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International Affairs

Democratic Solidarity Group Formed in Canada

92AF1158A Algiers EL WATAN in French
2 Aug 92 p 19

[Article by Amine Bouali: "Quebec: Committee To Support Democracy in Algeria"]

[Text] Following President Boudiaf's assassination, a committee to support democracy in Algeria was created in Quebec, on the initiative of the Aures Socio-Cultural Association, which regroups members of the Algerian community living in Canada. A meeting of solidarity and support for democracy in Algeria, which several political and union personalities attended, was held in Montreal on 2 July and decided to create such a support committee.

With premises at Rue Sainte-Catherine, a Montreal main street, the Aures Socio-Cultural Association publishes an information bulletin "Monrealgerie." Several other associations, such as Averroes or the Algerian Rally in Quebec (RAQ), exist within the Algerian community, which counts some 5,000 members.

Regional Affairs

'Militants' Said Trained in Sudan To Destabilize

92AF1214C Algiers EL WATAN in French
15 Aug 92 p 1

[Commentary by Nadjia Bouzeghrane: "Hysteria"]

[Text] Once again, Iran has confirmed its intentions to institute an Islamist International. The guide of the Iranian Revolution, Ali Khamenei, just stated that "the emergence and birth of Islamist movements are inspired by our regime."

The Iranian commitment is clear.

In Africa and the Maghreb, the Iranian relay is none other than Sudan, where an Islamist regime stemming from a June 1989 coup was installed at the instigation of its ideologist, Hassan Tourabi. Last year, Hassan Tourabi created the Arab-Islamic People's Congress, an organization regrouping several Arab and North African Islamist movements. It is a proven fact that militants from these parties are trained by Iranians, in Sudan, for subversion and destabilization purposes. Egypt has accused Sudan and Iran of doing so. For the same reasons, Tunisia closed its Khartoum embassy.

As for Algeria, it came close to breaking diplomatic relations with Tehran after Chadli Bendjedid's resignation. Since then, Tehran has started an unusually hostile media campaign against Algeria. The Iranian Government was extremely disappointed, and the interruption of the election process happened to thwart its plans. Tehran counted on an FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] victory and intended to turn Algeria into a second regional stronghold, after Sudan. After all, it was the

Sudanese Hassan Tourabi who talked about an Islamist International "from Afghanistan to the outermost bounds of the Maghreb."

Teheran accused the HCE [Higher State Council] of "usurping the people's power," and uttered the worst insults against the Algerian state and army. Iranian newspapers even expressed satisfaction at President Boudiaf's assassination, predicting the same fate to his successor, Mr. Ali Kafi. Worse, they even asserted that "Mohamed Boudiaf's assassination had made the Algerians happy."

Khomeini also expressed Iran's determination concerning "the need to fly the Islamist power's flag over the world" by any ways and any means, including civil war and division.

Envoy Voices Support for Iraq, Concern Over 'Schemes'

JN2408060592 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio
Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Aug 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf this evening received Ambassador (Cherif Derbal), chief of the Arab Desk at the Algerian Foreign Ministry and envoy of Algeria's Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi.

The Algerian envoy voiced his country's support for Iraq's just and legitimate cause in the face of foreign forces which have imposed an unjust blockade on its people. He also explained Algeria's worldwide efforts in this context.

The Algerian envoy also expressed his country's concern over current schemes that aim at violating Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The foreign minister valued Algeria's genuine stance, saying that the fraternal Algerian people hold a special place in the hearts of Iraqis.

The foreign minister reviewed details of imperialist schemes which started with the liberation of al-Faw city and the continuation of these schemes in various ways, the last of which was a threat to launch a brazen military aggression against Iraq under false pretexts.

He stressed the Iraqi people's steadfastness and their rallying around leader President Saddam Husayn's leadership in confronting all forms of aggression that target its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The meeting also focused on bilateral fraternal relations and ways of deepening them in the interest of the two peoples and the Arab nation.

The meeting was attended by Algeria's ambassador in Baghdad and the chief of the Arab Desk at the Foreign Ministry.

Internal Affairs**Eminent Personalities Comment on Current 'Crisis'**

92AF1127B Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
23 Jul 92 p 3

[Article by Tahar Slaouti: "Algeria in Crisis: A Harsh Report"]

[Text] On Tuesday evening a discussion was held at the Hotel El Djazair on the subject, "Algerian Society Today: The Crisis and the Possible Outcomes." Organized at the suggestion of LA VIE ECONOMIQUE in conjunction with ENTV and the Hotel El Djazair, the discussion brought together a number of eminent personalities from the sectors of the economy, the social sciences, and politics. The guests accordingly included the sociologist El Kenz Ali, the eminent economists Bouzidi and Boukhobza, UNEP [National Union of State-Owned Enterprises] President Benmansour, and a representative of the CAP [Algerian Confederation of Employers]. Mr. Baghdadi, who led the debate, announced that it was impossible for Mr. Benhamouda to join in the discussion, which was strengthened by the presence of Mrs. Khalida Messaoudi.

Origin of the Crisis

At the outset of the meeting, El Kenz presented his view of the crisis. In his opinion, "the visible religious crisis conceals the real crisis" and the Algeria of today is confronted with the "consequences of 30 years of the FLN [National Liberation Front]." He spoke of the role of the State today, at a time when it is lagging behind and is out of tune with the social dynamic. Boukhobza elaborated on this subject, emphasizing the social upheavals that Algeria has experienced, notably as the result of the "ruralization of the cities." He stressed the fact that in Algeria the elite reproduce themselves at a rate of 5 to 6 percent, whereas in other countries the rate is 80 percent! In Boukhobza's opinion, the crisis came into being and was intensified during the period 1980-86, but the full extent of the crisis became apparent only after 1986.

Mrs. Messaoudi commented that it is difficult today to speak in terms of a state or nation. She declared with conviction and candor that women have been excluded from the development process, and that when oil was at \$40 [a barrel] we could allow ourselves the "luxury of women staying at home." The code of the family, she said, contradicts the other laws of the nation.

She insisted that there is no authority for unilateral divorce either in our culture or in our traditions. What kind of democracy is it, she asks, when such conditions for women exist? Bouzidi's comment was quite perfunctory. He said, "There is a conflict between the men of the old, outmoded order and those—still in the minority—who want a new order." Baghdadi then turned to the representatives of the employers' organizations.

An Economic Crisis

Benmansour does not believe the crisis is an accident of history. He believes it is the result of the policies followed between 1982 and 1984, which caused us to revise all our political positions. Even the reforms led to devaluation of the industrial aspect of the economy to the advantage of the financial aspect.

In Benmansour's opinion, we are witnessing a "Moroccanization" of our country, whereby we are entering the world market by the back door. But although the crisis had its origin primarily in the period 1980-86, Amour—who represents the Algerian Confederation of Employers—recalled the marginalization of the private sector during the period of development. He briefly cited the nationalization of the hammams [communal bath-houses] and dwelt at length on the chastes and referendums of the 1970's, which excluded the private sector for ideological reasons. He added that industrialization made economic growth impossible. Bouzidi expressed an opposing view: in his opinion, the Boumediene era is not comparable to that of Chadli, during which competence was banished and national wealth dissipated in every sector. Between 1980 and 1987, \$147 billion was taken in; but despite this explosive growth of revenue, debt increased and investments diminished. Bouzidi believes that the public sector versus private sector debate is obsolete.

Both the public and private sectors have suffered the same constraints. Mrs. Messaoudi also discussed the 1970's. The economic situation was different then, she said, but the balance sheet for agriculture showed a negative balance, and it was during the 1970's that the phenomenon of the ruralization of the cities occurred. In speaking of the Chadli period, she was categorical. "The FLN of that era," she said, "killed the revolution" and set up a two-headed if not three-headed government: even Abassi Madani set up his schools in the FLN.

Mrs. Messaoudi spoke emotionally of the symbolic figure of Boudiaf and of the hope he had generated. In her view, the nomination of Belaid Abdesselam ought not mean a return to the 1970's. The CAP's Amour joined in this opinion. Today, he said, the "night clubs" are closing, and employers are turning to the informal market for their supplies. The CAP is resolutely opposed to the informal market, he said, but speedy action is required. In his view, Hadj Bettou is a monster born of the system; the new government must obtain credit; and maximalist discourse can be dangerous because it frightens lenders. Competence, the value of labor; and the respectability of the merchant must be rehabilitated.

This fascinating discussion was filmed in its entirety by ENTV, but according to one of the TV technicians there is probably little chance that it will be telecast.... The practices of the former system have not yet disappeared.

Internal Elements Said Focused on Destabilization
92AF1188C Algiers EL WATAN in French 30 Jul 92
p 1

[Commentary by Tayeb Belghiche: "Destabilization"]

[Text] The Malian president is paying tribute to Algeria for its contribution to national reconciliation in Mali and the conclusion of a "national pact" between the Bamako government and the Azawad movements.

For their part, the latter are reaffirming their attachment to that pact.

Although certainly weaker because of its domestic political and economic problems, Algeria has therefore been able to achieve a definite diplomatic success recalling the good old days when its diplomacy had the wind in its sails.

In this case, it has always been aware that its own stability depends on that of its neighbors.

The Touareg rebellions in Niger and Mali were regarded by Algiers as being part of a vast, multifaceted plot aimed at destabilizing the entire region and Algeria in particular.

Al-Qadhdhafi, for example, used to claim that the Touaregs were Libyans and did not conceal his dream of creating a Saharan state. To that end, he supplied weapons to Touareg tribes. It seems, however, that he has calmed down since Moussa Traore was deposed.

But other forces have continued to work behind the scenes to cause the uprising in those two neighboring countries to spread to southern Algeria. The region's inhabitants have not fallen for that scheme. But the danger is still there. Alexandre de Marenches, the former boss of the French intelligence service, wrote in his book *Dans le secret des princes (Sharing the Secrets of Princes)* that the Hoggar constitutes France's strategic depth, explaining that the French missile silos cannot be protected from a surprise enemy attack unless they are located in that mountain range.

That is why Algerian diplomats threw all their weight into the battle to help restore peace in Niger and Mali.

But by a kind of incomprehensible masochism, forces are active from within Algeria to violate that fragile peace and—why not?—light a Touareg fire within the country and weaken it even further. That is a piece of stupidity we could well do without and one that plays into the hands of the clandestine forces that are trying to destroy Algeria by any means.

National Associations Call For Unity

92AF1127C Algiers LE SOIR D'ALGERIE in French
21 Jul 92 p 3

[Article by A.P.S.: "Seven Associations Call For a General Mobilization for National Salvation"]

[Text] The political situation—and possible solutions designed to enable the country to escape the crises and

dangers that threaten it—were on the agenda of a joint meeting of seven national associations held last Sunday.

The meeting was authorized in a joint statement signed by the National Organization of Moudjahidines, the Organization of the Children of Chouhada, the Organization of Veterans of the People's National Army, the National Union of Algerian Youth, the National Union of Algerian Students, the National Union of Farmers and Workers of the Agricultural Sector, and the National Union of Algerian Merchants and Artisans.

The signers stressed the importance of drawing their inspiration from the principles of the November revolution and defending its objectives in order to safeguard the values and the security of the nation. The associations also denounced violence in all its forms—including crimes and assassinations—regardless of the causes or the motives. They further emphasized the necessity of reestablishing security, restoring confidence to the citizenry, working to revive the national economy, and coping with all kinds of deviations and social ills.

The seven associations made an appeal for Algeria to regain its international audience and its place in the concert of nations. They also called for unity in the ranks of the nation's constituent groups to confront the dangers that threaten the nation.

Last, they called for a general mobilization of the nation's constituent groups for the purpose of saving Algeria from the dangers that threaten it both domestically and from abroad.

UGTA Calls For Immediate Change in Policies

92AF1127A Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
22 Jul 92 p 3

[Article by Cherif Berkache]

[Text] The UGTA [General Union of Republican Workers] is more than ever in favor of a change—a change that would have to be endowed with meaning. That is precisely the object of a long statement made public yesterday in which "the UGTA emphasizes the urgent need to create the political, economic, social, and cultural conditions for an immediate, definitive, and irreversible break with the policies, practices, and work habits inherited from the decade of the 1980's."

We were told by a source at the national secretariat that this is the basis on which the Abdesselam administration will be judged.

This is the UGTA's price for concluding a social compact with the government and the employers, we were told by the same source. It is something that is without precedent since 1962.

"Taking into consideration the full significance of the changes that have taken place in the government and in the nation," the statement says, "and in view of the exceptional and decisive nature of the political, economic, and social situation that Algeria is experiencing,

the UGTA is proposing—to all of the nation's economically active groups who are concerned for its future—that they give serious consideration to the idea of a social compact that would embody all the conditions necessary for a resumption of economic growth and for national recovery in a context of stability while—of course—respecting the social and economic rights of the workers.”

We have learned from a source close to the national secretariat that this social compact has accordingly been submitted for negotiation on the basis of one inalterable condition: that the workers find it is to their benefit.

“While awaiting comprehensive negotiations between the UGTA and the government with a view to redefining the nation's social policy,” the statement continues, “the national secretariat of the UGTA is requesting an immediate revision of the tentative decisions to raise the price of bread, milk, and semolina—decisions that were not originally scheduled by the government and were not covered by any agreement with the UGTA.

“The national secretariat emphasizes that the original plan was to make this firm request of the preceding government at a meeting scheduled by the tripartite coalition—a meeting that was cancelled because of the tragic events experienced by the nation recently (the assassination of Boudiaf—editor's note).”

Addressing the “cowardly assassination of President Mohamed Boudiaf,” the UGTA “is asking once again, and insistently, for clarification concerning the exact circumstances and real causes and concerning those who were directly responsible and those who were the secret partners.”

The UGTA also asks “for the creation of a national commission of evaluation and control that would review the administration of the nation during the decade of the 1980's and would be charged with the task of clarifying the origins and real causes of the nation's economic, financial, social, and cultural decline, and of identifying—if possible—those directly responsible for this situation.”

“As a prolongation of what has gone before,” the UGTA encourages the pursuit and strengthening of “the fight against corruption, the embezzlement of public funds, speculation, and smuggling,” as well as “the declared and resolute fight against all forms of organized waste and against all the exorbitant, self-granted privileges that have been discovered in the state enterprises and administrations.”

According to sources close to the national secretariat, the UGTA is also talking about a “fiscal revolution” in early 1993.

Specifically, “the UGTA is demanding a substantial tax on large fortunes, on the external manifestations of wealth, and on income from speculation; taxation—or the recovery of taxes—in all known or acknowledged cases of unjustified enrichment; the strengthening and expansion of the fight against proven tax fraud and

evasion, particularly in the strictly commercial sector and in certain of the liberal professions; and a substantial reduction of the tax burden that is unfairly borne by wage earners alone, and especially by those of low and medium income.”

The UGTA proposes that the money collected from the tax on wealth, from the fight against smuggling and the embezzlement of public funds, and from the reduction of superfluous expenditure be allocated to a “National Fund for the Employment and Training of Youth.”

Our source close to Benhamouda notes that this “bold initiative by the UGTA concerning the problems of youth” is not opportunistic. Nor is it restorationist, but is instead an integral part of one of the labor federation's demands: the redistribution of the national income. “It is time for the government to take charge,” the source says.

This is because at the labor federation they want concrete results. They want action. The UGTA—which is making its “initial contribution” in the form of its statement yesterday—is acting “to defend the interests of the workers and rescue the nation”; two concerns that it says “are linked” and convey “one demand: ‘move toward complete change.’”

