

Camille Bonora

✓

France's Algeria Policy (1988-1995)

Discourse, Motives and Means

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds, Department of Politics

September 1995

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

Abstract

France's Algeria Policy (1988-1995). Discourse, Motives and Means is a study of the French response to political upheavals in Algeria. The October 1988 riots in Algeria sparked off a fast-track democratisation process which was, however, rapidly brought to an end. Following Algeria's Winter 1991/92 first free parliamentary elections through which Islamism imposed itself as the most popular form of political change, a coup d'état was staged by the Military -- the everlasting nucleus of power in Algeria. Since the coup d'état in January 1992 and the subsequent clobbering of the Islamist opposition, Algeria has foundered in a sea of violence. Until now, all political initiatives to bring back the country on the path of civil peace have failed.

Starting from the premise that France's long-run foreign policy objective has always been to preserve its rank as Algeria's "senior foreign partner", this study seeks to determine what policy France implemented in order to achieve its goal in the context of Algeria's turmoil. The central finding brought to the fore in this thesis is that France's Algeria policy was a shifting policy. From the 1992 coup d'état until the May 1995 French presidential elections, shifts in policy occurred both under the Left and the Right. In successive stages, the socialist Cresson and Bérégovoy governments as well as the right-wing Balladur government supported both "conciliation" and "eradication" in Algeria, which translated into varying degrees of support to the Algerian new rulers. France's shifts from supporting conciliation to backing eradication (January 1993) and from buttressing eradication to calling for conciliation (September 1994) are analysed in the light of three themes that permeate this study : discourse, motives and means.

Table of Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	i
<i>Table of Contents</i>	ii
<i>List of Tables</i>	vi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction	1
Part One	
Words and Deeds	10
Chapter One	
The socialist governments (October 1988 - March 1993)	12
1. Franco-Algerian relations in the 1980s	13
1.1. Evolution from 1981 to 1988.....	14
1.2. Changes in Algeria under Chadli and their welcoming in Paris (1979-1988).....	17
1.2.1. Economic liberalisation	18
1.2.2. Algeria's retreat from activism and radicalism in Third World politics.....	20
2. French support to Chadli Benjedid's economic and political liberalisation policy (October 1988 - January 1992)	25
2.1. The October 1988 uprising and the French response : non- interference and solidarity.....	26

2.2. France stands behind Algeria's political and economic liberalisation (October 1988 - June 1991)	29
2.2.1. Liberalisation in Algeria	29
2.2.2. French support.....	34
2.3. The Quai d'Orsay urges elections (June - December 1991)	40
2.3.1. The June 1991 events in Algeria.....	40
2.3.2. France urges elections	41
3. A hesitating support (Winter 1992 - Winter 1993)	45
3.1. Political upheavals in Algeria	46
3.1.1. The coup d'état	46
3.1.2. The Boudiaf leadership (January 1992 - June 1992).....	48
3.1.3. The Boumedienists' comeback	52
3.2. France's mixed support (January 1992 - January 1993)	54
3.2.1. The French response to the coup d'état.....	54
3.2.2. A strained relationship	60
4. Friendship otherwise than just with words (January - March 1993).....	65
4.1. Dumas in Algiers - Abdesselam in Paris	65
4.2. Unclear motives	68

Chapter Two

The Balladur government (April 1993 - May 1995)

1. Domestic politics in Algeria.....	72
1.1. Failed attempts at political dialogue	72
1.1.1. The aim of the dialogue : legitimacy.....	73
1.1.2. Dialogue with the FIS.....	75
1.2. Rescheduling Algeria's foreign debt.....	90
2. The meanders of French policy under Balladur	93
2.1. Buttressing the eradicators (April 1993 - September 1994).....	94
2.1.1. The official discourse	94
2.1.2. Putting the discourse to the test : ambiguities and contradictions	98
2.1.3. Bilateral and multilateral support : the means	105

2.2. Greater firmness towards the eradicators (September 1994 - May 1995).....	117
2.2.1. The Juppé/Pasqua split	118
2.2.2. Causes and limits of Juppé's shift towards conciliation.....	127

Part Two

Motives	139
----------------------	-----

Chapter Three

Perceived risks, ideological and psychological bearings.....

140

1. Bandwagoning in the Mediterranean.....	143
1.1. Falling dominoes and their foreseen consequences	144
1.2. Promoting regional initiatives for stability	145
2. Immigration issues.....	149
2.1. Politically-driven immigration from Algeria : concerns and restriction.....	149
2.1.1. An immigration wave : governmental hypotheses and concerns.....	150
2.1.2. Restricting entries	157
2.2. The FIS and the Muslim community in France.....	160
2.2.1. Attitudes towards the FIS	161
2.2.2. The FIS and re-Islamisation.....	166
3. National security : the terrorist issue.....	171
3.1. Threats against France.....	172
3.2. From fearing terrorist attacks in France	173
3.3. ... to opposing the FIS.....	175

4. Economic relations : limited risks	176
4.1. No foreseen questioning of the economic relationship	177
4.1. Trade relations.....	179
4.1.1. Asymmetry and decline.....	179
4.1.2. French exports to Algeria.....	180
4.1.3. French imports from Algeria.....	182
4.2. French direct investment	193
4.3. Financial relations.....	196
4.3.1. No personal audit possible	197
4.3.2. No paying back ?.....	201
5. The ideological and psychological dimensions	203
5.1. An economicist view ?.....	204
5.1.1. Islamism in Algeria : explanations.....	205
5.1.2. French truncated perceptions of Algerian society....	210
5.2. Ideological and psychological motives	213
5.2.1. Islamism and the challenge to Western ideological and cultural hegemony	213
5.2.2. The FIS vote : a psychological trauma for France.....	217
Conclusion	223
Bibliography.....	231

List of Tables

Table 1	French and Algerian governments, 1988-95	11
Table 2	Results of the Algerian local and regional elections, June 1990.....	33
Table 3	Results of the first round of the Algerian parliamentary elections, December 1991.....	33
Table 4	Algeria's share in France's world imports and exports and France's share in Algeria's world imports and exports, 1960-92.....	180
Table 5	French trade with the Maghreb, 1980-94.....	181
Table 6	French crude oil imports by selected countries of origin, 1980-93	184
Table 7	French imports of petroleum refined products by selected countries of origin, 1980-93	186
Table 8	France's dependence on world and Algerian supplies of refined products, 1980-93	186
Table 9	Gaz de France's LNG contracts with Sonatrach.....	187
Table 10	French natural gas imports by selected countries of origin, 1980-93.....	189
Table 11	France's dependence on world and Algerian natural gas supplies, 1980- 93	190
Table 12	Extracts of the France-Algeria Balance of Payments, 1985-93.....	199
Table 13	Structure by type of credits of Algeria's medium and long-term debt, 1987-92	200

Abbreviations

AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
AIS	<i>Armée islamique du salut</i> (Islamic Salvation Army, Algeria)
Bcm	Billions of cubic meters
BDF	<i>Banque de France</i> (French Central Bank)
CDS	<i>Centre des démocrates sociaux</i> (Social Democrats, France)
COFACE	<i>Compagnie française d'assurance pour le commerce extérieur</i> (public company for export insurance, France)
DGSE	<i>Direction générale de la sécurité extérieure</i> (intelligence service, France)
DREE	<i>Direction des relations économiques extérieures</i> (Department for Foreign Economic Relations, Economic Affairs Ministry, France)
ECU	European Currency Unit
EEC	European Economic Union
EU	European Union
FAF	<i>Fraternité algérienne en France</i> (Algerian Brotherhood in France)
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FFS	<i>Front des forces socialistes</i> (Socialist Forces Front, Algeria)
FIS	<i>Front islamique du salut</i> (Islamic Salvation Front, Algeria)
FLN	<i>Front de libération nationale</i> (National Liberation Front, Algeria)
FN	<i>Front national</i> (National Front, France)
GDF	<i>Gaz de France</i> (French gas public utility)
GIAs	<i>Groupes islamiques armés</i> (Islamic Armed Groups, Algeria)
HAMAS	<i>Mouvement pour la société islamique</i> (Movement for an Islamic Society, Algeria)
HSC	High State Council
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency.
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IEA	International Energy Agency
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MAE	<i>Ministère des affaires étrangères</i> (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, France)
MAJD	<i>Mouvement algérien pour la justice et le développement</i> (Algerian Movement for Justice and Development)
MCB	<i>Mouvement culturel berbère</i> (Berber Cultural Movement, Algeria)

MDA	<i>Mouvement démocratique algérien</i> (Algerian Democratic Movement)
MEED	Middle East Economic Digest
MEI	Middle East International
MIA	<i>Mouvement islamique armé</i> (Islamic Armed Movement, Algeria)
Mmt	Millions of metric tons
MNI	<i>Mouvement de la nahda islamique</i> (Movement of the Islamic Renaissance, Algeria)
MRP	<i>Mouvement pour la République</i> (Movement for the Republic, Algeria)
NIEO	New International Economic Order
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
ONS	<i>Office national des statistiques</i> (National Statistics Office, Algeria)
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PAGS	<i>Parti de l'avant-garde socialiste</i> (Socialist Vanguard Party, Algeria)
PCF	<i>Parti communiste français</i> (French Communist Party)
PRA	<i>Parti du renouveau algérien</i> (Algerian Renewal Party, Algeria)
PS	<i>Parti socialiste</i> (Socialist Party, France)
PT	<i>Parti des travailleurs</i> (Workers' Party, Algeria)
RCD	<i>Rassemblement pour la culture et la démocratie</i> (Rally for Culture and Democracy, Algeria)
RPR	<i>Rassemblement pour la République</i> (Rally for the Republic, France)
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London)
UDF	<i>Union pour la démocratie française</i> (Union for French Democracy, France)
UGTA	<i>Union générale des travailleurs algériens</i> (Algerian Workers' Union)
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Acknowledgments

In its general terms, the subject of this thesis is the result of a deal. It was a give-and-take agreement between the research interests of the Leeds University Politics Department and my own with, in the background, the prospect of a grant. I must, therefore, thank the Politics Department first among all for its generosity without which this project could not have been mine. The perspicacity and flexibility of my interviewers must also be recognised. Interested in the European Union's policy towards democratisation, they suggested Algeria as a case-study. But they also gave me the freedom to define the boundaries of my research so that I was able to focus on France's Algeria policy well after Algeria's short-lived democratic experience.

