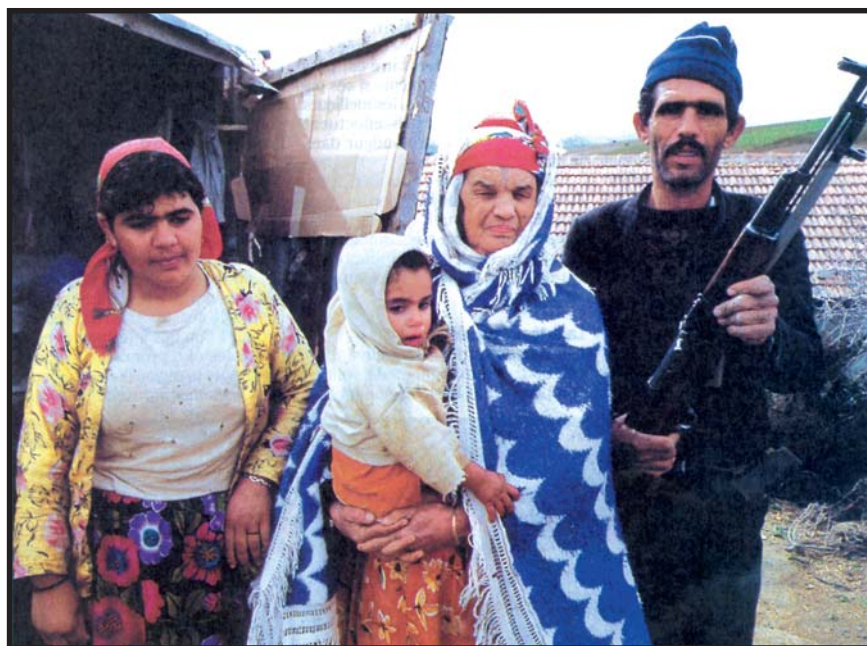
19. Survivor of the Bentalha massacre  
describes how she barricaded herself  
in her house during the massacre.

20. Bentalha survivor reconstitutes how  
she hid with her child under a vine tree.



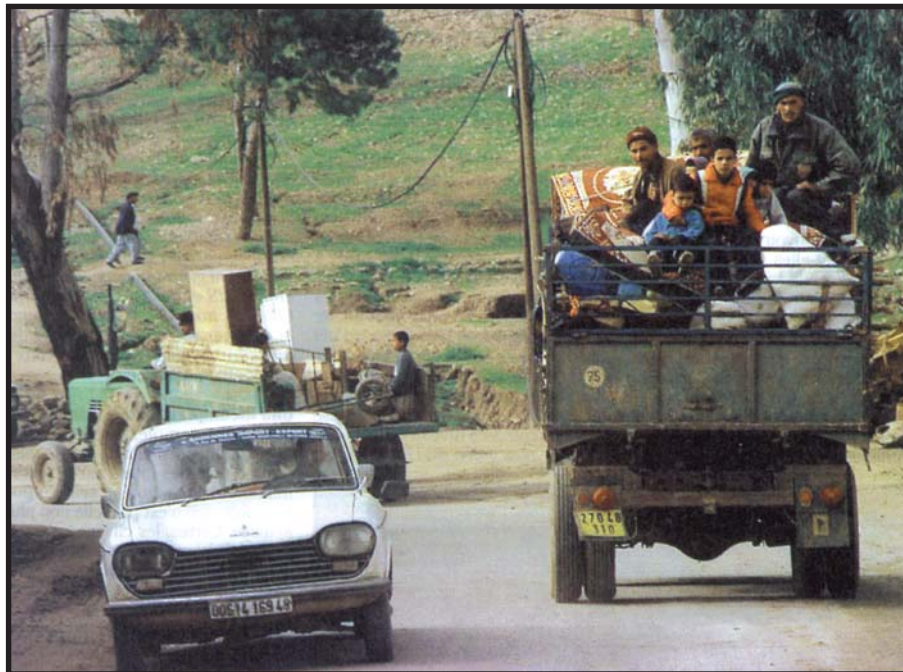


21. Aftermath of Raïs massacre. A member of the independent self-defence committee in Raïs displays rudimentary weapons.



22. Aftermath of the Relizane massacres. A peasant joins the *Groupes d'Auto-Défense* (GAD, army-led militias). Relizane massacres: 412 dead on 30 December 1997, 117 dead on 4 January 1998, over 300 dead on 5 January 1998 and 62 dead on 6 January 1998.