RCD Secretary General on Dialogue With HCE

*LD1009163992 Algiers APS in English 1033 GMT
10 Sep 92*

[Text] Algiers, Sep 10 (APS)—The secretary general of the Gathering for Culture and Democracy (RCD), said Saadi [Othman Saadi, president of the Algerian Association for the Defense of the Arabic Language], qualified as “respectable” the idea of dialogue the Higher State Council (HCE) intends to organize with the political class but deplors “the opacity which surrounds this initiative” and wonders on the form, the finality and partners of the debate. The secretary general of the RCD who said he does not want to make a value judgment, added in an interview to APS that it would be more judicious from the HCE to clearly define dialogue by precisising “with whom it is going to take place, how it must be organized and why”. Saadi for whom any action of the power must first be based on the restoration of the state authority and republican rules, fears that the initiative of the HCE will be an answer to an invitation to meetings which are the results more of a “will to consolidate the terrorist movement rather than to eradicate it”.

The secretary general of the RCD also called for the preservation of religion from partisan struggles. “We are not decided to start any debate with Algerians who explain to us that they are more Moslems than we are”, he said. Starting from the principle that “fundamentalism in Algeria is not a phenomenon of society but a fact of state”, Saadi rejects any discussion with “relays of the International Islamist Movement under the pretext that they are Algerians”. On another development, the Party of Science, Justice and Labour (PJST) said in a communique handed to APS that it is ready for the meeting due

on September 21 between the HCE and the political parties. "The PJST, the communique went on, decided to exclude itself from any position outside that in favor of a definite national reconciliation through a constructive dialogue based on the idea of justice".

Citizens 'Dissatisfied' With Boudiaf Report

92AF1161A Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
27 Jul 92 pp 1, 3

[Article by Chafika Merah: "Disappointment and Dis-satisfaction"—first three paragraphs are ALGER REPUBLICAIN introduction]

[Text] Parties, associations, and personalities are in no rush to express their views on the first results of the investigation of President Boudiaf's assassination.

A mini-poll that we made shows that public opinion is still not satisfied. Not everything was told yesterday, some believe. Most of the citizens polled show some dissatisfaction, even some disappointment. They demand that the investigation be continued with courage and determination in order to answer clearly the question of who was behind Boudiaf's assassination. They want to know the whole truth.

The first reactions from personalities, published yesterday, fully agree with this. For Dr. Said Sadi, the RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy] general secretary, "the investigation commission concluded that there had been 'criminal failures' of security departments at all levels."

Disappointment and dissatisfaction. These were the initial reactions of the citizens we met yesterday in the streets of Algiers to the results of the investigation commission on President Mohamed Boudiaf's assassination, which were made public on Saturday 25 July on television.

It seems that the demands of the citizens, who are eager to know the truth, were not met.

They expected more information on who was behind the crime. To their surprise, to quote a girl, "everything they gave us we already knew." Actually, she was not the only one to say so. Tens of young people think the same. Others even point the finger at certain individuals and wonder why the investigation commission does not do the same. "We want names," a group of young people indicated, "because the government's credibility is at stake," one of them added. A middle-aged man told us angrily: "It is the political and financial mafia that killed him. But that mafia is not localized. Arresting them is impossible, therefore we shall never know the truth." Another group of young people wanted to know the actual facts. They asked for Boumaarafi to make disclosures on television and they wanted to see the videotape that shows Boudiaf's assassination. The investigation commission's task is not easy. They will have to meet all these demands. Will they be able to do so?

Country Said Awaiting National Consensus

92AF1188D Algiers EL WATAN in French 31 Aug 92
p 1

[Commentary by Abderrezak Merad: "Dangerous Game"]

[Text] Does the political dialogue being advocated by the Higher State Council have any chance of taking place?

We have reached the point of asking that question today in view of the lukewarm response from certain opposition parties that are still too attached to theoretical ideas at a time when the country needs a very rapid national consensus that some people describe as an unavoidable understanding for saving the country. When all is said and done, the stands taken by those parties are very vague, leading one to think that unfortunately, they are not yet ready to abandon their "cheap political shilly-shallying" even in the face of the growing threat of the terrorism that wants, at all costs, to deprive the democratic process of what it has left.

Who will survive the antidemocratic forces in the future?

That is a topic for thought that is not devoid of interest and of calculated self-interest, since many of our political schemers are still convinced that the best way to get something is to play on several fronts at once—a little on the "democratic flank," a little on the side of "reliable social forces" that are not necessarily aligned with the democratic flank, and a little on the side of the Islamic fundamentalist movement, which has a worthwhile electorate—while taking care, however, to be very selective.

But that approach is dangerous, especially when combined with an extremism which, for its part, makes no distinction among its opponents.

That being the case, how can the political game be used to halt the forces of evil? To begin with, it will meet the need for an activity enabling the Army to stick solely to its own prerogatives.

Second, it will demonstrate, through the relationship between dialogue and solidarity, that there is a potential entity capable of managing political situations despite obvious differences of opinion. Democracy also means saving what is essential by rallying massively around dominant and unifying principles. While parties that do not represent much of anything from the standpoint of their popular base regard "political evasion" as a weapon like any other, it is incomprehensible that most of the opposition should be beating about the bush at a time when delay is dangerous. If there is too much insistence on intellectualizing the debate, we will soon have nothing left but our eyes to cry with. So, gentlemen, show a little good sense—and regard for propriety!

The battle cannot be won unless the majority becomes involved.

Political Parties Respond to New Cabinet*92AF1124D Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
22 Jul 92 p 3*

[Article by Mohamed Djenane]

[Text] With some expressing their desires and others adopting a wait-and-see attitude, the political parties are commenting in different ways on the human composition of the government of Belaid Abdesselam.

The RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy] comments that Belaid Abdesselam's cabinet "gives the appearance of a team basically drawn from the well of his personal experience" and believes that "the difficult situation through which Algeria is passing may perhaps enable us to understand his desire to have a government that is interdependent and homogeneous."

PAGS [Socialist Vanguard Party] emphasizes the emergence of new men "selected from the reserve of cadres who have distinguished themselves by the patriotic positions they have taken," and the "banishment" of "those individuals who were among the most conspicuous and most significant figures in the old regime."

The party says, however, that it does not understand "the retention of a minister who is known for his connections with obscurantist fundamentalism" and "the appointment of individuals whose competence and integrity have not been demonstrated or who are suspected of maintaining links with the system of exploitation and bureaucracy."

In its statement, PAGS also emphasizes "the persistent, and extremely dangerous, undervaluation of the ideological and cultural factors, at a crucial moment that requires the implementation of a massive national cultural program that is organically linked to the plan for a modern society and is an indispensable prerequisite for that plan."

MAJD [Movement for Justice and Development] believes that "there are no major changes, either in the structures or in the men selected."

In their statements, a majority of the political parties emphasize the absence of women in the cabinet.

The RCD says that "one cannot fail to note the absence of women on this team" and emphasizes that "it is to be hoped that this was not intentional."

Disappointed, the APUA's [Popular Association for Unity and Action] Allalou said the only break that occurred was with the women, as "if the 13 million women in Algeria did not exist." PAGS wonders about this undervaluation of the role of women, and adds that "it contradicts the spirit of the plan for a modern society and for progress in general."

As for the government's program, the RCD believes that it should be oriented basically toward the reestablishment of security and rehabilitation of the government, while avoiding the ideologization of the latter.

In the opinion of MAJD's Hammouche, the government "will have the responsibility of managing economic and social affairs." He presumes that the political domain will be left to the HCE [Higher State Council].

For its part, PAGS wonders if the process employed in forming the government was not hostage to political schemes, deals, arrangements, and compromises. And it says that these inconsistencies are liable to create serious doubt as to the ability of this government to generate confidence and to solve the major problems that are posed.

Video of Assassination Raises More Questions*92AF1127D Casablanca L'OPINION in French
5 Aug 92 p 3*

[Text] A videotape of the assassination of Algerian President Mohamed Boudiaf—which was presented to the press yesterday—appears to be raising more new questions than it is providing explanations for the crime.

The alleged assassin—a young second lieutenant—never appears in the pictures taken at Annaba on the day of the crime, 29 June. A spokesman of the court of inquiry, however, declared last week that the young man does appear "very clearly" in the film.

The aforementioned spokesman, Kamal Razzak Bara, had also explained to the newspaper AL WATAN that the video lasted 62 minutes. The film shown Monday to journalists at the headquarters of Algerian television lasted 58 minutes.

The video also includes statements by the alleged assassin, Boumarafi Lembarek, 26 years of age.

"I took advantage of the fact that I was assigned to protect the president," he said. "I shot at him. He deserved his fate," Boumarafi Lembarek declared.

Wearing the black uniform of the special intervention group, the young man repeated that he belongs to the "Patriotic Islamist Movement," although he frequented the discotheques.

According to the commentator on the videotape, Boumarafi Lembarek spent much of the night preceding the assassination in the company of several comrades at a discotheque of the Hotel Seybouse in Annaba.

His superior officer, Lieutenant Torki—who according to the investigators complained of the young man's "lack of discipline"—had nonetheless placed him in de facto command of the 11 soldiers charged with protecting the head of state.

Invisible Killer

During the assassination sequence it is possible to see a small black object moving rapidly toward the table where the president is sitting—a grenade, according to the commentator—followed by a flash and an exchange of fire.

Mohamed Boudiaf's head then drops slowly, and you see a form move behind the curtain at the rear of the platform. The alleged assassin, however, does not come into view.

The commentator explained that it was 15 or 20 minutes before the president received any medical aid. "Shots rang out both inside and outside the hall; it was disorder and anarchy," he said. "None of the officials present took the initiative to bring about a minimum of order," he added.

The young soldier who killed Mohamed Boudiaf with seven bullets to the head, it would appear, in no way resembles a "kamikaze."

FIS Said Behind All 'Terrorist' Acts

92AF1214D Algiers EL WATAN in French
13 Aug 92 p 3

[Article by Nadja Bouzeghrane: "Terrorism: The Hand of the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front)"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] While attacks against members of the security forces and acts of sabotage against public property continue here and there (the latest to date were the assassination of a young gendarme in Saoula and the burning of 12 of the 17 offices of the El Kennar APC [People's Communal Assembly] by masked men), the national gendarmerie stated that "the insurrection, as programmed by those who wanted to make Algeria bleed and burn, did not and will not take place." The same source, more precisely the information directorate that we approached, was positive.

Behind all the terrorist operations whose authors were arrested, there is the hand of the former FIS [Islamic Salvation Front].

According to the national gendarmerie, terrorism, as experienced by the country, started in September 1991 with the Guemmar case, although the FIS strike of June 1991 had paved the way for it; in an assessment published at the end of last week, the national gendarmerie reported that it had made 700 arrests for terrorism and acts of sabotage, and 800 arrests for disturbing the peace.

Of the 1,500 people arrested, over 1,000 were imprisoned, the others were released on bail; all are awaiting trial.

The national gendarmerie reported 17 major actions during which 13 gendarmes (in addition to the one in Saoula), including two republican guards, and some 30 terrorists were killed.

Concerning the profile of the authors of these acts, the national gendarmerie identified them as being mostly men with previous convictions, yearning for "social rehabilitation," and either unemployed or doing odd jobs. They do not include any member of the security forces, except for five army deserters, three of whom died in Zbarbar, while the other two are still wanted. Whether they are arrested for direct involvement or for

aiding and abetting, all terrorists, to the last man, are militants of the former FIS who held executive positions in the party structure, or FIS sympathizers.

"This was the outcome of our investigations," we were told. Also, "they are motivated by their convictions, social revenge, or money. The individuals arrested did not include any former prisoner from the camps in the South."

"Terrorism has been on the increase since March of this year." Sabotage is aimed mostly at sensitive facilities such as telephone stations and some public or private property; 160 acts of sabotage were on record at the end of last week. Their authors are unemployed youths motivated by money, and aged 17 to 30.

The Instigators Are Known

The largest terrorist group is the one that operates in the center (Algiers and the Mitidja). It is responsible for nearly all attacks against policemen.

To make it look as if there were several groups, commandos are sent to other regions, in particular the east of the country. Thirty percent of the center group's members have been arrested. There remain about 20 individuals, "who have a lot of blood on their hands but not a single chance."

There is the Sidi Bel Abbes group, who was practically dismantled. The two remaining members are wanted.

The Djemila group, too, is as good as neutralized. The gendarmerie noted increased awareness on the part of the rural populations among whom these groups operate, and do not hesitate to hunt them down; being cut off from their rear base and logistics, they cannot hold out forever.

"Based on supporting evidence, I want to state that in all the operations in which we were involved and made arrests, we have foiled [sic] the FIS's hand! I challenge anyone to show me that this was not so. The MIA [Armed Islamic Movement], al-Hijrah and al-Takfir are mere smoke screens," we were told by the national gendarmerie official in charge of information, and he added that the ideologist of the center terrorist group is a member of the former FIS, and that the leader of the Djemila group is none other than the former president of the Djemila APC and a member of the former FIS.

As for the holdups in the Algiers area, they were committed by the center terrorist group, except those at the Ouabait and Baraki, for which there are no leads as yet.

The principal leaders of the terrorist group are known. Those who are still free include Chabouti, Allal Mohamed, and Baa.

According to the national gendarmerie official, terrorism was bred by laxism and the failure of the institutions.

"For months, mosques indoctrinated young people, called for murder and insurrection, and we could not do a thing because the government of the time had so decided."

Nevertheless, the national gendarmerie considers that, as far as security is concerned, the situation is not alarming, and they point to their full coordination with police departments at all levels.

As far as we are concerned, the DGSN [General Directorate of National Security], which we approached to examine the question more closely for this article and to gain a better understanding of the terrorism phenomenon, let us know we would have to wait.

As is known, the HCE [Higher State Council] announced in its latest communique that new security measures would be taken. Will they be adequate and of a nature to fully eradicate the terrorism phenomenon?

Two FIS Leaders Expelled From France

92AF1241A *Algiers EL WATAN in French*
20 Aug 92 pp 1, 3

[Article by Khaled Melhaa: "Two FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) Leaders Expelled From Paris; French Change of Mind?"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] Two Algerian Islamists, Boudjemaa Bounoua and Kemr Eddine Kherbane, were ordered escorted back to the border; they were notified of the order eight days ago by the Val-d'Oise prefecture, after their appeal to the Versailles administrative court was rejected on Monday 17 August. The two Islamists boarded a plane to Karachi (Pakistan). They had come to France from that country three months ago.

A former Algerian Air Force officer, head of the group called "Faithful to the Oath," a member of the Majlis Echoura of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], Kemr Eddine Kherbane came to France three months ago. He obtained a residence permit from the French authorities. At the time, the Algerian Government issued a strong protest.

Kherbane, a member of the Salifia faction of the FIS, was jailed in 1986 for his participation in Bouali's MIA [Armed Islamic Movement]. Released in 1987, he went to Afghanistan and joined the Hezb-e-Eslami, Golloddin Hekmatyar's faction, under the assumed name of Abou Rabah. Back in Algiers, he was put in charge of security within the FIS. He was the founder and leader of "Echbel Muslimine" (Muslim Scouts) and, together with Boudjemaa Bounoua, a native of Mecheria, he fled Algeria when Abassi Madani was arrested. Their mission was to set up a network of Islamist associations in France, which are said to number over 20. In Saudi Arabia, Bounoua was in charge of the office that recruited Algerians to join Afghan Islamist troops and collected funds from "generous" Saudis.

Messrs. Kherbane and Bounoua were in contact with Said Makhoulfi, who fled to Jordan where he is in charge of training over 200 Algerians in an Islamic Jihad camp. "Their being escorted back to the border is warranted by the fact that their presence in France represented a threat against law and order."

This short sentence in fact means something entirely different: actually, there is a "war" going on between French departments. According to a source close to the French Ministry of Interior, the DST [Directorate of Territorial Security] "covered" Islamist activities in France, the better to "control" them.