In doing this research, I have incurred many debts. Without the testimonies of members of the French political establishment, much of this work would have been beside the point. Jean Audibert, Claude Cheysson, Roland Dumas and Georges Morin helped me a great deal by giving me insights into the foreign policy decision-making process and into the realm of perceptions and feelings about Algeria. I owe them more than they perhaps realise. High civil servants also brought an illuminating contribution to my understanding of the French government's perceptions of Algeria's crisis and of "how things work" between the two states. The time spared by Christophe Bigot and Lucile Schmid was not lost -- at any rate not for me !

Jean-Pierre Brevost, from the Total oil company, was very helpful in explaining the logics of contemporary oil trade, the scope of Algeria's hydrocarbon reforms and the technical aspects of Franco-Algerian oil trade. He also provided me with a general vision of what may be coined the "business view" of instability in Algeria. Because the overall structure of the thesis evolved through time, much of his teachings do not appear here, but will be remembered.

On the Algerian side, Sadek Boussena, who spent more hours with me than I

could expect, was of a fabulous assistance to the many questions I had about Algeria and Franco-Algerian relations. His expertise in hydrocarbons could not, unfortunately, be used to its full extent, given the limited emphasis I finally chose to give to the hydrocarbon aspect of Franco-Algerian relations. Transmitted knowledge is, however, never lost.

In the academic world, I am of course indebted to many scholars through the work they did on Algeria, Islamism, and Franco-Algerian relations. I would like to thank those who personally made a contribution to this work : François Burgat, with his eternal brain-storming effect, was a good mentor in introspection about ready-made presumptions ; George Joffé and Hugh Roberts made comments on a very early draft outline and, if what is proposed here is significantly different from what they commented on, their initial guidance must be accounted for. My supervisor, Simon Bromley, should not be forgotten : he played the devil's advocate, thus helping me to structure my thought and agreed to read the last version of the thesis at very short notice.

Finally, I must thank Doron Waisman and my parents for their support.

Introduction

France and Algeria have a long common history, even though the tie that originally brought them together -- conquest and colonisation -- was negative. Taking part in Europe's nineteenth century colonial expansion, France conquered Algerian lands then under Ottoman rule, in 1830. In contrast with the Moroccan and Tunisian French protectorates, the Algerian colony was made an integral part of France and the latter renounced its colonial possession only after seven years of bloodshed (1954-62). Despite the fact that, under colonial rule, Algerians encountered France's "civilising mission" only through the plundering of lands and colonial apartheid society and despite the sufferings of the War of Liberation, political Independence did not bring about a break in the relationship between the two countries. To the contrary, a series of economic, technical, cultural and immigration "co-operation accords", which were originally designed to preserve France's colonial advantages in return for massive economic aid and which were thereafter fashioned to accommodate changes in the bilateral relationship, have kept the two countries bound together.

Colonisation and the War of Liberation have also marked collective attitudes on both sides so that the context within which the Franco-Algerian relationship has been unfolding is highly emotional. Policy measures implemented by each of the two states or events happening in each of the two countries have often been understood as discriminatory, as having the unpleasant taste of neocolonialism for the Algerians and of radical nationalism for the French. Slight disagreements over particular aspects of bilateral relations have sometimes degenerated into a (verbal) questioning of the whole relationship. Dramatisation has been reinforced by the civil societies' often passionate meddling with such issues as the maintenance of French cemeteries in Algeria, children abductions, racist attacks against Algerians immigrants in France, etc... Considering the emotions surrounding the relationship, no one will be surprised that it has often been described as one of attraction/repulsion, or as similar to the love and

hate relations of an old couple who never crossed the line of divorce.

Because of France's continued economic and cultural presence in Algeria, the international community has generally considered Algeria as "France's backgarden" and it was by reference to the French position that the international community at first reacted to political upheavals in Algeria. It is, therefore, quite logical that in relation to Algeria, France's foreign policy, more than any other state's, should be the focus of study -- which, in itself, does not mean that other states' policies are of no interest. The question this research seeks to answer is quite simple : what was France's Algeria policy over the period October 1988 - May 1995 and why was this policy adopted? Before sketching out the main findings of this study, the time frame which is proposed to conduct the analysis must be justified and the existing academic literature on the subject must be referred to.

The time frame

This study of French foreign policy towards Algeria opens in October 1988, that is with the riots that then occurred in Algeria. This choice is dictated by the political significance of the riots. Throughout the 1980s, Algeria's authoritarian ruling elite was faced with several uprisings. However, in October 1988, Algeria's youth storming into the streets of the country's major cities, destroying public goods, state enterprises and public institutional buildings, generated, after the harsh repression¹, an unexpected response : fast-track democratisation. The one-party system was brought down and multiparty politics established only five months after the uprising. October 1988 is also the moment of the advent of the Islamist movement² into the

¹ To quell the rebellion, a state of siege was declared in Algiers, a curfew imposed and the tanks sent to the streets. 159 persons were officially recorded to have been shot by the Army throughout the country. Unofficial sources put the death toll over 500. Arrests were conducted *en masse*, and disturbing cases of torture were reported. For details on the unfolding of the October 1988 riots, see among others K. Duran (1989).

² In recent years a consensus has taken root in the academic literature dealing with contemporary Islamic revival as to the terminology to use in order to describe religiopolitical movements which endeavour to reconstruct the social and political order of their societies within a framework inspired by the Islamic scriptures and which do so by aiming at state power. Direct intervention in politics differentiates these movements (now designated under the generic term "Islamism") from "fundamentalist" ones, which restrict their religious activism to the moral sphere of private life without contesting the prevalent social and political order of their societies. On the issue of

Algerian political arena. The Algerian Islamist movement, in fact, arose in the late 1970s and crystallised in the 1982 platform defended by Sheik Soltani, Sheik Sahnoun and Abassi Madani. This platform enjoined the Algerian regime to remain true to its Islamic tradition and represented the movement's first clear step into politics. Nevertheless, it is Black October that allowed the Islamist movement to show itself as a significant political force. Indeed, without sparking off the riots, the Islamists managed to channel the people's anger and, as their leaders were received by president Chadli Benjedid in the wake of the October riots, the Islamist movement established itself as a mediator between the regime and the people. As the events were to demonstrate, the Islamist movement, although not united behind Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj, was the major beneficiary of democratisation. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which was recognised as a political party in 1989, triumphed in Algeria's first free local and regional elections (June 1990) and in the first round of the parliamentary elections of December 1991. The second round never took place and the FIS was outlawed, thus abruptly bringing democratisation to an end. Since the January 1992 coup d'état, repression and counter-violence have been the major items on Algeria's political agenda. Today, the country is in a virtual state of war between official troops and various Islamist guerrilla forces, both having enlarged their battle so far as to terrorise the population. Political dialogue between the regime and the banned FIS as well as other political parties occurred but could not bring a lasting solution to Algeria's protracted crisis because the Algerian regime never saw political dialogue as something else than a tool to legitimise its own rule.

Starting with Algeria's democratisation process in 1988 allows to put into perspective France's reaction to political developments in Algeria after 1992. The study of France's response to the events that followed the coup had to be brought to an end at some stage. Partly in light of my timetable for submission, I chose May 1995 simply because the French presidential elections, which then took place, marked the coming into power of a new Administration in France. Although the time frame of this

analysis roughly corresponds to President Mitterrand's second mandate, it is not "a study of France's Algeria policy under Mitterrand" but, first and foremost, a study of the French response to political upheavals in Algeria.

The academic literature

Whereas Algeria's fast-track, but short-lived, democratisation experience generated much academic interest, very few scholars have shown an equal curiosity in France's Algeria policy since 1988 otherwise than as a rapid side treatment of their own subject of study. To my knowledge and up to the time of writing, only four articles specifically dealing with France's Algeria policy since 1988 were published³. Most are "intervention essays". They either seek to "wake up minds" by denouncing France's role in the Algerian political deadlock⁴ or to formulate proposals for French policy both in the short- and long-term⁵. Jocelyne Cesari's article⁶ is perhaps the only paper that could be described as being within the academic tradition. It rapidly lays out the main features of France's Algeria policy from January 1992 to early 1995 in a manner which is relatively close to my own understanding. Cesari also raises the question of French perceptions of Islamism. In addition, she explains why the Algerian crisis has been transformed into a "French business" notably through the issue of the Islamists' attacks against gallicised Algerian intellectuals and through the immigration issues which have been raised by the Algerian conflict (political refugees from Algeria and re-Islamisation among the Muslim community settled in France). These issues are also dealt with in this thesis. Given that not much has yet been written on the time frame that concerns us, I do not find it appropriate to follow the literature review tradition usually required in the doctoral academic exercise. I shall thus say within the body of the thesis where I disagree with the authors concerned.

As regards France's Algeria policy and Franco-Algerian relations prior to

³ Two borderline cases may, however, be identified : JF. Daguzan (1993/94) and P. Naylor (1992) whose articles respectively deal with the periods 1962-92 and 1980-90.

⁴ H. Roberts (1994b).

⁵ D. David (1995) ; Editorial of *Esprit*, 208, janvier 1995.

⁶ J. Cesari (1994/95).