23. Sequel of Relizane massacres: Exodus.

'Leaving is better than dying. I am leaving everything here, my house, my crops, what is left of my livestock. To go where? I don't know but I cannot stay here.'

Relizane survivor, 6 January 1998.



24. In the wake of the Beni-Ali massacre, peasants flee to towns and cities. Beni-Ali massacre, 26 August 1997, 64 dead.



25. Bentalha massacre, Zmirli Hospital, 23 september 1997. A woman grieves the loss of dear ones.



26. Sidi-Hamed cemetery. A woman on the grave of her son. 13 January 1998.



27. Survivors of the Sidi-Hamed massacre.

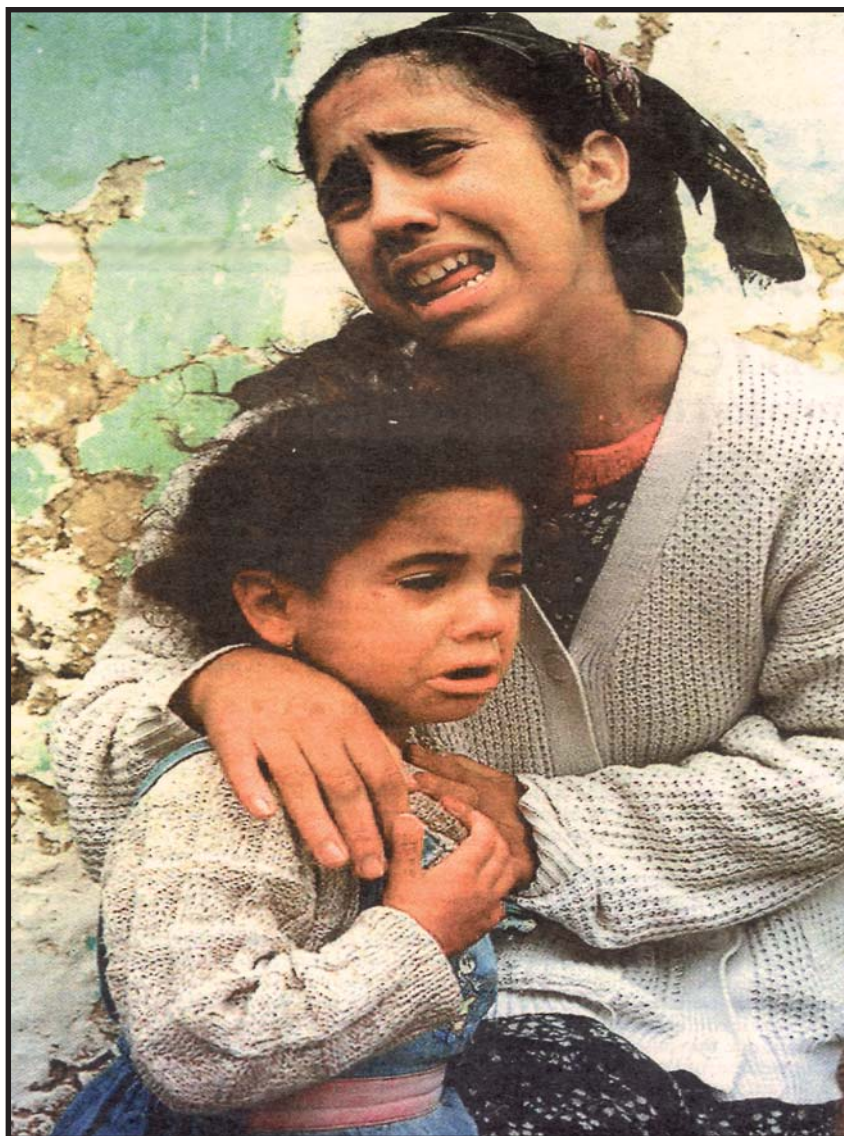




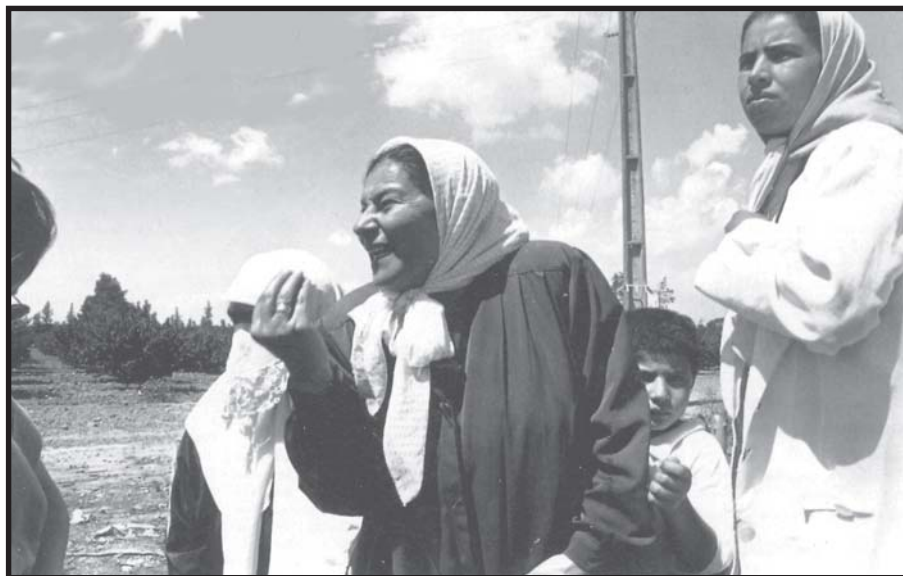
28. Sidi-Hamed cemetery. January 1998.



29. Women grieve in a village in the district of Relizane after a mother learns of her son's death. January 1998.



30. El-Hadj farm. Two sisters who survived the mass killing. Baba-Ali massacre, 23 January 1997, 22 dead.

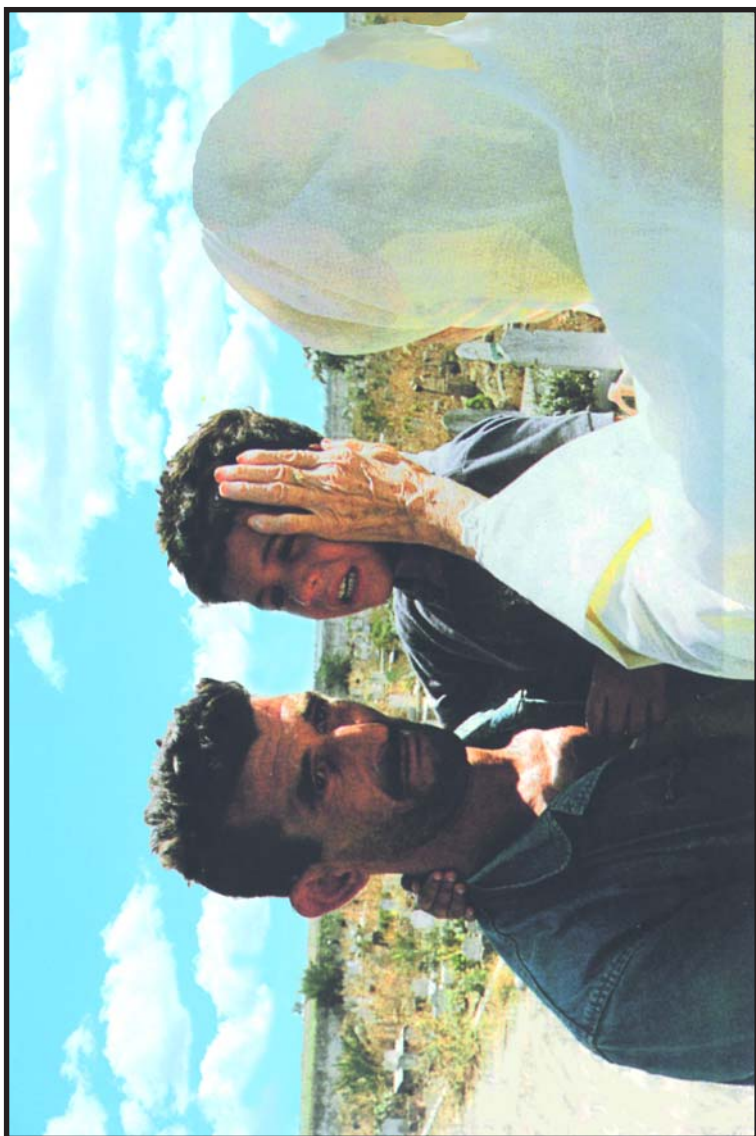


31. Why?  
Blida, Autumn 1997.



32. Mother and son in the aftermath of a massacre.  
Tabaïnat massacre, 12 January 1997, 12 dead.





33. Rais cemetery. 1 September 1997. The victims have just been buried.