At the origin of the expulsion was the recent arrival in Paris of about 10 Algerians from Pakistan, including individuals with dual citizenship who are said to have been welcomed by Kherbane and Bounoua during an internal meeting of the Islamist faction.

The proliferation of Islamist initiatives on French territory is said to have caused the security branch of the police force to write a report accusing certain police services of "laxity."

This report is said to have been the decisive factor as it raised fears of an attack against an Algerian personality in France. Perhaps France, which has been accused of giving more than its due to the Islamists living on its territory, wants to give proof of its goodwill toward Algerian authorities.

FIS Leaders Expulsion From France Investigated

92AF1241B *Algiers EL WATAN in French*
20 Aug 92 p 3

[Article by Omar Berbiche: "Investigation in Process"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] Contacted by telephone from Algiers by EL WATAN, the charge d'affaires of the Algerian embassy in Paris, Mr. Belarbi, who deputizes for the ambassador in his absence, refused to comment, claiming that he lacked information concerning the reasons behind the French authorities' decision to expel the two FIS [Islamoc Salvation Front] militants.

The Algerian Consulate in the Val-d'Oise department, near Paris, which is competent in the case, as the two Algerian nationals expelled resided within its jurisdiction; contacted the prefecture of police in order to learn more about the case, the Algerian Embassy in Paris indicated.

French authorities had not yet officially notified our chancellery by mid-afternoon yesterday, i.e., nearly 24 hours after the information was broadcast by an AFP wire from Paris, which is how, we were told, the embassy learned about it. The information deserves verification, people at the embassy said, adding that inquiries to that effect were being made.

However, we noted that "no relatives of the expelled individuals had approached the consulate" to undertake the usual steps.

Obviously, such a possibility can be ruled out, even if the information concerning the expulsion were to be officially confirmed from French source. We cannot imagine that the families of militants in a party, which never recognized the State's authority and is in a state of declared war against the government, would ask the

embassy to help them plead a cause that is almost certain not to be looked upon favorably by officials.

From sources close to the Algerian Embassy in Paris, we learned that the two FIS militants expelled to Pakistan had been in France "legally since the end of last year."

In other words, since right after the interruption of the election process when, following the call to jihad issued by the FIS, the noose was tightened around the leaders of the FIS radical wing, and those who were not arrested or on the run chose exile, more especially in France, where the dissolved party—several sources agree on this—is redeploying with the active support of French authorities.

In its last issue, L'EXPRESS disclosed that Islamist militants had been trained in terrorism and sabotage with active help from the French DGSE [General Directorate for External Security].

No Extradition Request

In an interview with our staff member Halim Bounehas, concerning his country's position with respect to the presence of FIS activist militants on French soil, the French ambassador in Algiers, Mr. Audibert, denied any French involvement with the FIS.

According to the French ambassador, there are in France, to his knowledge, only two FIS militants to whom "three-month tourist visas" were issued.

They are, the French diplomat said, Mr. Anwar Haddam, who claims to be the FIS official spokesman in Europe and America; and Kherbane, the very man who was just expelled by French authorities.

As for Mr. Haddam, Mr. Audibert indicated, a three-month visa was issued to him in January 1992, strictly according to regulations.

"Since Mr. Haddam was elected as a deputy," Mr. Audibert indicated, "his visa application presented no problem either for France or for the Algerian authorities." It's just that Mr. Haddam is a somewhat special kind of tourist. The man was never in any trouble as a result of his militant activities.

According to the French ambassador in Algiers, "Mr. Haddam had organized, as a private event and without authorization, a conference 'on the situation in Algeria,' which was attended by about 300 people." France, the French diplomat insisted, "never authorized him to hold such a conference."

And he added: "I can assure you that so far I have not received any extradition request from the Algerian authorities."

France, he also added, has a clear policy concerning known criminals and Algerian citizens who have got into trouble with the law in their country.

In other words, this means that the FIS Islamist militants who reside in France have no criminal records. Therefore, in the eyes of the French diplomat, France is in full

compliance with republican principles. As for Mr. Kherbane, according to the French ambassador, "he obtained his visa for France in a country other than Algeria and, it appears, with false papers."

There is every indication that the country in question is none other than Pakistan, to which the two FIS militants were expelled.

Four FIS Members Rob Bank

*LD2608080492 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic
1600 GMT 25 Aug 92*

[Text] The National Gendarmerie Command said that on the night of 23-24 August, four people stole a sum of money to the tune of 10.45 million dinars in addition to 14,250 French francs, from the local branch of the Algerian Bank for Rural Development in the municipality of Medrissa, in the wilaya of Itiarit [as heard].

The same source said that following investigation, the perpetrators, who fled, were identified. According to the Gendarmerie Command, they are Hazil Djilali, 33 years old, the bank treasurer; his brother Hazil Ben Khaled, 35 years old, a security guard at the same bank; Sahraoui Boubaker, 27 years old and unemployed; and Rezki Khalid, a 26-year-old blacksmith.

According the Gendarmerie Command, the men belong to the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front [FIS].

Baba Hassen Gang Wiped Out; Members Named

*92AF1242A Algiers EL WATAN in French
23 Aug 92 p 3*

[Unattributed article: "Fight Against Terrorism; A Turning Point"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] According to the Ministry of Interior's communique published late yesterday afternoon, the fight against terrorism has reached a major turning point. Of the 10 terrorists killed, the authorities said, some were famous for their bloody deeds in recent months. They are said to have been involved in all major terrorist attacks, especially the killings at the Casbah and at Boudouaou.

"Most of them," the communique indicated, "had criminal records and were habitual offenders (various thefts, possession of stolen goods, aggravated assault, drunk and disorderly behavior, expulsion from foreign countries)."

These individuals' participation in policemen's assassinations, holdups, and various armed robberies had been established, the communique further indicated, adding that information gathered led to the localization of the Baba Hassen gang, but they refused to surrender and opened fire on the security forces, which resulted in the deaths of their members. "Unfortunately, the exchange of fire with the criminals resulted in the accidental death of a 13-year-old girl whose grandfather and sister were slightly wounded; these people happened to find themselves at a place toward which the individuals pursued were heading in their flight."

The members of the wiped-out gang were responsible for many crimes against the security forces.

As is known, the national gendarmerie indicated, a few days ago, that the largest terrorist group was the one that is active in the center (Algiers-Mitidja area) and that it was behind nearly all the crimes committed against members of the security forces.

The gendarmerie also indicated that the group had been practically dismantled and that there remained some 20 activists, "who have a lot of blood on their hands but not a single chance."

Everything indicates that the 10 activists killed in Baba Hassen belonged to this terrorist group of the center. According to the same source, the Djemila and Sidi Bel Abbes groups were 80-percent dismantled.

The Baba Hassen operation, therefore, represents a serious blow to terrorism.

[Box, p 3]

Identity of the Group Members

The communique from the Ministry delegated to Public Security disclosed the identify of the group members and the acts for which they were wanted.

Bentebiche Djemaa, known as "Toufik," aged 29, was the author of the assassinations of Madani Mohamed at the Casbah (Algiers) last February; two members of the military of Haras-El-Djounhour, in Dar El-Beida, in March; the DRS [expansion not given] commander and second lieutenant at the time of the Telemly operation in May; and gendarme Hamrouche Mourad, on 9 August in Saoula.... Bentebiche Djemaa took part in the assassinations of the French citizen Laurent Xavier Bernard, in March, next to the Oued Ouchaieh tunnel; and police officer Djerboub Salah, known as "Ami Salah," in Sidi Moussa, last April.

He was also involved—together with Drif Kamel, known as "Kamel Brimer" (aged 27), Mekideche Azzeddine also known as "Zourourou Said" (aged 27), and Douakh Mohamed (aged 21)—in the assassination of six police officers in Rue Bouzrina, at the Casbah, last February.

Bentebiche Djemaa was also the co-author—with Mokhtar, known as "Abdenasser" (aged 26)—of the assassination of three police officers in the guardroom of the Rais-Hamidou cement factory in Algiers, last June. Together with Drif Kamel, Fortas Mokhtar, Meznane Abdelmoumene known as "Moumene" (aged 27), and Silem Iyes, also known as "Boubegra," also known as "Djouzi" (aged 28), Bentebiche Djemaa also took part in the assassination of five other police officers belonging to the security forces of the Boumerdes wilayah, on 9 August 1992, at the crossroads leading to Doudouaou El-Bahri.

Bentebiche Djemaa also took part in attacks against a joint roadblock of the gendarmerie and the ANP [People's National Army], at Sidi Moussa last January. Together with Douakh, Mekideche, and Drif, he

attacked the Debbih Cherif city police in Algiers in February 1992; he was also the author of the assassination of police chief detective Mokri Djamel, also a member of the city police.

In addition, Bentebiche and Fortas were the authors of holdups committed against the PMU [Urban Modernization Program] Hussein-Dey branch, and the CNEP [Algerian National Savings and Insurance Bank] Cheraga branch. They also attacked the armored truck carrying P&T [Post and Telecommunications] funds in Ouled Yaich (Blida). Bentebiche was the co-author of the attack of an armored truck carrying funds belonging to the Bouzareah ENERIC [National Enterprise for the Study and Establishment of Commercial Infrastructures].

Meznane and Drif took part in the assassination of a gendarme, last 9 August in Saoula; the author of the assassination was Bentebiche.

Meznane assassinated police officer Hamdani Sid Ahmed, last May in Belcourt, with Farid Lyazid (killed at the Annasers) and Settah Mohamed as well as Acid Kamel, known as "Moudjahed" (killed in Belcourt). He also assassinated an ANP officer in front of the restaurant "La Citadelle," last March.

For his part, Fortas killed policeman Benhamou Seddik, in April at Kouba.

Drif was the author of an attempt against a motorcyclist, Benmeziane Smail, in Larbaa in April.

Zaboug Riadh (aged 28), an ANP second lieutenant, deserted from the Tenes technical training and instruction center (CFTI), taking a Kalashnikov with him, and joined the terrorist group.

Attalah Ferhid, known as "El Hadj Farid," aged 42, was the owner of the Baba Hassen villa where the terrorists killed by the security forces had sought refuge.

Finally, X...Abdelouahab of Approval (unidentified) acted as liaison and intelligence agent and had taken part in all the attacks carried out by the terrorist group.

Status Report on Dismantling of Armed Groups

92AF1228C Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE in French
13-19 Aug 92 p 8

[Article by Djamel Benramdane: "Power Through Arms"]

[Text] Nearly a dozen small terrorist groups have been identified in recent months. Today, eight of them are partially or totally neutralized. These bands were operating in different areas of the country, from Setif to Oran, generally in locales close to bush or forest land where caches and hide-outs—what the security forces call "fallback positions"—had been prepared. The majority of these sites have been destroyed, by explosives where necessary, cutting the terrorists off from their "retreats" and making them more vulnerable.

Most of these tiny groups belong to the "MIA" [Armed Islamic Movement], the armed organization created by Bouiali Mustapha in the early 1980s in the Larbaa region, but without forming a national [political] movement.

In reality, these networks are separate, headed by people who often are unacquainted with each other but claim to be close to the ideology of Bouiali and the MIA. Even Bouiali's erstwhile "lieutenants," Abdelkader Chebouti and Mansouri Meliani—veteran fighters, sentenced to death and released in 1989, who were thought to be close and coordinating their actions in the different regions—have turned out to be completely independent of each other.

With Meliani's arrest, the shape of the movement has become clearer. Its three "adjutants" were operating in different zones: one in Bel-Abbes, another in Algiers; the third, Abou Seif, was gunned down by the gendarmerie in the Djemila region near Setif. In addition, one of Meliani's sons was active with a band.

The tactics of the groups are the same in every region: form a cell, capture arms, prepare caches and "safe" sites, recruit people to provide logistic support and "cover," engage in sabotage and diversionary actions, and as possible expand the cell, to try to build up the movement. The security services have worked tirelessly to break this machine. Some 700 people accused of terrorism or sabotage have been arrested, many of them for "complicity." About 400, mostly militants and leaders of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], have been imprisoned.

A number of "shock groups," with no rear base or support, were run to earth; it was becoming difficult to move around without attracting attention. There was only one solution: the cities, which seems to explain the resurgence of attacks in Algiers, the ultimate "fallback position." One young terrorist, the head of "El hijra oua takfir," in hiding for more than two years, was arrested a few months ago. He had continued to visit his home, see his family and pursue his activist calling openly in Bab El-Oued, while his picture was posted on the walls of the town.... Another terrorist admitted his relief at being tracked down, since it had become so difficult to find a hiding place. On the look-out 24 hours a day, his suspicions were sliding towards paranoia....

Since last May, MIA cells have been hit hard. Four of them appear to have been dismantled: two groups in El-Oued, mostly composed of young Algerians, one group in Oran, in the M'sila forest, and the band at Ain-Defla led by prison escapee Chakendi, author of the Blida tribunal attack.

Other small groups have been partially neutralized: the Bel-Abbes group in the forest of Zegla; the Chebouti group in Khemis El-Khechna, which reportedly has about 10 members left; the Djemila group headed by Abou Seif, Meliani's adjutant, which still has about four members; the Zbarbar group, consisting of 17 "djounoud" [Arabic] and a quartermaster sergeant,

army deserters who carried off their weapons with them—11 were killed, three others arrested, and four more are still in hiding; and finally, the most dangerous, the Mitidja group headed by a young terrorist, Allal Mohamed, also known as "Leveilley."

This band, of which 20 members have been arrested and nine others killed, is reportedly behind an incredible number of attacks, murders, and hold-ups, including the Boudouaou affair, the Casbah massacre, armed attacks on the CNEP [Algerian National Savings and Insurance Bank], the sports betting tote, the Oued-Smar brick-works, etc.

About 20 people from the "Moh Leveilley" band are still in hiding, in the Mitidja or the environs of Algiers: itinerant commandos that kill in cold blood, engage in banditry, and drive around in stolen vehicles. Their refuges have been largely destroyed, and it is likely they are responsible for the latest attacks in Algiers.

Of course, there are still other small terrorist networks unknown to the security services: people from the Islamic movement, the FIS, who decide to "go into action," young people indoctrinated (or simply paid) to commit acts of sabotage. At the time of the most recent arrests, the gendarmerie caught red-handed a band of young people felling a power pole. They had received monetary incentives.

It remains to be seen how far the partisans of "the Islamic state by force" will go....

'Terrorist' Group From Mitidja Dismantled

92AF1196B Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
14-15 Aug 92 pp 1, 3

[Text] This time, the National Gendarmerie (GN) hit hard. The leading terrorist group, active in Mitidja and led by Allal Mohamed, aka "Moh Leveilley," has its back against the wall. The group is nearly totally dismantled. Only a dozen or so of the some 50 hard-line elements are left. Following Allal, they are now fleeing.

It is now the turn of the Mitidja group to endure the fate of the Zbarbar group, led by another "emir," Said Makhloufi, and rendered harmless.

The three armed suspects caught in Beni-Tamou (Blida) Thursday turned out to be members of that group. One GN officer was wounded by a fleeing terrorist in a chase when the suspects refused to head the orders of a Gendarmerie patrol, but not before shooting Lalbani Abdelkader, "a terrorist actively sought by security services for a year."

The Gendarmerie considers Lalbani "an important catch" because he is "reportedly behind most of the killings of members of security services in the Blida and Boufarik regions."

The arrest of the other two individuals, also sought for the past year, enabled the Gendarmerie to locate one of the hideouts of the armed group.

Made up of six individuals, the group hid at the home of one C. Mohamed, who had evacuated his entire family from the house, leaving his 6-year-old son behind.