1988, they were unexpectedly little studied. Few books and articles are entirely devoted to Franco-Algerian relations⁷. Much of what can be found on France's Algeria policy lies within the literature dealing with French foreign policy worldwide⁸ or towards certain geographic areas (Africa, the Middle East and North Africa)⁹ or in the literature relating to Algerian foreign policy¹⁰. Although this material is very helpful in understanding the evolving context of Franco-Algerian relations in the post-Independence era, I do not find it particularly useful to review it in great depth on two main counts.

First, this body of academic literature is characterised by a virtual absence of explicit theoretical frameworks. With the exception of Bouhout El Mellouki Riffi, who clearly inscribed his analysis of France's "co-operation policy" with the Maghreb within the dependency theory view of the exploitation of the periphery by the capitalist centre¹¹, most authors have drawn on the central concepts of International Relations theories and of Foreign Policy Analysis without abiding by the substantive claims of these theories. Such concepts as the "national interest", "interdependence", "structural dependence" and "foreign policy decision-making" are all referred to, most often in conjunction, but are used in their common language sense. To give but one example, it is not because Paul Balta speaks of France's "greater interests" in the Maghreb¹², that he accepts the neo-Realist claim that the anarchical nature of the international system leads states to struggle for their survival by optimising their power position in the international system and that "national interest" means maximisation of power¹³.

Inasmuch as these scholars did not intend to explain French foreign policy towards Algeria in terms of particular theoretical models, it seems quite inappropriate

⁷ S. Mouhoubi (1989) ; N. Grimaud (1986) ; I. Brandell (1981). Articles dealing with specific aspects of Franco-Algerian relations were also published. See e.g. A. Sydnes (1989) ; I. Zartman & A. Bassani (1987) ; N. Grimaud (1984b) ; Conseil économique et social (1983) ; N. Grimaud (1983) and (1982).

⁸ Se e.g. C. Wauthier (1995) ; D. Colard (1978) ; E. Kolodziej (1974).

⁹ B. El Mellouki Riffi (1989) ; D. Beauchamp *et. al.* (1987) ; P. Balta (1986) ; J. Damis (1984) ; P. Balta & C. Rulleau (1973).

¹⁰ N. Grimaud (1984a).

¹¹ B. El Mellouki Riffi (1989).

¹² P. Balta (1986), p. 239.

¹³ Drawing upon H. Morgenthau (1949), Neo-Realism has been developed in particular by K. Waltz (1979).

to look for the theoretical shortcomings of their analyses. It would also be somewhat ill-suited because my own work is not an attempt at theory-building in Foreign Policy Analysis. Rather, it is inspired by the traditional decision-making approach of Foreign Policy Analysis which claims that an understanding of the way in which foreign policy is made is necessary to the grasping of its substance. As opposed to International Relations theories which look at the structures of the international system in order to explain state international behaviour, thus leaving the state as a black box, the *modus operandi* of the decision-making approach is that the black box must also be opened in order to unveil the causes of foreign policy behaviour. Throughout the thesis, the reader will thus recognise several themes which were developed by the extremely varied decision-making approach to foreign policy¹⁴. Such themes concern : formal decision-making structures (notably in the context of French "cohabitation" between a socialist president in the Elysée and a right-wing government in Matignon) ; bureaucratic politics (in the context of the rivalry between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs -- the Quai d'Orsay -- and the Ministry for the Interior -- place Beauvau -- under the premiership of Edouard Balladur) ; civil society and its relation to foreign policy formulation (in the context of the French presidential elections) ; incremental decision-making (in the context of shifting policies) and elite perceptions (with regard to Algerian society and Islamism).

The second reason why I find it not particularly useful to review the major themes developed by the academic literature on France's Algeria policy prior to 1988 is that it was written in a specific setting which did not produce the same questions as today's. Indeed, it was written in the light of an apparently stable and strong Algerian state. Today, the political configuration of Algeria is altogether different. The regime, which has almost completely lost its civilian *façade* hitherto provided by the National Liberation Front, the FLN single party, is challenged by several political parties and most importantly by political Islam. The emergence of Islamism as a significant

¹⁴ Given the diversity of foreign policy decision-making approaches, I prefer to refer the reader to A. Groom & C. Mitchell (1978, pp. 153-71) who provide a sound glimpse at all the foundational texts of Foreign Policy Analysis.

political force in the Algerian political arena is the key issue to understand France's Algeria policy today since it is around the issue of Islamism that the triggering and the resolution of Algeria's crisis has revolved. By extension, it is also around the issue of Islamism and, thus, of regime stability that France had to define its policy towards Algeria. Inasmuch as these issues were not yet on the agenda before Algeria got on the path of democratisation, much of what was written before then cannot really help us to understand today's French policy towards Algeria. The only lesson that can be drawn from the existing literature is that France has always sought to maintain its economic, political and cultural influence in Algeria because of the multi-dimensional benefits it generates and that it has sought a good neighbourliness relation with Algeria because of the historical and human ties between the two countries. If influence and good neighbourliness can be described as the major goals that have hitherto guided France's Algeria policy, then the question that needs to be answered is how France has sought to pursue these goals in face of the rise of Islamism in Algeria and of instability that has accompanied it since the coup d'état in January 1992.

What policy and why ?

As mentioned earlier, the basic aim of this study is to analyse what France's Algeria policy was particularly after the January 1992 coup d'état and why the French governments adopted a particular foreign policy course. These two questions are reflected by the organisation of the thesis in two parts. Part one is meant to provide answers to the issue "what policy ?". By confronting words and deeds, I sought to unveil what the French governments exactly did as opposed to just what they said they were doing. Confronting the official discourse to actual policy measures -- the means -- was conducted in relation to both the successive French socialist governments (1988-1993) in chapter one and Edouard Balladur's right-wing government (1993-95) in chapter two. The first conclusion that can be drawn from the findings in part one is that there was not one policy but several policies in relation to Algeria. Both the Left and the Right changed the initial course they had chosen for

their Algeria policy at one stage or another. Chapter one thus explains that, under the socialists, the official reaction to the January 1992 coup d'état was rather negative, even though there were divisions within the Socialist Party as to how France should have reacted. The Cresson government was far from being pro-Islamist but also dreaded the risk of a repressive drift which was not seen as the best way to contain the force of political Islam in Algeria. Through behind-the-scenes diplomacy, the Cresson government advocated a compromising solution with the Islamist mainstream. It did not call for a formal integration of the FIS in the government but suggested that a political personality capable of engineering a synthesis between the Islamic and secular nationalist traditions of Algeria be propelled to the forefront of Algerian politics. The Quai d'Orsay hoped that such a solution would be acceptable to everybody in Algeria, that it would preserve stability in Algeria and ensure the everlastingness of the way in which relations between France and Algeria have always operated. In January 1993, however, a shift occurred to the effect that the socialists saw political stability in Algeria as mere regime stability. In chapter two, the Balladur government's Algeria policy is analysed in terms of the shift that occurred around September 1994. Prior to September 1994, the Right also equated political stability with regime stability and subsequently buttressed the Algerian regime's "eradicator" trend. By contrast, after September 1994, conciliation in Algeria was truly advocated. However, conciliation did not make unanimity in the Balladur government and, in practice, the French government did not seek to dragoon the Algerian regime into conciliation. In each of these two chapters, the major events that took place in Algeria are recalled so as to allow the reader to follow the logic of French responses.

Part two seeks to provide rationales for the specific policy of opposing a FIS takeover by violence or by a negotiated settlement -- a policy which under the Left and the Right translated into French support to the Algerian regime at one stage or the other. Chapter three, which elaborates on motives, makes up part two on its own. It brings forward and assesses two types of motives for French opposition to the FIS. One relates to the foreseen risks of the FIS coming into power. The other one deals

with the ideological and psychological dimensions of the French political elite's opposition to the FIS. Perceived risks entailed by the FIS coming into power are analysed in terms of four issue-areas corresponding to the concerns expressed by the French political establishment with more or less emphasis : political instability in the Mediterranean by domino effect ; immigration issues ; national security issues and economic issues. Immigration issues raised by a FIS takeover or an inclusion of the FIS within the political process are identified as the central motive behind the French hostility to the banned party. The other factors are understood as having played a contributory role, especially insofar as opposing conciliation in Algeria was concerned. Opposition to the perspective of the FIS coming into power (by violence or not) is also explained by ideological and psychological factors. It will be argued that, if French opposition to the FIS on ideological grounds was similar to most Western states' wincing at a new form of nationalism involving the ideological and cultural spheres, it was primarily motivated by the fact that this challenge to Western political culture came specifically from Algeria, that is from a country that has emotionally remained a part of France in the French collective imaginary. The FIS vote was lived in France as a "psychological trauma" because it implied that part of the Algerian people did not recognise itself in France and its political paradigms. This was difficult to accept. This was also incomprehensible to the French political elite whose restricted contacts with the Algerian gallicised elite have nourished a truncated vision of Algerian society.

In the conclusion, the issue of France's shifting policy towards political upheavals is reassessed in the light of recent developments under the new Chirac Administration.

Part One

Words and Deeds

Analysing foreign policy is always a difficult task. To determine what foreign policy a government is implementing in relation to a specific international event, official discourse is a necessary but also an insufficient tool for analysis. Officials' speeches need to be studied if only because they reflect the image that a government wishes to project to its own people and to its external environment. Official talk also needs consideration because it is sometimes true to actual foreign policy. Even when it is not a complete replica of the actual foreign policy course, it always comprises elements of truth. In some cases, official discourse may just be a pack of lies, but more often it is steeped in ambiguities.

Official discourse can, therefore, never be taken at its face value. One way of ascertaining what foreign policy a government is effectively pursuing is to confront the content of its discourse with its actual attitude and its concrete policy measures. Confronting words and deeds is the method that was chosen in this work in order to determine what France's Algeria policy really was under the Left (chapter one) and the Right (chapter two).