The child was saved "from certain death by the gendarmes," having nearly been suffocated by tear gas thrown during the attack on the house.

During its investigation, the Gendarmerie discovered a second hideout in Beni Mered, where two more terrorists were arrested.

The Gendarmerie also discovered "a cache of weapons, military equipment, and drugs."

The activity of law enforcement officers throughout Mitidja to date has resulted in the death of ten terrorists from the Allal group and the arrest of 26 others, some of them veterans of the war in Afghanistan. With the elements caught Thursday, the Gendarmerie rendered Moh Leveilley's mainstays and thus his entire group harmless.

It should be recalled that the latter is considered "responsible for most of the killings and holdups committed in Algiers and Blida." It was behind the series of events that shook the two cities. It is the same group that attacked the Gendarmerie brigades at Beni Mered, Oued El-Alleug, Oued Mendil, the National Security patrol in Boudouaou, Telemly, and so on.

More determined than ever to render the fundamentalist terrorists harmless, security forces have stepped up their harassment.

In Zekakra (Ain Defla) Wednesday, two terrorists were also shot by elements from the antiterrorist squad of the governorate's security forces.

The individuals died during a shootout with police who had come to search a residence suspected of harboring terrorist groups affiliated with the "El hijra oua takfir" Movement, working with the group led by "Chakendi," aka El-Asnami, who was recently shot and killed by the National Gendarmerie.

Police Reportedly Heighten Rhetoric

92AF1127F Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
24-25 Jul 92 p 3

[Article by Said Tazrout]

[Text] After failing to organize an underground movement, and after gaining distinction by calling for a holy war immediately after the verdict in the trial of the seven former FIS leaders—a holy war that had no follow-up—the terrorists are attempting to carry out a policy of terror with the aim of sowing fear and panic among the citizens.

They are not attacking just the agents of the security forces; they are putting bombs in public places and are attempting to destroy the national economy, thereby demonstrating—in a manner that could not be clearer—that their objective is to bring Algeria to its knees.

After the assassination of the veteran police chief of Constantine, the terrorists struck again day before yesterday at Lakhdaria, killing the company commander of that region, Captain Hour Mohamed, while he was on weekly leave and in civilian clothes. The assassin, Ali by name, is the object of an intensive manhunt by the security forces. He had already been sentenced to death in absentia for participating in the murder—in the same city—of the police officer whose body had been thrown under a bridge some days previously.

Capt. Hour is one of the officers of the national police who participated with brilliance in the destruction of the terrorist networks in Zbarbar.

We should recall that during those events a leaflet from the former FIS had promised to kill Capt. Hour, although the police had denied the story at that time.

In the light of these isolated but dangerous criminal acts, the national police declared—when we contacted them—that they had decided to "raise the level of the rhetoric." They added that "these acts in no way affect our determination to destroy these tiny groups, ensure the safety of our citizens, and reestablish the authority of the State."

The fundamentalists' acts of sabotage bear a strong resemblance to those of the OAS [Secret Army Organization]. For example, on Wednesday afternoon they placed a homemade bomb at the main post office and another in a motion picture theater at the Ryad El-Feth recreation center. Fortunately, there were no casualties.

Also like the OAS, in other regions of the country the terrorists are setting fire to state enterprises and sabotaging telephone distributors and electric power networks.

The fact that they are now carrying out indiscriminate attacks on citizens is a further indication that not only are we dealing with terrorists who fear neither God nor man but also that these individuals are being consumed by despair.

Indeed, everything leads us to believe that the psychosis they wanted to create has been counterproductive. How otherwise can one explain the creation of watch committees to protect the neighborhoods of the terrorists? Does not the fact that our beaches are becoming crowded with bathers—unlike the past three years—constitute another indication? These tiny groups are merely obeying their leaders' appeals to kill (the most recent appeals were that of A. Haddam, who called for applying the scorched-earth policy, and that of the dissolved FIS, which in its clandestine pamphlet "Al Inqadh" incited military personnel to commit acts of disobedience and called the ANP [People's National Army] traitorous. In obeying these appeals, they are merely discrediting themselves in the eyes of the public.

Press Fax Line Down; Sabotage Suspected

92AF1242B Algiers EL WATAN in French
20 Aug 92 p 3

[Article signed T.H.: "No Newspaper in the East; Cable Facilities Sabotaged?"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] The press fax receiving line at the East newspaper printing company, which is connected to the Algiers-center (formerly center) press fax line, has been out of order for two days. The cause of the failure, which occurs with increasing frequency, is said to be a cut cable.

As a result, five national dailies (EL WATAN, ALGER REPUBLICAIN, ESSALEM, ECH-CHAAB, and EL KHABAR) were not available in the wilayat yesterday, once again depriving readers of their newspapers.

According to an East ENAMEP [Algerian Press Distributing Service] high-level official, the failure might last a long time, as P&T [Post and Telecommunications] technicians dispatched on location experience much difficulty in locating it.

Was that sabotage or was it an accidental failure of the P&T cables? The question remains unanswered. At any rate, until yesterday evening, part of the "Palma" industrial zone in Constantine, i.e., precisely the place where the East printing plant is located, was totally isolated.

As is known, a similar incident also occurred at the West printing plant a few days ago.

In addition, another act of sabotage was reported to have been committed at Ain Taya, where a VOR (visual omnirange) air-navigation beacon (for airplane flights) was destroyed. The authors of this act of sabotage have not been identified yet.

Armed Group Robs National Bank Branch

LD2708173392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic
1600 GMT 27 Aug 92

[Text] According to a source from the Constantine Province security services, an armed group yesterday at 1630 stormed the Algerian National Bank branch in housing district 450 in El Kharroub. The attackers, who were masked, sneaked through an unlocked side entrance. This negligence enabled the attackers to seize an estimated 50 million centimes before speeding away in a car.

The El-Kharroub security office has begun an inquiry to identify the perpetrators of this crime.

Citizens Organize Watch Committees

92AF1127E Algiers EL WATAN in French 23 Jul 92
p 3

[Article by R.N.: "Terrorism: The 'Scorched Earth' Policy"; boldface words as published]

[Text] Terrorism has been spreading, especially following the trial of the seven leaders of the former FIS [Islamic

Salvation Front]. Assassinations and acts of sabotage are increasing in the central and eastern parts of the country.

The fundamentalists have accordingly decided to apply a policy of scorched earth and destruction of the national economy, in response to the desire of those who want to see Algeria recolonized and reduced to less than nothing. Following the assassination Friday of a veteran police chief as he was leaving a mosque immediately after fulfilling his religious duties, the "Islamists" struck at Constantine again yesterday morning when they killed a member of the city's security services. The policeman, around 30 years of age, was struck by three bullets. The criminals were able to escape.

On Tuesday night or early Wednesday morning a number of unidentified individuals set fire to a state construction enterprise at Ain Oussera, 250 km south of Algiers, damaging four offices that contained administrative files and archives, according to a radio broadcast.

These individuals beat up the two security guards at the enterprise, the radio said, but gave no details concerning their condition. A bomb exploded yesterday at the OREF [expansion not given] and another at the main post office; the criminals were undoubtedly attempting to cause a large-scale massacre by targeting crowded public places.

These crimes are added to a long list of other crimes of the same type, all of which are designed to weaken the nation. The fact that these criminals are now targeting citizens indiscriminately indicates that the nation is dealing with individuals who fear neither God nor man. The proof is the armed attacks on the people of Algiers, during which a number of individuals identified as former members of the ex-FIS have stolen money. It is additional proof that political terrorism and banditry are two branches of the same tree.

The destruction of telephone and power lines, water systems, and a center of learning (the University of Constantine), and the deliberate burning of forests, serve to indicate the real objectives of the fundamentalist movement. These individuals are merely responding to the murderous appeals by their leaders, the most recent of which was made by Anouar Haddam, who from his French sanctuary—where he benefits from the close protection provided by the French police—promoted the scorched-earth policy.

The danger is now so acute that the citizens have become aroused. According to the daily HORIZONS, some of them have reportedly organized neighborhood watch committees to protect themselves from the terrorists.

A difficult task obviously awaits Belaid Abdesselam, who has the heavy responsibility of eliminating these criminals and providing for the security of the Algerian people.

Judges Reportedly Feel Unprotected by Law
92AF1166B Algiers EL WATAN in French 30 Jul 92
p 1

[Article by Hamid Tahri: "High-Risk Trade"]

[Text] At a time when violence is spreading and terrorism chooses its victims at random, do our judges enjoy the protection they need in order to perform their duties?

The question may seem preposterous for a profession that has always operated normally without the slightest hitch.

"The law, we do nothing but apply the law. All the rest is only speculation," one of them might say, hazarding a reference to exogenous factors that one way or another get in the way of the work of the court system.

But what can the law do if the government and its institutions see their power weakened daily?

"Protection? What protection?" one former prosecutor and now an official in the Ministry of Justice exclaims.

"Judges have no special protection," he maintains. "They hand down justice according to their soul and conscience. They are serene and neutral, believing that the role of arbiter that has fallen to them does not require special measures. The question of the judge's safety has not been posed so far. Consequently, nothing has been outlined in this domain."

And yet, everyone is aware that being a judge is a high-risk business, particularly in the case of "red-hot" cases.

If the social situation of judges has been upgraded somewhat, it was in order to preserve their dignity and prevent them from falling prey to the failings and many traps laid by all manner of corruptors. However, here also, the measures taken have not satisfied everyone.

It is also noted that several judges do not fully devote themselves to their duties because of the housing problem they face. Several central figures in the Ministry of Justice live over 60 km from their place of work. Even the ministry's general secretary encounters the same difficulties.

These objective factors must not be neglected, another judge notes, because they are directly related to his daily activities. One must therefore not underestimate their influence. As for security itself, no one dares discuss it at the present time.

It is not that it is an "untouchable" subject, but the opportunity has never arisen to bring it up.

Will it arise when judges are called upon to handle such burning issues as attacks on state security, major crime, corruption, and so on, issues which in other climes have kept public opinion in suspense for several months?

In Italy, for example, the courts and the Mafia have waged a relentless struggle. Judge Paolo Borsalino was

recently killed in a bombing in Palermo in circumstances almost identical to those in which his predecessor, Judge Giovanni Falcone, died.

Falcone symbolized the Italian Government's reaction to the spread of the Sicilian Mafia. It is a fight that moved him to the top of the black list of organized crime's hired killers. He was reportedly "brought down" because he was on the verge of taking on the anti-Mafia "superstructure." The episode is naturally viewed here as a police thriller that puts powerful antagonists on the stage. No matter what security measures were taken, the judges could not escape death.

However, the reference is out of place and the judge's connection with society is quite different. "We chose this profession; we have taken it up. It is our fate," says one judge, backed by the respect that the public pays to his profession.

Prosecutors assigned major cases are naturally protected by security. When threatened, some of us are also protected, as is any ordinary citizen, but such protection is blurred when the case in question is reversed.

"For the judge, who places himself above all political or partisan considerations, the only thing that counts is application of the law," notes Ahmed Belhouchet, attorney general at the Court of Blida, the target of an assassination attempt in April as he was leaving his home in Ouled Yaich. Even so, the attorney general, who was in charge of the Islamists' case, among others, was not safe from threats. "After I got into my official car as I always did, I saw an individual rest the barrel of an automatic pistol on the door window, aim at my head, and fire his weapon. The man and his accomplices then fled." The threat remains.

The current prosecutor of the Blida military court also reportedly has no special protection. "Why not?" one judge exclaims, convinced that it is henceforth necessary to take timely measures even if the law says nothing on the subject.

With the increasingly heavy cases piling up on judges' desks, should we not provide them with all the resources they need so that justice may be done, without any interference, for the benefit of the government and the citizen alike?

Grounds for Arresting Newspaper Head Faulted

92AF1161C Algiers LE SOIR D'ALGERIE in French
2 Aug 92 p 2

[Article by Fouad Boughanem: "On the Difficulty of Publishing Information"]

[Text] The arrest of Mr. Mohamed Benchicou, editor of the daily LE MATIN, once again—and spectacularly—raises the issue of the difficulty of publishing information under state-of-emergency conditions, and of the formal or tacit limitations set on the exercise of free speech in the face of security considerations that are often difficult to handle. The speed with which the gendarmerie reacted, and the methods it used, i.e., the

arrest of a daily newspaper editor at his domicile, seem to indicate that the information concerning Chebouti's arrest (which was denied) must have considerably hindered the National Gendarmerie command in their efforts to totally dismantle the underground organization of the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA), which is considered to be the most dangerous terrorist group currently operating. Already on Wednesday evening, news that Chebouti had found refuge in the Sudanese Embassy were circulating in Algiers. As was later ascertained, this was not the case. This shows that, in the context of psychological warfare waged by forces aiming to exacerbate tensions, editorial staffs are often the targets of attempts at manipulation which, at times, may fool journalists. Nevertheless, we should consider that the Algerian press is working in an exceptional environment and that, for that reason, a mistake is far from being a national disaster. We do not believe that arresting a journalist for publishing unverified news will radically solve the issue of how the press handle news relating to armed groups' activities. Coming after the arrests of Abderrahmane Mahmoudi (L'HEBDO LIBERE), the EL KHABAR journalists, and Messrs. Saad Bouakba and Ali Fodhil (ECHOUROUK), each on different grounds, Mr. Mohamed Benchicou's arrest cannot leave us indifferent. Although journalists have always believed that they are in no way "super citizens" and do not enjoy any specific immunity, the use of coercion in dealing with them is nevertheless not the most appropriate way to handle violations of the information code—a code with which, by the way, professional journalists as a whole strongly take issue. Mohamed Benchicou is to be arraigned this Saturday. Let's hope that the courts will see reason and quickly release our colleague. Convinced that Mohamed Benchicou would never have published the news of Chebouti's arrest as real (although it was not so) if he had been better informed, and that his good faith is not in question, the prosecutor's office will show discernment—at least we hope so—and will blame the incident on the difficulty and the extremely hard conditions under which the "duty to tell the truth" is exercised. Meanwhile, Mohamed Benchicou has our full solidarity.

Political Parties React to Suspension of Dailies

92AF1188A Algiers EL WATAN in French 10 Aug 92
p 2

[Unattributed article entitled: "Party Reactions"]

[Text]

FLN: Disapproval

The National Liberation Front (FLN) expressed its "regret over the decision to suspend the newspapers LE MATIN and LA NATION" and said it hoped that "the steps taken against those two daily newspapers are not indicative of the direction that will be taken by the amendments to the Information Code."

In a communique published yesterday, the FLN said that the decision was an "administrative" one based on

"accusations on which the courts had not ruled but that are the result of a political viewpoint that has conferred on them the seriousness helping to justify them in the eyes of public opinion."

The communique continues: "The FLN disapproves of any information running counter to ethics and professional rules. But it feels that the general thrust of the information policy that has been pursued since the appropriation of the two newspapers ECH CHAAB and EL MOUDJAHID has been to restrict freedom of the press and of opinion and to reduce the opportunity for political action on the part of parties and individuals whose ideas and opinions differ from the official position."

The FLN also says that the announcement by the Higher State Council (HCE) of its intention to close the security camps and transfer the files of detainees to the courts is a "positive step" and expresses the hope that "its significance will not be impaired by the slowness of its implementation."

FFS [Socialist Forces Front]: Repressive Measure

National daily newspapers have just been ordered to cease publication.

Despite the reasons adduced, the FFS energetically denounces that serious attack on freedom of the press and on its corollary, pluralism.

The FFS gives its support to the world of the press, which once again has just been hit with a repressive measure for "reasons of state."

The FFS warns against any attack on freedom of information and the free exercise of the journalist's profession, saying that when all is said and done, they are the only gains that have been made since October 1988.