Table 1 : French and Algerian governments, 1988-95

FRANCE		ALGERIA	
President	Governments	Governments	President
of the French Republic François Mitterrand (May 1981 - May 1995)	Rocard (May 1988 - May 1991) <i>R. Dumas</i> <i>P. Bérégovoy</i>	Brahmi (January 1984 - November 1988) <i>A. Taleb Ibrahim</i> <i>B. Benhamouda</i>	Chadli Benjedid (February 1979 - January 1992)
Jacques Chirac (May 1995 -)	Cresson (May 1991 - April 1992) <i>R. Dumas</i> <i>P. Bérégovoy</i>	Merbah (November 1988 - September 1989) <i>B. Bessaih</i> <i>Sid Ahmed Ghazali</i>	of the High State Council Mohamed Boudiaf (January 1992 - June 1992)
	Bérégovoy (April 1992 - March 1993) <i>R. Dumas</i> <i>M. Sapin</i>	Hannouche (September 1989 - June 1991) <i>Sid Ahmed Ghazali</i> <i>G. Hidouci</i>	Ali Kafi (July 1992 - January 1994)
	Balladur (March 1993 - May 1995) <i>A. Juppé</i> <i>A. Alphandéry-</i> <i>N. Sarkozy</i>	Abdesselem (July 1992 - August 1993) <i>L. Brahimi - R. Malek</i> <i>B. Abdesselem</i>	of the Algerian Republic Lamine Zerroual (January 1994 -)
	Juppé (May 1995 -) <i>H. de Charette</i> <i>A. Madelin-</i> <i>J. Arthuis</i>	Malek (August 1993 - April 1994) <i>M. S. Dembri</i> <i>M. Benachenhou</i>	
		Sifi (April 1994 -) <i>M. S. Dembri</i> <i>M. Benachenhou</i>	

Note : names in italics correspond to the minister for foreign affairs and for economic and financial affairs. Two appearing names means that a minister was replaced

Chapter One

The socialist governments (October 1988 - March 1993)

Under the socialists, France's Algeria policy could best be understood in terms of three distinct periods corresponding to changed circumstances in Algeria. The first period opens with the October 1988 riots and ends with the January 1992 coup d'état in Algeria. The repressive turn of the October 1988 events caused embarrassment in the French political establishment which had supported the Chadli regime ever since the arrival of François Mitterrand to the presidency in May 1981. But, as the riots played the role of a catalyst in the progress towards democratisation, the French government did not condemn the repression. Instead, it brought its support to Chadli's democratisation initiative as well as to his economic liberalisation programme. Algeria's democratisation process was concluded with the December 1991 free parliamentary elections which were interrupted in January 1992 as a result of the victory of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in the first round. The coup d'état generated a slight shift in French policy which, until January 1993, can be described as one of mixed support to the Algerian new rulers. The interruption of the democratisation process, indeed, generated a cool reaction in Paris. Although the French government did not wish, to say the least, a complete FIS parliamentary victory, it dreaded the consequences of the coup, notably the clobbering of the FIS which was likely to be responded by violence and, in turn, by greater authoritarianism. The discrepancy between the French president's discourse, emphasising France's strong reservations about the coup, and the foreign affairs minister's, stressing non-interference, should not be understood as a mere double-talk that allowed France to save face while effectively supporting the coup. It was a deliberate double-act meant to show France's dissatisfaction while at the same time maintaining the lines of communication open between Paris and Algiers. Indeed, France sought to influence the course of events in Algeria. It suggested that, in order

to avoid the aggravation of the political crisis and of the security situation, a political personality, belonging to the National Liberation Front (FLN) but able to rally the Islamists' allegiance through his religious legitimacy, was needed. The proposal was judged as profoundly improper in Algiers and relations between the two states became strained because of France's unwillingness to effectively throw its weight behind Algeria's new rulers despite an official discourse of support and solidarity. In January 1993 -- the starting-point of the third period -- France initiated a *rapprochement* with the Algerian authorities. The minister for foreign affairs went to Algiers and invited the Algerian prime minister to Paris. Economic aid followed promptly. The underlying reasons for this firmer backing still remain mysterious for it occurred just when the socialists were about to be defeated in the March 1993 French parliamentary elections whose results were rightly forecasted. It is possible that the change in French Ambassadors to Algiers played a role in the redefinition of French policy and that a reassessment of the power struggle between the Islamist armed groups and the authorities led Paris to alter its views.

In the following account, the French socialists' Algeria policy from October 1988 to March 1993 is thus analysed in terms of these three distinct periods : 1) support to Chadli's democratisation and economic liberalisation from October 1988 to January 1992 ; 2) mixed support throughout 1992 ; and 3) renewed support from January 1993 to March 1993. It is preceded by a brief account of the Franco-Algerian relationship from 1981 to 1988 which allows us to assess the state of the bilateral relationship when the events that shook Algeria occurred. In each of these three sections, the marking events that occurred in Algeria are accounted for so as to understand the circumstances in which French foreign policy-making was made.

1. Franco-Algerian relations in the 1980s

When François Mitterrand was elected president of the Fifth Republic in May 1981, special attention was given to Algeria. Under Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's

presidency (1974-81), Franco-Algerian relations had been very tense and the Mitterrand Administration, which numbered several pro-Algeria politicians, thus endeavoured to revive the strained relationship. In addition to the Mauroy government's willingness to "relaunch" bilateral relations, Algeria fitted quite well in the socialists' general frame for foreign policy based on North/South co-operation and the promotion of non-alignment. Very soon, however, several aspects of the bilateral relationship generated frustrations on both sides. Whether under the Fabius government (1984-86) or under the right-wing government of Jacques Chirac (1986-88), relations were lukewarm and sometimes on the crisis borderline. Nevertheless, Mitterrand's re-election in May 1988 was accompanied with promises of better days for Franco-Algerian relations and the October 1988 riots in Algeria were to be the test of friendship.

During these seven years, despite ups and downs in the bilateral relationship, France perceived the Chadli regime as much more open to co-operation and compromise than the Boumediene regime had been. Chadli's steps towards economic liberalisation were welcomed in France if only because this economic reform was beneficial to French business. Algeria's retreat from Third World activism was also greeted because the socialists' own Third World policy had lost much of its content as of 1984. Thus, throughout the 1981-88 period, the factors that brought tense relations were principally due to the wealth of the ties linking the two countries and to the somewhat over-passionate climate that has surrounded them since Independence. For, on the whole, compromise was always found and France welcomed undergoing changes in Algeria.

1.1. Evolution from 1981 to 1988

One of Mitterrand's 110 electoral propositions had been to establish privileged ties with Algeria¹ within the general framework of a foreign policy which would put emphasis on North/South co-operation and which would back, in the context of the

¹ F. Mitterrand (1981), p. 324.

Cold War, Third World states' non-alignment strategies. The privileged relationship also aimed at "relaunching" Franco-Algerian relations. These had deteriorated, both in their political and economic aspects, under Giscard d'Estaing, primarily as a result of French support to Morocco on the Western Sahara issue, a dispute over gas prices, and racist attacks against Algerians in France which led Boumediene to suspend emigration in 1973 before France closed its frontiers to immigration flows in 1974. Considering the third-worldist approach to international affairs of Claude Cheysson -- then French minister for external relations -- as well as his fondness for Algeria, stemming from his collaboration in the 1960s with the Algerian regime in developing oil resources, and his feeling that France had to compensate for its large responsibility for the state of underdevelopment of Algeria, it was not surprising that he would wish to reinvigorate the relationship between the two states. In the early 1980s, the "impassioned" relationship which Cheysson had promised took shape symbolically with mutual presidential visits : Mitterrand went to Algiers in October-November 1981 and received Chadli Benjedid in November 1983, his official trip being the first visit of an Algerian president to France since Independence. Concretely, the revival of Franco-Algerian relations came in the form of an over-market-price gas agreement (February 1982) and a protocol of economic co-operation (June 1982). Both were representative of the "co-development" plan sponsored by Claude Cheysson and Jean-Pierre Cot (minister for co-operation and development). These agreements allowed for a recovery of bilateral trade and of lucrative contracts. For, as it had been nicely put by Mitterrand, "To help the Third World is [also] to help oneself (...)"².

As from 1984 the euphoria of the early 1980s toned down. There were several reasons for this. Cot's resignation in 1982 was symptomatic of resistances within the French political establishment to a real application of third-worldist principles to French foreign policy. The replacement of the Mauroy government by that of Fabius in July 1984 confirmed the retreat from grand designs for French-sponsored

² F. Mitterrand (1986), p. 359 (Speech at the UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries, September 1981). All translations from French into English are mine except when otherwise indicated by the bibliography.

development in the Third World -- a retreat also driven by the effects of the economic crisis in France. In addition, several ministers who were "friends of Algeria", such as Cheysson and Rocard, for various reasons left the Fabius government. From the Algerian point of view, several aspects of the relationship generated frustrations : low French oil imports ; reduced gas imports ; restricted credits ; insufficient interest of French firms in creating joint-ventures ; limitations on immigration ; and France's "policy of equilibrium" seeking to maintain good relations with each of the three Maghrebi states. On the other hand, the French government had its own grievances on such issues as the maintenance of French cemeteries in Algeria, the transfer of the *Pieds-noirs'* assets and the custody of divorced mixed-couples' children.

Under the right-wing government of Jacques Chirac (1986-88), some of these problems continued to hinder a warming of political relations. Nevertheless, the latter were not wholly strained. In particular, the French interior minister, Charles Pasqua, maintained good relations with his counterpart, Hedi El Khediri. Algiers intervened for the release of the French hostages in Lebanon and in the stopping of Iran-backed terrorist attacks in France. In return, the French Interior Ministry muzzled Algerian political opponents exiled in France and, it seems, accommodated the Algerian Military Security in covering up the murder of one of them, A. Mécili³. Economic relations were, however, on the decline. The 1985/86 oil countershock dramatically reduced Algeria's capacity to import and invest, affecting thereby French exports to Algeria and the signature of big contracts. In addition, disagreements over the renewal of the 1982 gas contract envenomed the relationship. When it was suggested that an international arbitration should settle the case, Chadli warned that the entire bilateral relationship would suffer⁴. As a matter of fact, retaliation measures were taken against French firms which were not paid for their services or not chosen for import or delocalisation projects.