AHD-54: When Will It Be the Parties' Turn?

"Following the arrests of journalists—legal procedures no longer being sufficient—we are reaching a more dangerous stage: publication of their newspapers, LE MATIN and LA NATION, has been halted.

"Putting 'newspapers in prison' in the name of democracy cannot convince anyone except perhaps the head of the government.

"In those conditions, AHD-54 wonders when it will be the turn of the political parties.

"Before October 1988, being in the opposition meant being counterrevolutionaries and agents in the pay of foreign powers.

"Today, depending on the mood the head of the government is in, we may become agents for destabilization.

"We were hoping that those practices were part of the past, but how can one make new things out of old?"

PST [Socialist Workers Party]: Concerns

In response to the alarming resurgence of attacks on freedom of the press, the PST indicates its deep concern over such practices and expresses its complete solidarity with the newspapers affected.

Reaction to Suspension of 3 Dailies

92AF1166A *Algiers LE SOIR D'ALGERIE in French*
11 Aug 92 p 2

[Article by Zoubir Souissi: "The Way and Means"]

[Text] The surprising decision to suspend the dailies LE MATIN, LA NATION, and EL-DJAZAIR EL-YOUM rocked the profession. Many colleagues were legitimately concerned yesterday, wondering about the future of the journalistic profession and freedom of expression. Born amidst the pain of the bloody events of October 1988, the free press rapidly gained a following among readers avid for news and particularly credibility. After nearly three decades of single-party rule and all its consequences (restrictions on individual and collective freedoms, absolute control of the press and the courts, flagrant injustices, and so on), the independent press has helped reconcile the reader with a sector we thought was gone for good.

Backed by often paltry means, great determination, and good will, a number of banners carved out a choice place in a hungry but nevertheless demanding market. For some, it was a resounding debut, while for others it was painstaking, to say the least. Anxious to gain revenge for a system that crushed them just as it had anything else that thought or reflected in this country, the new ventures tried to do everything that had been outlawed by the old order. Above all, they tried to erase a painful image so widespread at the time of newsmen used by the government to wipe its feet. A few succeeded in this difficult mission, others fared less well and some simply failed. That is the way it goes. Today, given the incredible number of banners and the clouds looming on the media horizon (excessively high printing costs and the collapse of the system of distribution), it is becoming increasingly clear that some will not be able to go the distance. There is nothing for it; such is the rule of survival. Only the strongest, the most efficient, will have the power to stay in the race.

One must have solid assets in order to hang on. The increase in the number of newspapers originally resulted in the institution of a kind of healthy rivalry that quickly turned into often fierce and sometimes even unfair competition. This is normal in a country deliberately moving toward a market economy. It is the least of things, people will say, because it is precisely the absence of competition and the negation of the spirit of competition that engender mediocrity and facility. The media thus embark upon a frantic race that sometimes verges on war with no mercy or quarter given to the rival, who is one's colleague, after all. Nor is one bothered by scruples or precautions dictated by propriety, and there is no end to the tart courtesies tossed back and forth.

One's private life, professional background: Anything is fuel for the fire. Jealousy and envy exist in all corporations and in ours, they are served by a morbid desire to hurt that is practiced with art by some showing a real talent for it.

Here I can just imagine our colleagues frowning and wondering precisely what I am getting at. It is quite simple: The misfortunes being heaped upon us should be an opportunity to tell the truth to one another, whatever it may be. We are faced with a government as jealous of its prerogatives as any other government on earth and which, unfortunately for us and the government, has not varied in its reactions. The men who were the protagonists and artisans of the single party cannot, even by a wave of a magic wand, turn into democrats and defenders of human and citizen's rights. They make do with what they have, which is to their credit, because this at least means that they have assimilated the adage that holds that only imbeciles do not change. Once again, unfortunately for us, there are those among us who provide them with the stick to beat us with. This is becoming a constant and our newspapers are stuffed with denials and retractions. The moral: The professionalism of which everyone boasts and that is present in all the oh-so-pertinent resolutions of journalists' meetings is practiced very little. We must admit it: We hold a formidable power, the power to express judgments and opinions on things and men in this country. Wrongly used, that power can hurt, do damage, destabilize, destroy. And it is precisely because we have it that we must see that we use it properly.

In this country where we were deprived of freedom for over a quarter of a century, attacks on our brand-new freedom wreak considerable havoc. It is difficult to admit that such improper means are used to attack one of the pillars of democracy: freedom of expression. We must admit that despite the state of emergency, despite the extremely difficult situation that Algeria is going through, there have been no excesses on the part of those responsible for the country's affairs. On the contrary, they have made it a point of honor to restore the government's authority and respect the state of law under all circumstances. Then why violate this line of conduct? That is where the problem lies. The suspension of organs of the press for whatever reason is an excessive measure that contradicts everything so patiently built in this field and that was the main source of pride (we have few left these days) of professionals in the field of information and of Algerians in general. Foreigners are unfailingly struck by the extremely free tone of the Algerian media, this despite the state of emergency and all the miseries endured by this country. Appealing to the courts would have been wiser and more in keeping with the state of law that we so rightly wish to preserve. If the media in question did indeed violate the rule, if they broke laws, they must answer for it before the proper courts. Like those that preceded it and that were never spared by the media in the least, the current government should keep its sang-froid. It is not by resorting to the execrable means of yore such as censorship or muzzling

that it will help to purify the climate and restore professionalism to journalistic practices.

In our humble opinion, these heavy-handed, obsolete, outdated methods will not help to solve the problem. During such periods of instability and danger, the alliance of all democrats and all those who carry Algeria in their hearts is the only alternative. So far as we know, with the exception of a few extreme cases, the press has joined in the fight against the forces of evil. It is for that reason that it must not be weakened. In contrast, it is high time that we begin serious reflection on our information practices, define rules of ethics and deontology, and name (through elections) a high authority whose task it would be to arbitrate and rule on distortions of freely accepted rules of conduct and to punish the violators if need be.

Journalists Concerned After Suspension of Dailies
92AF1214B Algiers EL WATAN in French
17 Aug 92 p 3

[Article by Nadjia Bouzehrane: "The Future of the Press: Professionals Are Concerned"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] The presidential decree of 11 August, and the communiqué of the Ministry of Interior and Local Communities which, among other things, set bounds to the exercise of the profession of journalist, and define the prerogatives and limitations of information, raise the essential issues of compatibility between freedom of speech and the state of emergency, and the meaning of concepts such as "responsible press" and "attempt against the country's interests."

Professionals in the information sector are challenged by these questions, which directly affect the future of their profession and the freedom to practice it, a freedom for which they fought hard.

Most of them—some are of the opposite opinion—agree that the measures taken by the government represent a setback as far as freedom of speech is concerned, or even a desire to make the press "toe the line." They also are of the opinion that journalistic practice should be made more ethical through rules of ethics and deontology.

"We must agree on the concept of freedom of speech. To me, it has never meant the freedom to say or write anything, and especially not the freedom to drag citizens or colleagues in the mud and settle personal scores. This kind of freedom does no credit either to journalists or to the country," Ahmed Halli, a journalist and former editor of ALGERIE ACTUALITE, stated, adding: "I certainly understand that, after the period of restraint and the shackles imposed upon the press under the single-party regime, we may witness a proliferation of written articles, with some excesses, but I believe that the psychological release that has been going on since October 1988 may, in the long run, become suspicious or even dangerous." Ahmed Halli pointed out that "all countries, including the most advanced, have a communication strategy that is dictated by the country's higher

interests, not by a written law. In Algeria, there have been mostly tactics, too often partisan, selfish, and mercenary tactics. Sometimes, they are all that at the same time." This being said, the former editor of ALGERIE ACTUALITE estimated that "it is regrettable that what we must call violations of the press laws should elicit such an authoritarian and, in my humble opinion, such a disproportionate reaction. I believe that the lack of moderation in which some of our colleagues indulge should not be answered by a lack of moderation on the part of the State which—even in a state of emergency—should remain calm and act only after mature deliberation."

Ahmed Halli also estimated that "in this particular case, they hurried to act before thinking, even though, let's repeat that once more, some articles may arouse legitimate indignation among men who are certainly very well aware of the Nation's higher interests." Coming back to the Ministry of Interior's communiqué, Halli recalled that "we should not forget that we do not live in a State based on the rule of law, but rather in a state of emergency, I would even say in a right-wing State."

Aziouz Mokhtari, president of the AJA [Algerian Journalists Association], recalled that freedom of speech is an issue that the profession had already raised before. "Unfortunately, the information code and most laws passed by the APN [People's National Assembly] managed to elude basic questions, such as deontology and ethics, the law on advertising, on broadcasting. The law does not clearly answer the following question: Who may start a newspaper, and who may not?"

The AJA president also pointed out that there is no law on radio and television and that the independent press was initiated by a government circular, with all the precariousness that this entails.

"After two years of experience with an independent press, with its ups and downs, the profession, considering the ferocity with which Hamrouche broke the MJA [Algerian Journalists Movement], now finds itself unable to formulate an assessment or projections in an organized or disciplined manner," the AJA president observed, acknowledging the existence of glaring problems related to professionalism and ethics. "To make it worse, we are dealing with a Higher Council on Information that is ineffective."

Aziouz Mokhtari, finally, considered that, irrespective of the point of view expressed, all we can do is reformulate the professional organization problem and that "if we do not formulate these problems inherent in the profession, others will do it, as seems to be the case."

The editor of the weekly L'EVENEMENT, Mourad Termoul considered that "the state of emergency includes a series of guidelines—that is obvious." But the Ministry of Interior communiqué "comes at the wrong time in view of recent events" (suspension of LA NATION, LE MATIN, and DJAZAIR EL YOUM) "which constitutes a fact that needs no comment. I

would rather see the editors of these newspaper sentenced than the publications closed down."

The editor of L'EVENEMENT asked: "What does the government want? What orientation does it want to impart to the press? Isn't that designed to make us toe the line? Parts of the Ministry of Interior communiqué allude to, and call for support for the government. If my views do not agree with the government's, am I going to be penalized? What about my freedom of analysis?" And he concluded: "I am not against guidelines in any sector of activity if the state of emergency demands it, but events that occur in such rapid succession give you something to think about." He also asked: "What is our minister doing?"

The Profession Must Get Organized

For his part, the editor of EL KHABAR, Omar Ourtilane, acknowledged that he is baffled. "Do they want to stop the independent press and return to the previous situation?" He added: "There has always been arrests and intimidation." Not deluding himself, he believes that "the independent press is being eliminated," while "the multiparty system seems to be empty of all meaning." As far as the country's interests are concerned, Omar Ourtilane considered that "they must be clarified and clearly defined. What is an attempt against the Nation's interest and security?" He also believes that "the government should speak up frankly and clearly and say that an independent press bothers it."

The only official from a state-owned medium—the others we attempted to reach, in vain, were busy or away; in other words, they could not be reached—Mr. Heraoua Mohamed, assistant editor of the evening daily HORIZONS estimated that "people are speaking freely," and that "freedom of speech does not seem to be thrown back into question by the state of emergency that has been in force for six months."

"At HORIZONS, we always made it a rule to check our information. We are proud of having received so few denials. A credible press will not say just anything," the newspaper assistant editor emphasized, estimating that "you don't write information in the conditional tense."

Mr. Heraoua acknowledged that he does not know what a responsible press is. "It's a matter of interpretation. As for us, we are trying to publish a credible newspaper, about problems of interest to our readers." Three newspapers were confiscated, for reasons stated by the authorities, "but" newspaper stands show that there are many publications."

The editor of LE SOIR D'ALGERIE, Zoubir Souissi stated that "the question on which we do not agree is the concept of the country's higher interests. People tend to confuse the country's higher interests and the government's interests. When the press does its job, it serves the country's interests." For the editor of LE SOIR D'ALGERIE, the measures announced constitute "a slip that may prove dangerous for the country. They want to

attack the few scraps of democracy that still remain." "Don't fight the wrong enemy. The press represents no danger to security and law and order. The enemies are those who kill policemen," Zoubir Souissi emphasized, adding that "the press as a whole played the game to defend the Nation's higher interests."

"We are going backward. A responsible press, does that mean a press of yes-men?"

In conclusion, Zoubir Souissi called on all information professionals to get organized and agree among themselves to break "their laws," because "our role is to inform, analyze, criticize, in a professional manner." "To suspend newspapers is something inadmissible. We must now put our affairs in order, institute rules of deontology, act like professionals, and check our information."

Journalists Urged To Organize Despite Differences

92AF1214A Algiers EL WATAN in French
18 Aug 92 pp 1, 2

[Article by Nadjia Bouzeghrane: "Journalists: 'Beyond Differences'"—first two paragraphs are EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] The measures dictated by the state of emergency (presidential decree of 11 August and communiqué from the Ministry of Interior and Local Communities) are still being discussed, analyzed, and commented by editorial staffs. Here and there, people consider that it is time for the profession to get organized and look beyond its differences and beyond false problems, prejudices, and divisions of all kinds, such as the opposition of state-owned and independent press, of Arabic- and French-language press. The profession must find its way and open a serene debate, a genuine dialogue around what unites it: the exercise of a profession that is not without risks.

This was the feeling of all those we met.

We live in a special situation governed by the state of emergency, which has its own logic, but this should not be used to undermine what we have achieved—freedom of speech for instance—and it should not be an obstacle to democratic speech, according to Mr. Cherif Anane, editor of the evening daily EL MASSA. "In all countries of the world, the state of emergency means regulating, sometimes restricting liberties," he considered, adding, "we should not be naive, the state of emergency amounts to exceptional management of daily life."

In other words, the state of emergency is a material reality governed by equally material rules made to fit this reality.

Coming back to the profession and the upheaval it is experiencing, the editor of EL MASSA observed that "we have all made mistakes, done imprudent things that were warranted. We do not have the means to release entire teams to investigate and inquire."

"Information sources are often closed, and the environment does not always cooperate." Mr. Cherif Anane went on: "Nevertheless, we are holding an extraordinary weapon. If we cannot or do not wield it, it may be more dangerous, more destructive than firearms."

From Cherif Anane's point of view, institutions like the High Council on Information bear some responsibility for the present situation of the press. "It was supposed to implement laws regulating the profession; it did not do it. Its missions are clearly defined in Law 90-07 on information. If it had applied article 59 (concerning its missions), the problems that now plague the press would be less serious." Still from the point of view of the editor of EL MASSA, lacking any rules and precise criteria (e.g., transparency), the press developed as it could, often in anarchy.

"The information sector was neglected. As for us, journalists, we did not have the courage or the intelligence to look beyond our differences and get organized among journalists, among editors.... The profession must show solidarity, sincerely and irrespective of any misunderstandings and false divisions, such as language, the status of the publishing company—we face identical constraints—and irrespective of what publication we are working for."

The profession must get organized. Cherif Anane estimated that professionalism and honest work, irrespective of each individual's political leanings, should be the common rules.

"In spite of all this, I am optimistic," he said. "I am sure of two things. First, the State cannot restrict freedom of speech, or that would mean the loss of all democratic prospects for the country. Nevertheless, the suddenness of the decisions made (the suspension of three newspapers) is something new. I do not think that these decisions are final."

"Second, that will give us a chance to think about ways to get organized. In Great Britain, for instance, it was the editors themselves who decided to institute editorial rules. We must agree on a number of professional principles and ethical rules." Therefore, for the editor of EL MASSA, "what we are experiencing now is a challenge not only to take a stand on the recent State measures, but also to get ourselves organized."

Harzallah Mohamed Salah, writer and journalist at ECH-CHAAB, estimated for his part that the government's decision concerning LE MATIN, EL DJAZAIR EL YOUM, and LA NATION, were an attack against freedom of speech and information.

"You cannot talk about democracy without freedom of speech and freedom of information. It would have been preferable to refer the matter to the courts," he said, further emphasizing: "I don't believe that any journalist is against the country's interests, even though points of view may differ. The case must be decided by the law, not by a political decision. We need a clear law on publications."

Kacem Derradji, editor of ES SALEM, believes for his part that, "a mistake was made from the start. We should have had laws defining the role and missions of journalists. What we have is anarchy; newspapers have been edited by professionals and by nonprofessionals."

Kacem Derradji considered that the information code was never applied and that there have been excesses.

"Algeria lives in a specific context. Journalists must take this into consideration. They must not fan the crisis that we are experiencing, but act as peacemakers and consider the consequences of the facts they report."

Kacem Derradji deplored that we are "still impregnated with the single-party mentality. We have trouble getting organized. We must accept one another, even if we have different political leanings. What weakens us is that our ranks are dispersed. Let's look beyond our differences and let's talk. There is a minimum on which we must agree, i.e., the exercise of our profession. And unless information imposes itself in its diversity and plurality, democracy will not succeed!"

Journalism Viewed as Profession at Risk

92AF1158C Algiers EL WATAN in French
2 Aug 92 p 1

[Commentary by Omar Belhouchet: "Released on Probation"]

[Text] No committal order was issued against the editor of LE MATIN. In a fit of wisdom and generosity, the Law Courts decided to calm things down and quite simply referred the case to the court in charge of "violations of the press laws" for review on...29 September.

All the same, the spectacular manner in which Mr. Benchicou was taken in for questioning raises for the umpteenth time the question of the free and independent practice of the press function in Algeria.

The journalist profession is universally acknowledged to involve risks. In Algeria, it is now a high-risk profession since bombs are set on the premises of independent newspapers, unspecified death threats against journalists are made almost daily, and all editorial staff members may be taken in for questioning, which "taking in" takes the form of police raids, somewhat too brutal to our taste.

This climate of harassment is becoming unbearable. It is true that it is the editors and journalists' responsibility to scrupulously and constantly check the accuracy of their facts, and to make sure they are not reporting gossip or false news, or being used to spread rumors or campaigns—all things that unfortunately happen at times. But it is equally true that the government, the citizens, and the State as a whole should fight the "negative effects" of free press in Algeria only through legal means.

This important condition must be complied with if honest men are not to be crushed and, above all, if an essential aspect of democracy is not to be reduced to nothing.

**New Arabic, French-Language Newspapers
Published****Arabic Daily: EL-HADITH***92AF1169A Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE
in French 5 Aug 92 p 8*

[Article by K.M.B.: "Another Newcomer"]

[Text] We have yet another newcomer to the news world: EL HADITH, a daily newspaper in Arabic. Under the headline "Who Ordered the Assassination?", the front page is devoted to President Mohamed Boudiaf.

Photos taken the day of his burial cover pages 11 to 14, showing how touched people have been by the tragic event.

In its test-run edition, one can read an interview with Mahfoud Ghazali on the 1989 Constitution and its flaws and a story on the failings of Algerian education, undeniably a vital sector that has reached a low point. There is more. Other issues discussed include the deregulation of prices and articles on film and the theater.

Nor are international affairs neglected. An article is devoted to the defeat of the Israeli Le Likoud Party and news briefs report on events in South Africa and Egypt.

Arabic Monthly: AL-ARABI*92AF1169B Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE
in French 5 Aug 92 p 8*

[Text] The monthly periodical EL-WIFAK AL-ARABI is steadily making headway and has just put out its sixth issue. Distributed in several Arab countries, its publishers are mainly interested in promoting knowledge of Algeria in those countries in an effort to establish better relations with them. All technical and artistic work (dummies, editing, printing) is done by REVOLUTION AFRICAINE.

French Daily: LIBERTE*92AF1169C Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
29 Jun 92 p 3*

[Article by H.M.: "New Daily LIBERTE Appears"]

[Text] Our pleasure will not be spoiled, the pleasure of updating our little black book and hailing the birth of a newcomer to the world's press, a national daily called LIBERTE.

It is a banner that reminds one of the precipitous path followed by our patriots long before 1954. Thus it is that the newspaper announces its "colors," so to speak, and its editorial line. Its slogan, "The duty to know, the duty to inform," is indeed a difficult task in the world today!

The format is midway between our half page and the full-page French newspaper LE MONDE.

Two major headlines stretch across seven columns: the trial of the leaders of the FIS [Islamic Front of Salvation] and the Algerian Cup. LIBERTE's opening story is comprised of a column of brief information in summary form. The first edition also has two photos, of Benhadj and Abassi, accompanied by this question: "Will the shayks be able to save their heads?" In a box, the Algerian Cup with this headline: "A third for the JSK!"

The editorial was written by our colleague Hacene Ouan-djli, whose title, "French Leave," refers to the trial of the FIS and the "twists" given to history, a reference to the time when the Islamist movement tried to combine religion and politics. Ouan-djli recalls the pressure from the FIS and the fundamentalist calculations and concludes that the shayks have already taken their "French leave" and exited the political scene.

The newspaper's promising density would seem to indicate that it will try to provide maximum information. We welcome LIBERTE and wish it a long life at our side!

Abdesselam's Economic Program Reviewed
92AF1161D Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE
in French 5 Aug 92 p 12

[Article by A. Tareb: "Government: A Complete Program"—first paragraph is REVOLUTION AFRICAINE introduction]

[Text] The man proved to be like the picture everyone had of him: determined, austere, and convinced that the only way to overcome the many-sided crisis that the country is experiencing is to rely on our own resources.

The prime minister dwelt at length on the seriousness of the economic situation. He does not see the critical condition of the economy as fated; but he acknowledged that the means to adapt solutions are not legion. As we already mentioned, Belaid Abdesselam insisted that he could not work miracles.

In the present state of advanced economic and social dilapidation, the prime minister's task, during the necessarily short period that he will head the government, will therefore not be to bring back prosperity—if we ever experienced such a thing—but to reduce the violent tensions that perturb the nation's economic and social body. Belaid Abdesselam ruled out that we might go on living at the rate we do, unless we want to doom the country to bankruptcy. The prime minister then made it clear that, if that were the case, he could not accept to head a government that would be a sort of official receivership.

Harrowing revisions must therefore take place at all levels of the country's economic and social life.

The debt, and in particular the debt service, received "preferential" treatment in the prime minister's speech at the press conference.

To this end, Belaid Abdesselam recalled that the debt service had quite simply doubled in five years, from \$5 million (in 1987) to \$10 million (in 1992), which is quite simply outrageous. Still more outrageous is the infernal cycle that resulted from it, since we must borrow to pay our food bill. Therefore, we cannot go on like this, or else we will once again risk mortgaging the country itself.

Although Belaid Abdesselam was cautious in his war-economy scenario—hesitating to recommend it as a remedy now that he is prime minister—he nevertheless is a strong advocate of austerity, for everybody.

The first thing to do is to reduce our imports to the bare necessities, because it is simply inconceivable and humiliating—the prime minister strongly emphasized this—to borrow money to "stuff ourselves," he said, apologizing for the term used. If we must borrow, let it be for bare essentials (in particular drugs).

To reduce our imports, we shall have to rely on the country's technical skills, especially in the agricultural sector where greater incentives should be provided to producers interested in strategic crops (grains, legumes), to researchers in the agronomic sector, as well as in the

housing and civil engineering sector; and we shall have to mobilize national skills. During the forthcoming months, or even years, the top priority will be the debt, because it is vital for us to break out of the bind in which we find ourselves today in this respect.

Belaid Abdesselam sees only one possible way out, not to say one mandatory way out: austerity, which must first materialize in a drastic reduction of our imports and a rational development of our resources, especially our oil and gas resources—this being of course his favorite theme. Belaid Abdesselam's thinking is in line with the law on oil, gas, and mines that was adopted under the Ghazali government, and which we must now use to our best advantage. In this respect, the former prime minister could hardly have found a better advocate for the implementation of this law than his successor who, however, vigorously denounced all those who, once the law had been adopted, had poured forth alarmist statements as to the objectives pursued.

On this occasion, Belaid Abdesselam stated again that he had always been in favor of foreign participation in oil and gas development in our country, adding that even the nationalizations of 1971 did not rule out such participation, which has now become unavoidable. However, our partners should not take advantage of our difficult situation to impose their conditions, especially concerning the amount of the leasing rights. For the moment, according to the prime minister, it is on this question that the negotiations started many weeks ago are stumbling.

There seems to be quite a gap between the proposals of foreign firms and what the Algerians want. We must remain firm, Belaid Abdesselam said, so as to impose our views and our conditions.

The prime minister also declared himself in favor of rehabilitating state-owned companies, which should be guaranteed adequate means to resume their operations. After that, lame ducks will have to go. Belaid Abdesselam said he was in favor of freezing the operations of certain industrial units that are large raw-material importers and manufacture products for local consumption; this, again, to reduce our import bill.

According to the prime minister, the reforms were somehow a sham, in that we never gave up managed economy. We merely went, he said, from management through planning and ministerial supervision to bank supervision over the production apparatus. This transfer of supervision further materialized with the advent of the currency and credit law, which gave the Bank of Algeria full power to manage the country's economy; this explains the prime minister's decisions concerning this institution, and first of all the appointment of a new governor. Adjustments should also be made to that law and to the reforms as a whole. Belaid Abdesselam also did not conceal the fact that he acted in keeping with the current era, that of reforms. Another issue on which he also dwelt at length was that of corruption and enrichment without cause. The prime minister stated again

that he was prepared, if not to end them, at least to fight them with the utmost energy, enrolling everybody's help for that purpose, including the people, who must then help the authorities by reporting any abuse they observe. Finally, it was interesting to know the prime minister's state of mind concerning the relations he intends to maintain with international financial institutions. In this respect, we can say that Belaid Abdesselam was equal to himself since he again stated his distrust toward this type of institutions and somewhat distanced himself from the policy they implemented and applied to us. That policy did little to help us overcome economic stagnation, on the contrary, the prime minister suggested. That is quite a program.

Debt Burden Said Threatening Press Shutdown

92AF1149B Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE in French
23-29 Jul 92 p 14

[Unattributed article: "Storm Over the Press"; monetary unit is centimes]

[Excerpt]

[Box p 14]

The Sworn-In Diplodocus

Who weighs what? The inquiry speedily carried out by Lyes (with much speed when it came to turning in the paper) that the Diplodocus had called for does not entirely answer the question. The print run gives an idea of the market share but the returns (that is, the unsold copies) express it better. In any event, Sehar has enough figures to silence the lies and bare certain truths that style clauses conceal.

So here is an exclusive story by the Diplodocus on the press, its print runs, debts, and proliferation. [end box]

In a few weeks the media landscape runs the serious risk of being subject to the market's punishment. With more than 12 billion centimes of debt to the Central Printer and more than 14 billion [centimes] of debt to the EL MOUDJAHID printer (as of 30 April 1992), several titles run the risk of shutting down. For many the euphoria, which was born after the March 1990 circular letter, which allowed all journalists to join collectives, create their own newspapers, and thus launch themselves into "the intellectual adventure," will be nothing more than a bad memory. For two years the readership has begun to stabilize. Certain titles have become established. Others will only manage to survive through debts incurred at the printer's. It is true that the distribution networks (the ENAMEP [Algerian Press Distributing Service] and private concerns) are not well heeled. But it is also true that through their print runs the observer can imagine which titles will succeed in establishing themselves and which titles are doomed to disappear even as they pay their bills for distribution and advertising. It was impossible for us to learn the exact indebtedness of each title at the two printers. Spokesmen of the printers involved refuse on principle to make their debts public while the cases have not been dealt with with the

concerned owners. But we were able to learn that in the case of certain titles, notably the daily newspapers, this debt hovers around the 1.5 billion mark. If, in the case of those who managed to succeed in the market, they do find it possible to pay their debts, in the case of the others, arrest looms over them.

At the Central Printers, the promissory note is the device that has been used for printing and photogravure work done during the months of April and May 1992. For the director of the Central Printers, not a single sou has come in since the beginning of the year. So each time the supply of paper and other materials is negotiated with the bank so the presses can continue to roll. As for the director of EL WATAN, he stated categorically: "We paid for January and the promissory note has been honored (a 579,386,242-centime invoice)." The director of LE MATIN as well was categorical. The promissory note that comes due on 31 July has been honored (an invoice for about 694 million [centimes]). It is important to point out that once the promissory note comes due, the printer can sue an editor who has not discharged his debt. And this is where many titles run the risk of coming to a dead halt. The director of LE MATIN, who is contesting the price being used, decided to pay at the end of a tense meeting with the director of the press and the directors of EL KHABAR, LE SOIR, EL WATAN, and LE MATIN. This was to allow the printer to improve his relationships with the banks and be able to stock up. A commitment was made to negotiate a new schedule of ceiling prices. The biggest customers do not understand why the printer applies the price in the same way for newspapers with smaller print runs, contradicting the rules of business. But the cases already run the risk of going to court once the summonses are put together.

We have learned, for example, that some newspapers which have folded are reported to have left debts behind them: the weekly paper LA SEMAINE reportedly left some tens of millions [of centimes] of debt, and SIM-SAR, which owed 232 million [centimes]. Their respective owners are reported to be behind the founding of the daily paper LA NATION, which is close to the National Liberation Front [FLN] leadership, which manages to get printed at the printers on Avenue Pasteur (which is FLN property). We were not able to obtain information on other newspapers which have ceased.

At EL MOUDJAHID, another tack has been taken. Bills payable books have been suggested to the various papers. They must pay at least 30 percent of their debt with a commitment to pay the remaining balance in a regular fashion. Under this scheme, it is anticipated that service will be cut off and that the issues in dispute will be decided by the courts. At EL MOUDJAHID, it would appear that the most threatened papers are LE QUOTIDIEN D'ALGERIE, whose debt is reported to exceed 1 billion centimes, and EL DJAZAIR EL YOUN (ALGERIA TODAY), which is reported not to have paid an 800-million [centime] debt.

According to certain sources, HORIZONS, which is up against EL MOUDJAHID in an old dispute, has advanced a 300-million [centime] check.

ALGER REPUBLICAIN, which is also reported to be affected by a debt of almost 1 billion [centimes], has already begun to negotiate with EL MOUDJAHID's administration to establish a bills payable book. If the sales figure and advertising receipts are going to influence each title's chances of surviving, in press circles the wildest rumors are circulating about the owners of different private press titles and about their management. [passage omitted]

Coffee Prices Lowered Due to World Competition
92AF1188B Algiers LE SOIR D'ALGERIE in French
5 Aug 92 p 3

[Article by Brahim Tahiri: "Lower Coffee Price: Reasons for a Drop"]

[Text] Algiers—In our issue last 1 August, we announced a drop in the price of coffee. The explanation given by the Directorate of Competition and Prices [DCP] was based on the fact that several firms had intervened in the area of coffee imports, thus causing prices to drop as a result of competition.

Enapal [expansion not given] reacted to that announcement by saying that it was the agency that had intervened with the DCP offices existing in every governorate by providing them with a list of coffee prices to take effect on 1 July 1992. A fax received by our office and signed by the director of UCT [expansion not given]-Enapal/Annaba confirms that information. But those prices have not yet gone into effect in the markets. Hypermarkets and merchants are continuing to charge the old prices in defiance of the regulations. The reason for this may be the inventories being held by the marketing structures.

But what remains unacceptable is the fact that even the quotas received recently are still being sold at the old price, thus penalizing the consumer, who is already suffering great hardships following the deregulation of food prices. For its part, Enapal feels that it was at the source of the drop in the price of coffee. Mr. Baka, Enapal's general manager, explains that "the firms that imported the coffee were unable to sell it because they were not familiar with either the product or the market. We were forced to buy the inventories (95 percent) held by the shopping centers, the EDGA [expansion not given], and so on."