Thus, Franco-Algerian relations, without being icy, were somewhat chilly when Mitterrand was re-elected president in May 1988. As in 1982, the socialist

³ For a detailed account of this nasty business, see M. Naudy (1993).

⁴ *Le Monde*, 20 novembre 1987.

government saw in a solution to the gas conflict a way of "relaunching" the relationship on a healthier basis, all the more because a new problem had emerged : the Algerian authorities wanted to retrieve the premises of the *lycée Descartes* in Algiers, which would have put an end to the education in French of the children of mixed-couples and of well-to-do Algerians. The issue, which concerned only a limited number of French persons, was taken with high emotion in France. Perceived in France as one aspect of Algeria's relentless nationalism, the measure in fact symbolically answered the grievances of Arabic-educated Algerians who, because of the incoherence of Algeria's Arabisation policy, are often confronted with dead-end jobs. The visit of the French minister for foreign affairs, Roland Dumas, to Algiers on September 3-4, 1988 was aimed at defusing the lurking crisis before the trip of Mitterrand scheduled for October. Dumas succeeded by managing to draw up a firm schedule for the resumption of the gas dispute and by inscribing the prospect of the new accord within the larger framework of bilateral economic and financial co-operation⁵. The October riots then occurred.

1.2. Changes in Algeria under Chadli and their welcoming in Paris (1979-1988)

Despite the problems referred to above during this period, the Chadli regime was perceived in Paris as more open to co-operation with France and as much less dogmatic than that of Boumediene, particularly on the economic and foreign policy fronts. This is why, in general, France's policy has been characterised throughout this period by a willingness to support the Algerian authorities.

⁵ For a detailed account of Franco-Algerian relations under V. Giscard d'Estaing, see in particular N. Grimaud (1984a). For the period 1981-1988, see P. Naylor (1992) ; B. El Mellouki Riffi (1989) ; S. Mouhoubi (1989) ; N. Grimaud (1986), (1984b) and (1983) ; and the yearly international chronicle of Algeria published in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord*. Claude Cheysson explained the goals of French policy towards Algeria from 1981 to 1984 in an interview with the author (March 22, 1994). For technical details on the 1980-82 gas negotiations, see the debate between B. Abdesselam (1990) and A. Brahim (1991) ; A. Sydnes (1989) ; I. Zartman & A. Bassani (1987); and N. Grimaud (1982). As for the 1986-89 gas negotiations, A. Sydnes covers part of the bargaining. For a complete story that still needs to be written in full, see the articles of *Le Monde* particularly from August 1987 to September 1988. F. Fritsher and V. Maurus's article (14 janvier 1989) does, however, produce a summary of the main issues at stake.

1.2.1. Economic liberalisation

The arrival to power of Chadli Benjedid in 1979 ushered in a new era in the field of economic policy, even though Boumediene had suggested towards the end of his life that an economic reform was necessary. Boumediene's development strategy -- formally aimed at reducing Algeria's dependence on the world capitalist market -- had been based upon strong state-capitalism and the model of "industrialising industries" whereby investment in heavy industries and, in particular, in energy-related industries, was expected to have a stimulating effect upon other sectors of the economy. A 1980 *Assessment of the Economic and Social Results of the 1967-1978 Decade*, prepared by the Algerian Ministry for Planning, pinpointed the shortcomings of the development strategy : continued reliance on the capitalist world market through exports of hydrocarbons and the resort to international finance ; lack of inter-sectoral integration leading to numerous shortages, bottlenecks, and blockages ; excessive centralisation ; neglect of the agrarian sector ; lack of efficiency and productivity, etc.⁶. In the light of this assessment, the June 1980 FLN's extraordinary congress defined a series of liberalising reforms to be implemented through the 1980-84 plan, and this orientation was accentuated in the 1985-89 plan. In the meantime, the latent economic crisis, sparked in 1986 by the oil countershock, fostered economic liberalisation measures and the self-implementation of a structural adjustment programme⁷. From 1980 to 1988, major reforms were thus undertaken on all economic fronts, with a clearer emphasis on the transition to a market economy as from 1987-88. The reappraisal of the industrialisation strategy was accompanied by a redefinition of macro-economic priorities away from investments in heavy industry towards emphasis on light, consumer goods industries, social infrastructures

⁶ For an account of Algeria's strategy of development under Boumediene and its shortcomings, see e.g. A. Lamchichi (1991) ; R. Lawless (1984).

⁷ General literature on Algeria's liberalisation policy can be found in K. Pfeifer (1992) ; A. Brahim (1991) who was minister for planning in 1979-84, before being appointed prime minister for the period 1984-88 ; M. Ecrement (1986). For a critical assessment, and notably an analysis of the political goals pursued through the restructuration of the public enterprises (dismantling centres of power and patronage increasingly resistant to central authority), see M. Bennoune (1988) ; M. Ollivier (1987).

(housing, health, education), and agriculture. The private sector was reintegrated as a positive force contributing to national economic development. It was thenceforth let to operate, despite some restrictions, in industry and services (1982-83) and in the agrarian sector (1981-83 and 1987)⁸. An overture towards foreign investments in industry and hydrocarbons was made in 1982 and 1986, even though foreign partners were limited to a minority share⁹. In parallel, state intervention and regulation was progressively reduced. The planning system was decentralised, with greater powers being delegated to enterprises and local government. It was also loosened to become indicative rather than directive (1987-88). Before rendering their management free from state intervention and being applied a competition regime (January 1988), public enterprises were dismantled into smaller units (1981) and their finances were reorganised (1984)¹⁰. The monopoly of state enterprises on foreign trade was also relaxed through different measures in 1984 and in July and September 1988¹¹. In addition, state intervention and regulation was progressively diminished in such domains as subsidies to consumer goods and state-owned firms, pricing and wage policies.

Algeria's progressive liberalisation programme was seen by the French political establishment rather positively. Indeed, although the socialists had hoped, upon their arrival to power, to lead France on the path of economic recovery through an expansionist and state-led growth policy, the strategy of "Keynesianism in one country" failed to prevent the recession from deepening. Austerity measures implemented as early as June 1982 were accompanied under the Fabius government (1984-86) by a return to neoclassical formulae tempered by the principle of the "social market economy", which has been the credo of the Socialist Party ever since. There was, thus, no contradiction of doctrine in the evolution of both states' economic policies. Inasmuch as no state has an interest in seeing an economic partner on the

⁸ On the liberalisation of the private sector, see J. Leca & N. Grimaud (1986). On agrarian reforms, see K. Sutton & A. Aghrout (1992).

⁹ On foreign investments, see R. Zouaimia (1991) ; R. Abdoun (1989) ; M. Issad (1984).

¹⁰ On the restructuration of state enterprises, see R. Saadi (1984).

¹¹ On the liberalisation of foreign trade, see A. Guesmi (1991) ; N. Bouzidi M'Hamsadji (1989).

verge of economic collapse -- even though brilliant performances are not necessarily welcome either -- there was no reason for the French government not to approve the liberalisation measures, all the more because the reappraisal of priority sectors for investments was realised primarily to the benefit of French business. Indeed, the June 1982 governmental protocol of economic co-operation gave rise to a series of sectorial accords on investment projects in the field of housing and public works (June 1982), transport infrastructures (November 1982), and agribusiness (January 1983) for which the services of French firms and banks were appealed to. On the whole, Algeria's progressive liberalisation policy was, thus, apprehended with satisfaction by both the French political establishment and the business community.

1.2.2. Algeria's retreat from activism and radicalism in Third World politics

In the realm of foreign policy, Algeria adopted as soon as the early years of the Chadli regime a more moderate approach to its Third World politics. This was not to the dislike of the French government whose own North/South policy was on the decline. Under Ben Bella and Boumediene, Algeria's foreign policy had been based upon the principles of non-alignment and the struggle against (neo)colonialism and imperialism. Thanks to the constant activism of Algeria's leadership in promoting the unity of the Third World and a restructuring of the world political economy, Algeria became in the mid-1970s the centre of all initiatives aimed at creating a "New International Economic Order" (NIEO)¹². Upon his arrival to power, Chadli Benjedid signalled no spectacularly change in foreign policy. In his 1979 speeches, he maintained Algeria's foreign policy orientations as defined by the 1976 National Charter¹³. He appointed as foreign minister a veteran of the NIEO negotiations, Mohammed Benyahia. In matters of concrete policy, Chadli seemed to honour

¹² For details on Algeria's role in promoting the cause of the less developed countries and in spearheading the Third World in the mid-1970s, see A. Lassassi (1988), N. Grimaud (1984a), and R. Mortimer (1984a).

¹³ See, for instance, his speeches of March 13 and October 30, 1979 in *Ministère de l'information et de la culture* (1979), vol.I, p. 17, 31 and 32.

Algeria's commitment to the Third World's cause. Several Third World summits or conferences, while not of the same standing as those of 1973-75, were hosted in Algeria¹⁴. Most importantly, at the sixth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (Havana, September 1979), Chadli introduced the principle of global negotiations on international economic co-operation, development, monetary and financial issues, primary commodities and energy, for which, as chairman of the Group of the Seventy-seven, Algeria had prepared a blueprint¹⁵.