The general manager is also careful to point out that "the only enterprise that kept the market regularly supplied between May and October, before the increase in the price of coffee, was Enapal itself. The other firms refused to put their coffee on sale before the price went up."

In Mascara, for example, the governor had to issue an injunction ordering Edipal to sell the coffee it was holding in its warehouses. But keeping the market stable by ensuring regular supplies cost Enapal the trifling sum

of 500 billion centimes, and it is currently negotiating with the Compensation Fund.

According to Enapal, lower coffee prices are due to the drop in world coffee prices, not competition. General Manager Baka of Enapal points out that "world coffee prices have been falling steadily since July 1989."

"And if the ICO (International Coffee Organization) does not reach an agreement in September to reduce production quotas, there is a strong chance that prices will drop even further."

Enapal also feels that the increase in the number of firms involved in coffee imports is creating a chaotic situation that is bound to lead to more expensive credit and especially to an increase in the cost of financing imports.

Figures Show Drop in Port Traffic

92AF1196D Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
12 Aug 92 p 3

[Text] Goods traffic at Algeria's ports, already down last year, registered another 10-percent drop during the first half of 1992, falling to 7.7 million versus 8.5 million tons during the same period of 1991, based on statistics from the Ministry of Transportation's Port Administration.

The same sources reports a similar drop for all commercial ports except Bejaia, where traffic has stabilized, and Jijel/Djen, where activity is up somewhat.

The most significant declines were recorded at Mostaganem (-24 percent), Ghazaouet (-18 percent), Algiers (-16 percent), Tenes (-11 percent), and Oran (-10 percent).

Imports make up the bulk (88 percent) of all traffic, totaling 6.8 million tons from January to June 1992, compared with 7.6 million during the first half of 1991, a 10.2-percent drop.

Imported agricultural products dropped by 33 percent, foodstuffs 28 percent, and miscellaneous goods 20 percent.

The same downward trend was reflected in export traffic, which fell from 954,960 tons during the first quarter of 1991 to 915,386 tons during the same period of 1992, a drop of 4 percent.

In contrast, hydrocarbon traffic is up 6 percent, from 32.4 to 34.4 million tons, with most exports (95 percent) coming from the ports of Arzew (60 percent), Skikda (25 percent), and Bejaia (12 percent).

The overall trend in shipping is down 1.5 percent, with 7,784 ships (inward- and outward-bound) during the first half of 1992. However, passenger traffic is up 24 percent, rising from 145,020 to 180,465 and mainly departing from Algiers (52 percent). APS

Ships Warned Djendjen Port Silting Up*92AF1196C Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
12 Aug 92 p 3*

[Text] On 9 August, the Algerian oil tanker Skikda, belonging to SNTMIPROC [expansion not given], experienced difficulty docking at Djendjen Port (Jijel) because of silting in the channel.

The ship, sailing from Arzew, was carrying 16,000 tons of diesel fuel for Naftal-Jijel. It was not able to dock at one of the piers until 2005 on Monday, 10 August, APS has learned from the vessel's second captain.

The operation was finally completed thanks to the transfer of 600 to 700 tons of diesel fuel to another ship, the Stale, which came to help its neighbor.

The operation raised the draft of the oil tanker, which was berthing at Djendjen for the first time.

The Skikda, which measures 186x24 meters, has a crew of 41 and a gross weight of 14,714 tons.

If it had continued into the port, the ship, which can carry up to 20,000 tons, would have run aground. Even the maneuvering did not cause the ship, which has a draft of 8.6 at the stern and 8.1 at the bow, to give way. No damage was sustained, 2d Captain Aouina Mohamed told APS.

However, loaded with a flammable, polluting product, officials feared the worst for Jijel and its fine harbor.

The unloading operation was begun at noon on Tuesday using a small-diameter pipe and in the presence of Naftal officials from Jijel and Dejaia. In principle, the process should take 48 hours, which is considered slow.

According to well-informed sources, APS Jijel warned as early as March of the danger of silting and stranding at the Djendjen port, a project that cost the astronomical sum of 5 billion dinars. The investigative report, entitled "Djendjen Port Threatened by Silt," angered a number of local and central officials who promptly denied the APS report contained in a dispatch issued by Jijel.

The same officials confirmed their denial in talking with EL WATAN, which carried it in its 30 April reportage on the Djendjen port.

They expressed "astonishment" and said they were "not at all worried" about the "phenomenon of silting at the grandiose Djendjen port."

The former minister of equipment in the government of Sid Ahmed Ghazali also refuted the information on silting when he visited the Djendjen site.

The experience of the Skikda is a warning signal that the port of Djendjen is in fact gradually silting up. The ship, which has a capacity of 20,000 tons but that had only 16,000 tons in its holds, was a "first" at the port, which officials claim is in no danger whatsoever of silting.

It is a warning to other vessels that might risk a fatal stranding. Dredging or at least a study would not be inappropriate, but given the speed of traffic at this

gigantic port designed to receive 4.5 million tons a year, such a figure seems rather utopian.

By noon on Tuesday, three ships were waiting in the roadstead at the old port (Encombres) while the Djendjen piers were desperately empty, except for the oil tanker that nearly "bit the sand."

Unemployment Up 20 Percent in Setif*92AF1161B Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
27 Jul 92 p 6*

[Unattributed article: "Setif: Almost 100,000 Unemployed by the End of This Year"]

[Text] A recent report from the Sarkhat Echabab association of Setif indicates that unemployment figures might reach 100,000 by the end of the year, which would be about 20 percent more than last year.

The main reason for this situation, association officials believe, is the stagnation of the job market in all sectors, in particular in the industry and services sectors, which used to account for the majority of jobs.

Note that unemployment no longer affects only unskilled or uneducated workers, as used to be the case; in recent years, it has affected university graduates and graduates from higher institutes.

Currently available statistics show that nearly 1,700 university graduates are looking for jobs, in addition to the hundreds of young people graduating from vocational and specialized schools.

The job situation might still get worse if the financial problems encountered by most local state-owned companies, some of which may have to close, [are not solved].

Some 20 of the 50 companies established in the wilayah have a budget deficit that may force them to stop their operations. During the first half of this year alone, 150 workers were laid off by a few local companies, in particular the Setif community real-estate agency and the utilities unit.

In view of the scope of the phenomenon, various initiatives are being taken to find permanent jobs to offer to young people. Among these initiatives, we should note the efforts of the Association for Youth Integration and Promotion, which works in cooperation with the Directorate of Agricultural Services and the Delegation to Youth Employment; their aim is to integrate some 20,000 young people in the agricultural sector in the intermediate term.

For its part, the Sarkhat Echabab association multiplies its contacts with private investors in order to find jobs for young people, especially those who are totally unskilled.

ONS Report Indicates Economy 'Deteriorating'*92AF1124C Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
21 Jul 92 p 3*

[Article by Tahar Slaouti: "ONS Sounds the Alarm"]

[Text] According to the ONS (National Bureau of Statistics)—in a report that will appear shortly—the national economy recorded a substantial slowdown during the first quarter of 1991. The economic indicators reflect a certain deterioration in industrial activity and in the labor market—and a 50-percent decrease in the trade surplus for that quarter!

Industrial activity accordingly registered a slight decrease, except in the energy and agricultural-food processing sectors. The reasons cited by the ONS are the financial difficulties and the disruptions in the supply system, which are said to have impacted approximately 76 percent of potential production. The breakdown in the process of building up inventories impacted 64 percent of the nation's industrial capacity. Industrial production, except for hydrocarbons, reverted to 1984 levels.

Moreover, because of the deterioration in the price of oil, export revenues declined sharply during the aforementioned quarter while the level of imports remained unchanged. The result led to a 50-percent decline in the trade surplus. The ONS further states that "the evolution of the structure of imports does not appear to have satisfied the requirements for reviving the economy, neither in terms of improving the supply system of the enterprises nor in terms of stimulating investment."

At this point, the judgment no longer relates to the first quarter of 1992 but to the overall economic trend. It should be pointed out that the scope of these difficulties has been limited by the accord—concluded last March—that reprofiled a part of the foreign debt and made it possible to circumvent somewhat the foreign financial constraints.

The consequences of this situation have appreciably affected the labor market. Already damaged by the personnel reduction policies—which the enterprises have not compensated by a strategy of redeployment and investment—the labor market has seen its curve on the graph head downward. Job offers have never been so scarce since the system for monitoring the labor market was established.

Although limited to the first quarter of this year, all these qualitative data nevertheless show clearly that economic recovery through a revitalization of the production apparatus and investments has not taken place. And although the improvement in the price of oil during the second quarter served to relax the financial constraints, it did not bring about a revival of industrial production.

The factor of the freeze—translated into the record growth in the money supply—has enormous consequences for the foreign and domestic financial imbalances and their serious social repercussions.

The presence of the informal market—and the hold it exercises on the economy through the medium of the current money supply—make it very difficult to implement any policy of economic revival and investment, because of the inability to control the flow of money that is involved in the informal market. This illustrates the great importance today of the supplementary budget, the content of which should be adapted to the current year.

Given the financial gap that must be filled, but also given the existence of possible sources of financing that are escaping all controls, the necessity today of suppressing the informal market becomes an unavoidable prerequisite for controlling the flow of money and directing it toward productive investment and job creation. Algeria remains one of the few countries in the world where there is no tax on wealth and where it is the wage earners who are the principal source of tax revenue. The problem of reforming the enterprises, and the social cost of the withdrawal of the price supports, today render it necessary to make choices that are resolutely more correct and that are a prerequisite for any economic recovery plan.

Natural Gas Liquefaction Plants To Be Renovated

*LD0609142592 Algiers APS in English 1028 GMT
6 Sep 92*

[Text] Algiers, 6 Sep (APS)— The national firm SONATRACH [National Company for the Transport and Marketing of Hydrocarbons] and the Belgian firm Tractebel Industrie signed a cooperation accord for the renovation of Algerian plants of the liquefaction of gas. The contract is centered on the technical control of renovation works engaged these last years to increase the production of the liquefied natural gas (LNG).

SONATRACH started in 1987 the renovation of its liquefaction plants in order to increase in the medium term its LNG exports. The aim until the end of 1993—beginning of 1994 is to produce with full capacity (30 billions of cubic meters per year), before reaching an extra capacity assessed at about 15 percent.

Starting from the year 2000, SONATRACH expects to export towards Europe between 65 and 70 billion of cubic meters per year under the form of LNG and natural gas through the gas pipeline. Experts of the enterprise estimate at about 1.5 billion dollars financing needs for the rehabilitation of the installed capacities which registered a fall of 35 percent for all the firms.

Works of renovation concern the three liquefaction plants GL1K of Skikda (500 kms east of Algiers) and GL1Z and GL2Z of Arzew (450 kms west of Algiers). Renovation contracts were attributed to enterprises constructing these plants. The GL1Z, built up in 1978 in Bethioua (Arzew), is confided to the U.S. enterprise Bechtel International Limited, while the GL2Z, also in Bethioua in 1981, is confided to the U.S. firm N.W. Kellogg. The GL1K (Skikda—1972) falls to the French firm, Sofregas, a branch of Gaz de France. As to the GL4Z (Arzew—1964), which functions at 90 percent, its renovation aims at extending its duration of exploitation.

According to officials of SONATRACH, the operation of renovation or rehabilitation of plants of gas liquefaction is to reach completion by 1995, to bring the capacity of production of LNG to 32 billions of cubic meters per year. The Algerian exports of natural gas through the transmediterranean gas pipeline linking Algeria to Italy, and by the "Maghreb-Europe" future gas pipeline linking Algeria to Spain via Morocco, are to reach more than 30 billions of cubic meters per year in 1995 and about 44 billions of cubic meters per year by the year 2000.

Demographic Figures for 1991 Reported

92AF1124A Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
24-25 Jul 92 p 4

[Text] The population of Algeria as of 1 January 1992 reached 25.939 million, according to the latest results published by the National Bureau of Statistics [ONS].

For several years the growth rate of the population of Algeria has been slowing down, as determined by a relative decline in the birth rate: 773,000 births recorded in 1991, representing a gross rate of birth of 30.10 per 1,000 inhabitants, whereas the number of deaths during the same period was 155,000, representing a death rate of 6 per 1,000—a rate that has tended to stabilize since 1988 (there were 183,000 deaths in 1985 compared to 161,000 in 1987).

Infant mortality continues to decline, but at a slower pace than during the preceding years. In 1988 the infant mortality rate was 60.37 per 1,000 compared to 56.86 in 1991, for an average annual decline of 1 percentage point per 1,000 births. In 1991, 27,856 infant deaths were recorded nationwide.

The distribution of infant deaths per wilaya shows that the highest number of such deaths in 1991 was recorded in Setif (1,502) compared to 1,261 in Algiers, 1,066 in Mascara, and 1,048 in Relizane. The table indicates that the highest figures for infant mortality are not necessarily found in the big cities.

The lowest infant mortality rates nationwide in 1991 were recorded in Tindouf (17 deaths per 1,000) and Bordj Bou-Arredidj (35 per 1,000).

The number of marriages increased slightly (from 140,000 in 1988 to more than 151,000 in 1991), for a relative increase of 8 percent. The generations reaching marriageable age are increasingly numerous, a fact which—among other factors—explains this increase. The gross rate of marriage (5.66 per 1,000 inhabitants in 1988 compared to 5.91 per 1,000 in 1991) demonstrates the existence of a certain regularity in terms of the number of inhabitants.

For its part, the age at marriage experienced a substantial retardation, attaining levels never before recorded: approximately 24 years of age for women and 28 for men.

Moreover, the movement of people across the nation's borders since 1985 has recorded negative balances of varying amounts. At first reading, the flow of Algerian travelers would appear to indicate a resumption of emigration—an assumption that can be confirmed only after an analysis of the criteria for residence. "Based on the available data," the ONS points out, "the impact on the estimated resident population is of little significance."

The ONS recorded 2,872,280 departures from the national territory in 1985 compared to only 2,814,977

entries, for a negative balance of 57,303, which worsened to 71,105 in 1989 and to 95,449 in 1991, after a "pause" in 1990 (18,004).

Number of Citizens Living in Canada Increases

92AF1196A Algiers EL WATAN in French 12 Aug 92
pp 1, 12

[Article by Boussetta Allouche, permanent correspondent in Quebec: "Algerians in Canada: The Hustlers and the Less Fortunate"]

[Text] The Algerian community in Canada has grown steadily over the past several years. Put at some 3,000 persons by the consular services of our embassy in Ottawa, the number of Algerians residing in Canada now probably amounts to twice the official figures.

Furthermore, the figures are naturally speculative because they include an undetermined number of our fellow countrymen whose documents are not in order, the so-called "illegals" who "live underground" because their status vis-a-vis the Canadian Immigration Service is either illegal or irregular. Equally suspect are the figures on students not on scholarships and independent immigrants (naturalized or not), who, at least in short-range terms, are not at all anxious to register with Algerian consular officials.

Because of the very size of the Canadian territory and the geographic dispersion of the Algerian community, it is very difficult to make a clear and extensive evaluation of the socioeconomic status of Algerians living in that region of North America. The following observations and conclusions are therefore somewhat intuitive, resulting from observation and common sense. For the vast majority of all Algerians, Quebec Province is the favorite host land because of the linguistic factor. Actually, the dominance of the French language throughout Quebec (also known as New France or French Canada) facilitates the integration of Algerians into Quebec society in particular and Canadian society in general.

This also explains why Montreal has the highest concentration of Algerians, all socioprofessional categories combined, after Ottawa (Ontario Province). Next come such major Quebec cities as Hull, Sherbrooke, Laval, and Quebec, where Algerians comprise a visible community.

Students make up the bulk of the Algerian community in Canada, followed by professionals (management and upper-level technical personnel) and businessmen (businessmen and merchants). The student population can be broken down into two distinct groups: those with scholarships from the Algerian Government and independent students paying their own way through school. Many of the latter are "self-sufficient" in the sense that they receive continuing, regular financial support from their families. In the vernacular, these are the notorious *ichitchi*, full of longing, yet carefree. This group is smaller than its counterpart further south. A number of university campuses in the United States are reputed for

the welcome they traditionally extend to foreign students. American University, George Washington University, and Georgetown University have large contingents of "private" Algerian students enrolled in language courses or as undergraduates.

The second subcategory of independent Algerian students sometimes rouses admiration and emulation. These are the "hustlers" who, come hell or high water, manage to pay their own way through long and costly studies for the master's or doctoral degree. Their sources of financing very often include the university itself or the association to which they belong. Enrolled part-time, they work as research assistants, teaching assistants, or instructors for a set period of time, with the possibility of renewing such posts. Thanks to substantial assistance from the institutions in which they are enrolled, they somehow manage to continue their student life while accumulating the professional experience they need to face the job market in the future.

In contrast, the less fortunate independent students are forced to take temporary jobs off campus in order to make both ends meet. Lacking the legal documents that would enable them to assert their rights in terms of jobs and pay, many are at the mercy of their greedy, selfish employers (generally Arab "brothers" from the Maghreb or Middle Easterners). Moreover, the recession now being felt nearly everywhere in North America has caused a tangible slump in economic activities, adding yet another factor of uncertainty and anguish to a situation already marked by unstable income and social stress. Caught up in this unhealthy situation, students feel the immediate effects on their studies, which go on forever. Succumbing to the temptation of the routine use of alcohol or drugs, such students have a way of life—or survival—that is neither pleasant nor enviable.

'Alarming' Housing Situation Detailed

92AF1158D Algiers EL WATAN in French
2 Aug 92 pp 1-2

[Article by Okba Khiar: "Housing: The Crisis is Getting Worse"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] While the Algerian population nearly doubled in the past two decades, from 12.22 million in 1966 to more than 23 million in 1987—a relative growth rate of 47.8 percent—available housing increased by only 23.6 percent, from 290,000 [sic] to 2.998 million housing units. This only made the longstanding housing crisis worse.

Crowded housing, ever-expanding shantytowns, first marriage at an ever-earlier age, such are the consequences of the housing crisis.

Today, the housing crisis¹ "is beginning to exceed the tolerance threshold and to create tensions that might constitute a powerful gridlock factor in the short term" and place a heavy burden on the economic and social progress.

After independence, housing was not considered a priority²; the problem was thought to have been solved for many years thanks to construction under the Constantine plan and thanks to "vacant real estate." The hundreds of thousands of premises that were vacated led people to believe that there was no need to build housing. This vacant-real-estate "myth"³ was persistent, and it was only at the beginning of 1980 that the question was eventually more or less taken into consideration. Accelerated demographic growth had a strong impact on housing needs. No town and no village was able to meet the new needs for housing, community facilities, or infrastructures that the strong population growth required.

The lack of resources, the failure to adapt to the functional and social mutation of urban and rural centers, the lack of any planning resulted in huge discrepancies between housing needs and demographic growth. What attempts were made to remedy the situation?

There were new forms of housing: developments (ZHUN [new urban residential areas], rural housing, etc.) that represented an organic and planned response to the question; and shantytowns that were a spontaneous improvisation by the users themselves. In between, we find various individual makeshift solutions.

The chances of obtaining genuine housing are quite limited, due to strong real-estate speculation, which reserves access to property to a small number of privileged individuals.

In 1987, 2.998 million housing units were counted, compared with 2.290 million in 1977, i.e., an average annual growth rate of about 2.7 percent, whereas the population increased by more than 3.0 percent.

This gives an idea of the overcrowding of housing units, which are classified according to the occupancy rate per unit and per room. A comparison of these indicators clearly shows the extent of the crisis.

Evolution of Indicators

Year	Ordinary Household Housing, All Together	Occupancy Rate	Algerian Households	Average Household Size
1977	2,290,000	6.83	2,349,518	6.65
1987	2,998,000	7.54	3,183,137	7.10

These indicators show a deterioration of the housing situation, especially with respect to housing occupancy rates. In 1987, the average occupancy rate per housing,

nationwide, was very high: 7.54 people per unit, compared with only 6.1 in 1966 and 6.83 in 1977. The same is true of the occupancy rate per room: about 3.5 people

per room, compared with 3.2 in 1977. These figures do not fully reflect the worsening of the actual crisis; they are weighted averages that cover profound discrepancies:⁴ a certain segment of the (old or new) middle-class live at ease in villas among the hills of Algiers (or elsewhere), while the working class live crowded in one- or two-room apartments.

Note that the desirable standard is about 1 to 1.5 people per room, and that the critical overcrowding threshold is reached at 2.5 people per room. Obviously, the supply is inadequate to meet the ever-increasing demand. The

table below clearly shows the changes in population and housing needs from 1984 to the year 2000, as well as the disturbing increase of the housing deficit. From 1984 to 1990,⁵ 2.73 million housing units should have been built to achieve a situation similar to the 1966 situation (occupancy rate of about 6 people per room). At the end of the period considered, in 2000, the deficit will already amount to 2 million housing units. The housing inventory is dilapidated: 53.3 percent of the housing was built over 30 years ago; 20.0 percent, over 10 years ago; and only 23.3 percent was built between 1977 and 1987.

Changes in Population and Housing Needs from 1984 to 2000
(in thousands)

Year	Population (Forecast)	Projected Needs	Net Inventory Built Prior to 1984	Cumulative Housing Needs
1984	21,750	3,110	2,240	870
1985	22,455	3,250	2,173	1,077
1986	23,197	3,410	2,108	1,302
1987	23,954	3,630	2,044	1,586
1988	24,750	3,800	1,983	1,817
1989	25,561	4,050	1,924	2,126
1990	26,387	4,325	1,866	2,459
1991	27,242	4,540	1,810	2,730
1992	28,112	4,760	1,756	3,004
1993	28,997	5,000	1,703	3,297
1994	29,909	5,240	1,652	3,588
1995	30,851	5,550	1,602	3,948
1996	31,823	5,890	1,554	4,336
1997	32,811	6,190	1,508	4,682
1998	33,812	6,500	1,462	5,038
1999	34,826	6,830	1,418	5,412
2000	35,871	7,170	1,376	5,794

Generally speaking, changes in the housing inventory were insignificant during the period 1977-87, the annual growth rate being only 2.7 percent whereas the average annual demographic growth rate exceeded 3.0 percent.

It is estimated that, during the period 1977-87, about 700,000 housing units were built by public and private investment, whereas 900,000 to 1 million were needed just to meet the new demand resulting from demographic growth and to maintain the 1977 situation.

In addition, as far as housing amenities are concerned, the situation⁶ concerning household living conditions is still a cause for concern, and the lack of comfort is rather widespread. Actually, no less than 42.0 percent of households do not have drinking water, and no less than 47.6 percent are still disposing of their organic waste in a septic tank or outdoors, with all the risks of transmissible diseases and epidemics that this entails.

Variation in Housing Deliveries, 1980-91

The variations in housing deliveries since 1980 was marked by two stages (see graph [not reproduced]).

During the first stage, ending in 1983, deliveries increased considerably, from 34,400 to over 85,000 units. The second period saw a marked slowdown of this progress: hardly 73,000 housing units were delivered in 1986. Starting in 1987, housing deliveries were in free fall: only 24,797 units were delivered in 1991, i.e., one unit for more than 30 births, or one unit for more than six marriages.

Overall, the housing situation is characterized by a state of acute crisis and, qualitatively, by a considerable lack of comfort and salubrity. This situation is all the more worrying as it has kept getting worse during the entire period.

This advanced deterioration of housing, and its mediocre results are due to a large extent to the fact that it was overlooked in the development strategy and relegated among the least concerns. Still, the small share given to housing in the period's total investments does not adequately explain the alarming situation that prevails in the housing sector. This situation is also due to the low

productivity of the housing sector. This low productivity translates into higher construction costs, from 2,500 dinars per square meter for urban housing in 1987 to 8,000 to 10,000 dinars per square meter today. This steep rise in construction costs started in 1987-88 and, far from attempting to curb their costs, building companies indulged in erratic behavior, which did not fail to further deteriorate the cost situation (costs being, as always, passed on to the favored target: the citizen). No wonder then, that the "number-one" problem of the Algerians of yesterday—housing—is now relegated to third position (after uncontrollable inflation and unemployment); this is because it is unaffordable: an F4 apartment at the El Djaohara development costs over 1.2 million dinars! That is the income of an individual earning 6,000 dinars per month for more than 16 years (without eating or drinking of course).

Any economic development plan that cares to achieve human advancement within society will attempt, on the one hand, to supply the basic necessities (nutrition, health, housing, etc.) without which a population free from major subsistence needs is inconceivable; and, on the other hand, it will promote among the population the work ethic and the search for higher productivity. Housing is a structural component of any urbanization policy and a stimulant of economic development. Housing construction and improvement lead to an increase in the active population's productivity. Sociological studies undertaken in various countries agree that there is a close link between sound housing conditions and improved workers' productivity in all fields of activity.

Housing programs should achieve a reasonable balance between the construction of new housing and the improvement of community facilities. Restricting them to the development of housing without paying any attention to public health conditions will soon lead to overcrowding and the deterioration of such housing. The population cannot be stabilized and its well-being ensured unless community facilities are provided to take care of its educational, health, and social needs (and not as in the Ain Naadja district). Overlooking or disregarding the imperative need for such coordinated facilities would amount to jeopardizing the effectiveness of a rational housing policy.

The effectiveness of a housing policy also depends on a series of institutional measures. Creating a body in charge of the overall housing policy, and paying attention to credit institutions willing to provide partial financing for low-cost housing (not for F3 apartments costing 600,000 or even 700,000 dinars) will promote successful national and regional development. This arsenal of administrative measures should make sure that housing prices are set at the lowest possible level. Above all, it is essential not to leave free rein to speculation (as has always been done) but to control it reasonably. A balance must be found between incentives and housing price control, so as not to discourage either new construction or applicants. The distinctive characteristic

of adequate legislation is that it protects investment in housing by guaranteeing it adequate profitability over a number of years. Its success will depend on how it will encourage the bodies specialized in housing financing to mobilize available resources and lend to encouraging conditions. Without State intervention, we can hardly expect a housing policy that will fit into an adequate institutional framework. All financial and institutional structures must be reconsidered in connection with adequate facilities.

Footnotes

Data and figures are from the 1990 statistical yearbook (ONS [National Office for Statistics]) and from the MUCH [expansion not given].

1. Benamrane, *La crise de l'habitat* (The Housing Crisis).
- 2, 3, 4. J. Fontaine and J. C. Brule, *Volontarisme etatique et aménagement du territoire* (State Voluntarism and National and Regional Development).
5. Benmati, *La Formation dans la Problematique de l'Habitat en Algerie* (The Role of Training in the Problematic of Housing in Algeria).
6. H. Souaber, in *REVUE ONS*, No. 28.

Young Children Said Leaving School To Work *92AF1149C Algiers LE SOIR D'ALGERIE in French 13 Jul 92 p 5*

[Article by Guelmani Zine-Eddine: "For a Few More Dinars"; first paragraph is LE SOIR D'ALGERIE introduction]

[Excerpt] At the end of every year, thousands of students are out in the street: either because they are too old to repeat a year in school or for family reasons, these children can only end up in the street. Some will easily fall into vandalism, drugs, or delinquency. Others who are more aware of their family's situation will go in the direction of the world of labor. It is a cruel world.

Annaba (LE SOIR D'ALGERIE)—The unfavorable status of the majority of Algerian families requires youths to work from the time they are young. This very widespread phenomenon is not a new one. After independence, young people have frequently worked very hard and from an early age: they have been shoeshine boys, they have carried baskets in the markets, etc. Today the trades in which they are engaged are many. They are exploited in cafes for a pauper's salary and are often not reported for insurance purposes. They work as vendors of small bags or of some unusual products at display cases in large stores or they sell peanuts or certain articles of clothing such as socks and other items.

The central covered market in Annaba provides the depressing proof of this: here, on a daily basis, youths, sometimes even children six years old, sell absolutely anything. Young girls too, unfortunately, cope with this "small business" plague which, you might think, brings in very little, but whose profits will help their father

make ends meet at the end of the month; if, that is, the father is not unemployed or deceased.

For these children, earning a little money has become a goal that they must accomplish no matter what it may cost, even if the work they do is often dangerous.

Under Annaba's bridge, opposite the port, there is an incessant daily hustle and bustle. Cars are parked on the sidewalks of both sides of the street. Having opened the doors and hoods, their owners are having their cars washed. Children, bucket and sponge in hand, must do the work. Water gushes out of the fissure in the big rock. In their bare feet and with their pants rolled up, the children jostle one another to fill up their buckets. The main thing is to wash a car quickly so as to work on another one. "Charges" are left to the discretion of the customer and are often between 15 and 30 Algerian dinars.

For Salim, a 15-year-old boy, this work is profitable. At the end of a day, he can earn some 200 dinars. Sometimes he can earn 50 dinars and sometimes nothing at all when motorcyclists are at the corner making it impossible for owners of cars to park or have their cars washed, which risks holding up traffic.

Religious Affairs Ministry Statement on Prophet's Birthday

*LD2908075192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic
0600 GMT 29 Aug 92*

[Statement from the Ministry of Religious Affairs—read by announcer]

[Text] The celebration of the noble anniversary of the birthday of the Prophet on 9 September 1992:

The Muslim Algerian people will be celebrating the noble anniversary of the birthday of the Prophet. The Ministry of Religious Affairs wishes for the celebration activities to concentrate on the following:

The study of the life of the great Prophet, God's peace and prayers be upon him; the study of the traits of the

Prophet, God's peace and prayers be upon him; the derivation of lessons from his life in a manner that will bring good for the Islamic nation; and the use of the Prophet's methods in dealing with the problems of Muslims.

The Ministry requests that all cultural groups in society give this great event the importance it deserves and insure our celebration of the anniversary of the birthday of the great Prophet, God's peace and prayers be upon him, under the slogan: Fraternity, mercy toward each other, harmony, unity, cooperation in piety and charitable deeds, the casting away of differences, and the unification of efforts to overcome the obstacles of illiteracy, poverty, and backwardness.

All citizens, male or female, young or old, should prepare for the celebration of the anniversary in a manner that befits the greatness of the Prophet, God's peace and prayers be upon him, and glorifies our Islamic society through the delivery of sermons and lectures in the mosques, the submission of studies, and the showing of films and serials in clubs, theaters, cinemas, on television, and over the national radio and other media.

The Ministry requests that merchants and owners of establishments manifest their pleasure at this great anniversary by decorating their shops and the areas around them and adorning our towns and villages in a manner that will reflect their elegant Islamic character.

On this great occasion the Ministry of Religious Affairs announces competitions for all adults and children in the oral learning of the Holy Koran and the noble Hadith as well as poetry writing in all the classical and national dialects. It calls on all public and private companies and all philanthropic sons of the homeland to offer prizes to award the winners of these competitions in the oral learning of the Holy Koran and noble Hadith by young men and woman and the winners of poetry, play writing, and singing competitions.

Contributions for the prizes should be given to the supervisors of religious affairs at the wilaya level. The prizes will be announced, God willing, through the various information media. Thank you.