This continuity in Algeria's foreign policy led Robert Mortimer to write that "There [was] little reason to expect any substantial revision in doctrine or militance."¹⁶ Yet, despite Chadli's radical proposal at Havana, there were perceptible signs of Algeria's retreat from its radicalism and activism. In Cuba, Chadli supported Tito's conception of non-alignment as opposed to that of Castro, operating thereby a shift away from Boumediene's equation of non-alignment with militant anti-imperialism towards a classical definition of non-alignment as a policy of equidistance between the USA and the Soviet Union¹⁷. Algeria also became less active within the Non-Aligned Movement. It was not a member of the bureau for the preparation of the ninth Conference of Foreign Ministers (New Delhi, February 1981) and for the preparation of the seventh summit (New Delhi, March 1983), whereas it had always been one throughout the 1970s¹⁸. Furthermore, although Algeria continued to assume the chairmanship of the expert-group on the Co-operation of Broadcasting Organisations, which it was assigned in 1978, its function within the group proved to be more technical and administrative than ideological. Indeed, it did not participate in the meetings in 1981 and 1982 of the inter-governmental council for the co-ordination of the Non-aligned Countries on the participation of the movement in the struggle for

¹⁴ E.g. the meetings of the Committee of Co-operation of Broadcasting Organisations of the non-aligned countries in May and June 1979 and March 1982 (O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.), respectively (1986), vol.VII, p. 169 ; (1989), vol.X, p. 179 and 321) ; extraordinary meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement's co-ordinating countries on the Namibian issue in April 1981 (O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.) (1986), vol.VII, p. 51) ; two meetings on South/South co-operation in May 1982 (JR. Henry (1984), p. 467).

¹⁵ R. Mortimer (1984a), pp. 167-8 ; *Le Monde*, 11 septembre 1979.

¹⁶ R. Mortimer (1984b), p. 20.

¹⁷ J. Entelis (1986), pp. 201-4 ; R. Mortimer (1984a), p. 145.

¹⁸ See O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.) (1986), vol.VII, p. 51.

a New International Information and Communication Order¹⁹. In parallel, it is noteworthy that in 1980 Chadli Benjedid's public speeches made few references to the Non-Aligned Movement and its struggle for international restructuring²⁰.

These contradictory dynamics in Chadli's early foreign policy were brought to an end in 1983, which marked a clear shift away from Algeria's activism in Third World fora towards a focus on regional politics (the Maghreb and Southern Europe)²¹. Algeria's clear pulling back in 1983 was triggered by its failure to rally the Non-Aligned in New Delhi behind a common declaration calling for global negotiations and the adoption there of a softer bargaining strategy with the North²². Since then, Algeria's activism has ceased. This is best illustrated by its refusal to lead the eighth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement which was symbolically-charged since it marked the Movement's twenty-fifth anniversary²³. Algeria's radicalism also tuned down as a consequence of the general trend towards conciliation within the Third World since it failed to impose its demands on the North and of Algeria's own economic interests which lay in the core of the industrialised capitalist economies rather than in the South. Thus, at the seventh United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, Geneva, July-August 1987), the Algerian delegation made no reference to the NIEO even though it still argued for South/South co-operation. When referring to the North/South dialogue, it ceased to present it in a conflictive perspective and stressed co-operative concepts such as "international co-operation", "interdependence", and "joint-responsibility" which were practically non-existent in its previous discourse²⁴. As a practical step, Algeria's withdrawal in 1986 from the Non-Aligned Countries' co-ordinating group in the field of transnational

¹⁹ O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.) (1989), vol.IX, p. 159 and 310 ; vol.X, p. 179, 190, 321 and 403.

²⁰ See, for instance, his speech to the National Popular Assembly on October 30, 1980 in Ministère de l'information et de la culture (1981), vol.II, pp. 120-1.

²¹ This transpires in all articles dealing with Algeria's foreign policy under Chadli. See N. Grimaud (1993) ; R. Mortimer (1992), B. Korany (1991); J. Entelis (1986).

²² R. Mortimer (1984a), pp. 167-8.

²³ JR. Henry (1987), p. 544.

²⁴ See the comparative statistical analysis of the statements given to the plenary meetings of UNCTAD in R. Cléménçon (1990), tables 17, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 24.

corporations and foreign investment²⁵ is highly significant, since this group had constantly condemned the activities of multinationals in less developed countries. This stance had become contradictory to Algeria's own policy of openness to foreign investments.

In 1981, in accordance with the doctrine of the Socialist Party on Third World policy²⁶, Mitterrand had advocated the establishment of a "New International Economic Order", within which North/South relations would be dissociated from East/West competition and whose rules of the game would be reformed to the benefit of the Third World (increased decision-making power within the Bretton Woods institutions and increased financial liquidities granted on better terms). In addition -- and following Algeria's 1979 proposal -- Mitterrand called for North/South global negotiations on such issues as the stabilisation of primary commodities prices, technology transfers, development of new and renewable energy and food self-reliance. The principle of global negotiations, which Mitterrand had supported at the UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Paris, September 1981)²⁷, was accepted by the industrialised countries at the Ottawa G7 summit (July 1981) and at the North/South Conference of Cancun (October 1981). At the 1982 G7 summit, held in Versailles, the preliminary steps towards the organisation of global negotiations were to be taken. Instead, the Seven simply renewed their agreement to open negotiations. Thereafter, the disunity within the G77 and the rally of many Non-Aligned Countries to India's moderate bargaining strategy allowed the industrialised countries to withdraw from their original promises. Mitterrand continued, with more or less emphasis, to defend the Third World at all G7 summits. However, by 1984 his propositions concerned the strategy of debt management rather than ambitious international restructuring²⁸. In parallel, the vast programme for a reform of French

²⁵ See the list of member in O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.) (1993), vol.XI, pp. 426-8.

²⁶ For details see J. Touscouz (1981).

²⁷ See the president's speech in F. Mitterrand (1986), pp. 355-65. Mitterrand explained his general propositions in C. Manceron & B. Pingaud (1981), pp. 146-7.

²⁸ For a glimpse at the evolution of Mitterrand's discourse within the G7, see *Le Monde*, 19-20 juillet 1981 ; 8 juin 1982 ; 31 mai 1983 ; 9 juin 1984 ; 5 mai 1985 ; 7 mai 1986 ; 22 juillet 1988 ; 16-17 juillet 1989 ; 12 juillet 1990 ; 18 juillet 1991 ; 11 juillet 1992 ; 10 juillet 1993.

co-operation policy with the Third World, aimed at stripping it from its neocolonial features, was never undertaken seriously²⁹. In this context, Algeria's retreat from its traditional radicalism and activism in supporting the Third World could only be seen with a willing eye by the French authorities, notably after Cot's resignation.

Algeria's rising role throughout the 1980s as an international mediator (mediation with Iran for the release of the American hostages, mediation between Iran and Iraq, between the members of OPEC, and between the various factions of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, PLO)³⁰ was generally perceived as a matured way of conducting foreign policy. As indicated earlier, from 1985 to 1987 France also benefited from Algeria's new international role through its mediation for the release of French hostages held in Lebanon and the obtaining of a "cease-bombing" in Paris.

On specific foreign policy issues, there were no major disagreements, and the evolution of events generally favoured a *rapprochement*. This was the case, for instance, on the issue of the Iran-Iraq war. After the mysterious crash in May 1982 of the plane taking the Algerian foreign minister to a negotiating round between the two belligerents, Algeria continued to argue for a negotiated solution to the conflict but was in favour of France's delivery of offensive fighting-jets to Iraq in 1983³¹. On the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Mitterrand's support for the 1978 Camp David accords as opposed to the 1980 European Venice Declaration and his refusal to recognise the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians were far from Chadli's own views on the issue. However, the Algerians wholly agreed to Mitterrand's 1982 trip to Israel since he was to appeal there for the creation of a Palestinian state. In addition, Algiers could not fail to notice that Yasser Arafat's life had been saved twice thanks to the French³². France and Algeria eventually co-operated in an operation for the exchange of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners against Israeli ones³³. Although the French

²⁹ Material on the third-worldist spirit of French policy towards the developing world and its failures can be found in F. Favier & M. Martin-Roland (1990) ; J. Adda & MC. Smouts (1989) ; D. Levy (1987) ; JF. Bayart (1984) and JP. Cot (1984).

³⁰ For details, see N. Grimaud (1993), pp. 414-9 ; B. Allouche (1989).

³¹ P. Favier & M. Roland-Martin (1991), p. 24.

³² Interview with Claude Cheysson, April 22, 1994.

³³ P. Favier & M. Roland-Martin (1991), pp. 37-8.

presence in Africa contradicts Algeria's formal condemnation of neocolonialism, a community of interests was found in the conflict between Libya and Chad : French fighting-planes were authorised to fly over Algeria's air-space and to refuel on its territory during the 1983 Manta operation against Libyan troops³⁴. The most contentious issue between France and Algeria related to France's policy of equilibrium in the Maghreb once relations with Algeria had been brought back to parity with those between France and Morocco and Tunisia. In particular, Mitterrand's private visit to Hassan II in late August 1984 when Morocco was organising a referendum on the union treaty signed with Libya was perceived in Algiers as bringing a caution to an alliance that was to its disadvantage. Algeria may have been disillusioned as to the power of the pro-Algeria lobby within Mitterrand's Administration. However, it was well-understood, albeit not well-accepted, in Algiers that France could not afford a deterioration of its relations with Morocco and Tunisia, and that, subsequently, it could not go beyond its neutralist stance on the Western Sahara dispute³⁵.

Although the period 1981-1988 was not all rosy for the daily unfolding of Franco-Algerian relations, the Mitterrand regime had thus a rather positive attitude towards its Algerian counterpart which undertook to liberalise its economy and to shift from Third World activism to international mediation. The October 1998 uprising in Algeria was to bring Paris even closer to Algiers.

2. French support to Chadli Benjedid's economic and political liberalisation policy (October 1988 - January 1992)

The October 1988 riots were to change the political face of Algeria. Indeed, they sparked off a fast-track democratisation process which lasted for over three years before being brought to an end with the coup d'état of January 1992. During these three years, Algeria experienced an exceptional degree of political freedom in the Arab world. Civil society was freed. The one-party state system was brought down as

³⁴ L. Blin (1990), footnote 123, p. 415.

³⁵ Interview with Claude Cheysson, April 22, 1994.

political parties were allowed. Free local and regional elections took place in June 1990 and their results were accepted, thus bringing the FIS to power in the majority of local and regional councils. A setback occurred in June 1991 when martial law was enforced as a result of protests organised by the FIS against a new electoral law which gerrymandered the constituencies. The subsequent imprisonment of the FIS's leaders let to presage what was to happen later on. However, to all appearances, the Algerian government seemed prepared to organise parliamentary "clean and fair" elections. In parallel with democratisation, Algeria accelerated its economic liberalisation programme.

In face of the crushing of the 1988 riots, the Rocard government chose the "telling silence" in the range of diplomatic formulae. It then proceeded to argue that Algiers needed help, not remonstrance, to overcome the socioeconomic problems that led to popular discontent. Backing Chadli in the wake of Black October also came down to demonstrate support for the man himself at a time when he was challenged both from below and from within the political establishment. With democratisation on track and economic liberalisation accelerated, France brought its support to Chadli. Mitterrand went to Algiers in 1989. Significant economic aid was granted although, to Hamrouche's despair, France refused to be accommodating with regard to Algeria's bilateral debt. The June 1991 setback led the French foreign minister to call for a rapid holding of the parliamentary elections which were seen as the only means through which an Algerian government could get the legitimacy it had always been lacking. If the French government had foreseen the FIS's victory, it probably would have argued for "the proper circumstances to be met" before holding the elections.

2.1. The October 1988 uprising and the French response : non-interference and solidarity

As seen previously, despite the recurrent ups and downs in the Franco-Algerian relationship, the French authorities had supported the Chadli regime throughout the 1980s. When the brutal crushing of the popular rebellion occurred in

October 1988, the Rocard government (May 1988 - May 1991) was faced with a dilemma. As explained by a high civil servant, "supporting Chadli (...) mean[t] backing the repression, but supporting the Algerian people and freedom [came] down to disavow Chadli."³⁶ While Algeria's youth was being shot at by the Army, the French foreign minister resorted to the traditional diplomatic phraseology by saying that the French government was very closely following a situation that "appeared" worrying³⁷. This foreshadowed the official position of non-interference in Algeria's domestic affairs spelt out both by the spokesman for the Elysée³⁸ and the Quai d'Orsay. On October 12, 1988 Dumas argued at the National Assembly³⁹ that co-operation between Paris and Algiers should not be affected by these events. He explained that the French government had to express its solidarity towards Algeria because turning its back on the Algerian regime would not help solving the problems that were at the root of popular discontent. Dumas described the riots as an expression of the people's dissatisfaction with their socioeconomic plight resulting from the deep developmental crisis affecting Algeria. He also mentioned the popular demand for greater political freedom, but, quite logically, hushed up the problem of the legitimacy crisis of the Chadli regime which had transpired during the riots through various slogans expressing only contempt for the president⁴⁰. Dumas proposed to show France's solidarity by finding a solution to the gas dispute within the larger framework of bilateral economic and financial co-operation -- a proposal that he had already made in September during his visit to Algiers.

³⁶ Quoted in *Libération*, 11 octobre 1988.

³⁷ Interview, October 8, 1988, quoted in *Le Monde*, 11 octobre 1988.

³⁸ See H. Védrine's address quoted in *ibid.*

³⁹ MAE (Septembre-Octobre 1988), p. 86. See also his interview on France-Inter, October 10, 1988 in *ibid.*, pp. 71-2.

⁴⁰ Despite this silence, Dumas's explanation of the 1988 riots is close to that found in the academic literature. In general, authors are split on two issues. Firstly, whether the uprising was primarily a "semolina riot" (e.g. M. Akacem (1993), p. 52) or whether it was essentially the product of a political crisis (e.g. H. Roberts (1993a), pp. 434-6). Secondly, whether the rebellion was a spontaneous reaction to economic and political privations (e.g. J. Entelis & L. Arone (1992), pp. 24-6 ; L. Rummel (1992) ; K. Duran (1989), pp. 407-12), or whether the Youth had been manipulated either by the conservative trend of the FLN as a means to destabilise the Chadli regime, or by the presidency itself as a means to undermine the FLN party (see PR. Baduel (1994), pp. 8-12 ; A. Kapil (1992), pp. 515-21 and F. Rouziek (1990), pp. 583-5). Whether or not the Youth was manipulated, it should not be forgotten that the 1988 riots represent the peak of a movement of social discontent that had begun in the early 1980s.

Apart from the fact that the French government had perhaps already got wind of Chadli's political reforms proposals made in his speech to the nation on the evening of October 10 (see below), the decision to support Chadli seems to have been taken primarily in light of his potential removal from power. In *Libération*, A. Valladao suggested that French support to Chadli was motivated by the fear that the military establishment might return to the forefront of political affairs⁴¹. This was a prospect that the French government wanted to avoid, most certainly. For, even though the military has always been the centre of power in Algeria, its direct management of political affairs would have had the effect of sapping the presentability stamp provided by the civilian government and would have entailed risks of greater authoritarianism. But, in addition to this general issue, the maintenance in power of Chadli himself was at stake. Indeed, the nomination of the unique candidate for the next presidential elections was on the agenda of the FLN's sixth congress scheduled for December 1988. Now, not only was Chadli openly challenged from below, but his policies had also alienated the conservative trend of the FLN party⁴². Relations between the presidency and the Boumedienist trend of the FLN were particularly tense before the October riots broke out. The fact that part of the FLN party was pitted against Chadli boded ill for his nomination for the presidential elections, even though, in the last resort, the decision lay with the Army.

In an interview with the author, Dumas confirmed that the French government

⁴¹ *Libération*, 11 octobre 1988.

⁴² The FLN party absorbed the various nationalist movements at the time of the War of Liberation and thus became a coalition of different trends. It has never ruled Algeria despite its status of unique party. Its role has been limited to the control and mobilisation of the civil society -- a function that it did not fulfil that well since Boumediene had to rely on communist activists to organise the Agrarian Revolution and since, in the early 1980s, an anti-establishment movement appeared both with the Berber and the Islamist mobilisations. Despite its weak position in the Algerian political system, the FLN had, nevertheless, a nuisance capability. This appeared clearly in 1985 during the debates around the "enrichment" of the 1976 National Charter. The issue that crystallised opposition from the conservative or Boumedienist trend was Chadli's economic liberalisation project. Some also argue that behind-the-scenes discussions on a reform of the FLN were at the root of the hardliners' discontent. It is true that the official recognition of one of the three Algerian Human Rights Leagues and the easing of the conditions for the creation of associations in 1987 infuriated Mohammed Cherif Messaadia, head of the permanent secretariat of the Central Committee, precisely because it questioned the FLN's control over the mass and professional organisations, and, in the longer term, the FLN's status as unique party. On the relations between the presidency and the FLN hardline conservatives, see A. Kapil (1992) ; F. Rouziek (1990) and (1989).

wished Chadli to be maintained in power after the FLN congress⁴³. Chadli was thought to be able to get his country out of crisis and his policies pleased the French government. In addition, the eventuality of his removal from power could only be apprehended with concern in Paris because of the uncertainty as to who would replace him and as to the future policies that would be implemented. French support to Chadli Benjedid did not imply that the French had a say in the nomination of Algeria's president. It did, however, signal that, with Chadli in power, the French authorities would be ready to help Algeria with its economic difficulties. The decision to back Chadli was thereafter reinforced by the Algerian president's democratisation measures and his continued economic liberalisation policy.

2.2. France stands behind Algeria's political and economic liberalisation (October 1988 - June 1991)

2.2.1. Liberalisation in Algeria

The bloody October 1988 events triggered a move towards political liberalisation. In his speech to the nation on October 10, Chadli Benjedid promised, among other things, political reforms. On October 13, whereas the state of siege and the curfew had ended, the president announced a national referendum on a constitutional reform for November 3, 1988. He proposed to reorganise the executive power through the strengthening of the prime minister's function, henceforth entrusted with the conduct of domestic affairs and responsible to the National Assembly. On October 25, the presidency proposed a reform of the FLN party, claiming that it had to "definitively liberate itself from the temptation of hegemonic and direct exercise of responsibilities within the state apparatus, elected assemblies, the economy, and within the social and professional organisations"⁴⁴. In effect, the

⁴³ Interview with Roland Dumas, May 16, 1995.

⁴⁴ Quoted in F. Rouziek (1990), p. 591. See also Rouziek's article for all events, dates and figures indicated for the year 1988. Algeria's democratisation experience until the January 1992 coup d'état has been accounted for in many books and articles by now. Among them see e.g. JJ. Lavenue (1993) ; J. Entelis & L. Arone (1992) ; R. Mortimer (1991).

presidency proposed the abolition of the one-party state system. After the dismissal of Mohammed Cherif Messaadia and his replacement by Abelhamid Mehri on October 30, 1988, the FLN endorsed the reform at its sixth congress (November 27-29, 1988). It also designated Chadli Benjedid as the unique candidate for the presidential elections. Benjedid was reelected for a third mandate on December 22, 1988. Two months later, on February 23, 1989, a new Constitution, opening the path to political openness, was put to referendum and accepted at 73.4% of the popular vote. The Constitution omitted reference to major ideological principles of the Republic, notably socialism, non-alignment, third-worldism and the promotion of a NIEO. Mention of the FLN was done only in relation to its historical role in winning Independence from France. The Constitution fortified the separation of powers while reinforcing the presidential prerogatives. It secured the guarantee of civil liberties (freedom of expression, of association, right to strike, etc.) and introduced multipartism by allowing for the creation of "associations of a political character". Moreover, article 24 no longer referred to the National Popular Army as the "Guardian of the Revolution" and confined its activity to the sole defence of the territory⁴⁵.

From February 1989 to June 1991, and particularly under the premiership of Mouloud Hamrouche (September 1989 - June 1991), political liberalisation effectively took place⁴⁶. During this period, the Army, without relinquishing its *de facto* predominance within the Algerian political system, withdrew from its positions in the direct management of political affairs : in March 1989, its officers left their functions in the FLN's Central Committee and, in July 1990, President Benjedid renounced his function as defence minister. In June 1991, he also relinquished his function as head of the FLN. The protection of civil liberties seemed secured with the April 1989 parliamentary approval of the UN convention against torture and the ratification of various international conventions on human rights, as well as the official recognition of the Algerian Association for the Defence of Human Rights headed by Ali Yahia

⁴⁵ On the constitutional reform and for a reprint of the Constitution, see C. Rulleau (1989), pp. 159-87.

⁴⁶ The following marking events are drawn from the chronology provided in P. Eveno (1994) ; F. Rouziek (1992) and (1991).

Abdennour in November of that year. The civil society was let to organise itself : a plethora of associations emerged, the press was freed, and political parties were allowed by statute 89-11 of July 5, 1989⁴⁷. A year after the promulgation of this law twenty-one parties had officially been recognised. On the eve of the first round of the parliamentary elections (December 1991), there were fifty⁴⁸. The break with the past was symbolised by the return to Algeria of such opponents as Hocine Aït Ahmed, leader of the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS) in exile for twenty-three years and Ahmed Ben Bella, Algeria's first president who had spent fifteen years in prison before being released under Chadli Benjedid in 1980 and who thereafter went into exile in Europe. Anticipating the local and regional elections of June 12, 1990, the various political parties organised numerous demonstrations which were allowed. Democratisation was also patent in the authorities' acceptance of the verdict of the June 1990 elections where the FIS triumphed over the FLN (see table 2).

On the economic front, the appointment of Mouloud Hamrouche as prime minister gave a new impulse to the transition to a market economy. Hamrouche represented the FLN's reforming trend. Under the authority of the presidency, he had supervised a study workshop whose mission was to find solutions to the Algerian economic crisis. The fruit of this work was published in 1989 in *Les Cahiers de la réforme*⁴⁹. It strongly inspired Hamrouche's own programme. The latter insisted on the necessity to associate all economic agents (unions, associations, etc.) to the reform aimed at abolishing state-controlled economy. Under Hamrouche, the reform towards the managerial autonomy of state enterprises went ahead. State monopoly over foreign trade was further relaxed (August 1990) before being formally abolished (February 1991). Following the provisions of the March 1990 law of credit and money, the

⁴⁷ The text of this law is reprinted in A. Djeghloul (1990), pp. 200-5.

⁴⁸ F. Rouziek (1993), pp. 639-40. The multiplication of parties and newspapers has generally been seen in the West as a sign of the vitality of Algeria's civil society. Although this is not to be denied, it should be noted that some parties seem to have been formed only to receive state-sponsored financial aid. State-financing of political parties renders their subscribers eminently suspect as to their independence, and parties, such as the FFS and the FIS, refused it. As regards the press, journalists wishing to create their own newspaper were guaranteed a three year salary by the state. The issue of their independence is thus also at stake (A. Yefsah (1994), footnotes 27 and 28, p. 93).

⁴⁹ The contents of *Les Cahiers de la réforme* can be found in G. Corm (1993), pp. 12-16.

monetary and financial sectors were deregulated, the Central Bank was made independent from the Ministry of Finance, and restrictions on foreign investments were removed. In accordance with an IMF programme accompanying a standby credit (April 1991), the Hamrouche government devalued the Algerian Dinar and introduced price deregulation and a new wage system meant to reflect productivity⁵⁰. However, Hamrouche's endeavour to liberalise the economy was not achieved without difficulty as it questioned some well-established vested interests. In particular, foreign trade liberalisation directly threatened the tidy commissions pocketed by the Army officers selecting foreign suppliers. The reform of public enterprises also prevented their infiltration by the Military Security. The June 1991 events offered the opportunity to remove Hamrouche from his function.

⁵⁰ See G. Corm (1993) ; F. Rouziek (1993), (1992) and (1991).

Table 2 : Results of the Algerian local and regional elections, June 1990

Parties	Votes	Expressed		Registered		APC	APW		
		Votes	%	Votes	%				%
FIS	4 331 472		54.3		33.7	853	55.4	32	66.7
FLN	2 245 798		28.1		17.5	487	31.6	14	29.2
Independents	931 278		11.7		7.3	106	6.9	1	2.1
RCD	166 104		2.1		1.3	87	5.6	1	2.1
Others	310 136		2.1		2.4	8	0.5	-	-
Total	7 984 788		100.0		62.2 *	1541	100.0	48	100.0

Reg. voters	12 841 769
-------------	------------

Table 3 : Results of the first round of the Algerian parliamentary elections, December 1991

Parties	Votes	Expressed		Registered		Seats	%
		Votes	%	Votes	%		
FIS	3 260 222		47.3		24.5	188	43.7
FLN	1 612 947		23.4		12.1	15	3.5
FFS (b)	510 661		7.4		3.8	25	5.8
Hamas (ne)	368 697		5.3		2.8	-	-
Independents	309 264		4.4		2.3	3	
RCD	200 267		2.9		1.5	-	-
MNI (ne)	150 093		2.2		1.1	-	-
MDA (b)	135 882		2.0		1.0	-	-
Others	349 386		5.1		2.6	-	-
Total	6 897 419		100.0		51.7 *	231	53.0

Reg. voters	13 314 771
-------------	------------

Legend : APC : Assemblée Populaire Communale (local council)
 APW : Assemblée Populaire de Wilaya (regional council)
 * : Participation rate
 (b) : boycotted the 1990 elections.
 (ne) : non-existent at the time of the 1990 elections.

Note : The numbers of votes given in table 2 correspond only to the local elections. Results of the regional elections (held simultaneously) were similar.

Source : Tables respectively compiled from the data in F. Rouziek (1992) and (1993).

2.2.2. French support

In France, after the "telling silence" on the crushing of the riots, the official stance was one of solidarity with the Algerian authorities. The appointment of Kasdi Merbah to the premiership had initially provoked some surprise. Merbah had headed the Military Security under Ben Bella and Boumediene and was not, therefore, the perfect incarnation of the democratisation process announced by Chadli. Yet, it was also thought that as a man of authority, having good relations with the Military, and having headed several ministries under Chadli, Merbah had the required experience and firmness to get the country out of crisis⁵¹. France's support was expressed through a diplomatic backing, illustrated by Mitterrand's visit to Algiers on March 9-10, 1989. There, he declared himself satisfied with Algeria's evolution towards pluralism and democracy⁵². As promised by Dumas, economic support was channelled through the settlement in January 1989 of the disagreement over the renewal of the 1982 gas accord⁵³ and the signature of a financial aid accord of FF 7 billion (over \$ 1.1 billion) in February 1989. This financial package comprised a FF 3 billion commercial credit line. It was also made up of a new financial device : a FF 4 billion financial protocol constituted of long-term governmental credits (30 years) and of Coface guaranteed long-term private loans (10 years). The sum was to be paid out in two equal instalments in 1989 and 1990 and was meant to ease Algeria's balance of payments deficit and finance developmental projects⁵⁴. This financial protocol indicated the French government's willingness to back the Algerian economy through state development aid, since, previously, French official

⁵¹ Interview with Jean Audibert (France's Ambassador to Algiers from January 1989 to September 1992), June 7, 1995.

⁵² See his speech in MAE (mars-avril 1989), p. 16.

⁵³ The deadlock on the renegotiation of the 1982 gas contract opened in July 1986. It stemmed from disagreements between Sonatrach and *Gaz de France* (GDF) over the pricing formula and quantities. In addition to these problems, disagreements between the two companies appeared in late 1986 as Sonatrach continued to bill GDF's imports according to a temporary pricing agreement signed in March 1986 and designed to counterbalance the effects of depressed oil prices on the price of gas (pegged on the price of oil since 1982). The 1989 gas accord imposed a compromise between the positions of the companies and provided that GDF would pay the arrears (FF 850 million) corresponding the difference between the price paid by GDF and that billed by the Sonatrach. For details on the gas contract, see L. Blin & E. Gobe (1991), pp. 486-7.

⁵⁴ L. Blin & E. Gobe (1991), p. 486.

development aid to Algeria had been very low⁵⁵.

In the last months of his premiership, Merbah had been in open conflict with Chadli Benjedid over issues concerning the powers of the prime minister. Partly because of this quarrel, which was detrimental to governmental policy stability, the nomination of Mouloud Hamrouche was welcome in Paris. Hamrouche was a "president's man". He had been general secretary of the presidency since 1986. There were, thus, few risks of disagreements with the presidency. In addition, Hamrouche incarnated the FLN's reforming trend. His government comprised many young renovators. This gave credibility to his programme of reforms which he applied consistently and which was praised by the French political establishment⁵⁶.

Prior to the visit of the French foreign affairs minister to Algiers on May 24-25, 1991, Hamrouche had stated in an interview with *Le Monde* that "things were not going that well since 1988" between France and Algeria⁵⁷. This was quite surprising since, as shown above, gestures of support had not been lacking even when Merbah was prime minister. When Hamrouche was himself in government, bilateral relations had been managed rather smoothly. Two marking events occurred when Hamrouche was leading the government : the Algerian elections and the Gulf crisis (August 1990 - April 1991). Neither had, however, a particular impact on Franco-Algerian relations.

The June 1990 elections which brought the FIS to power in the majority of local and regional councils did not create a panic effect in France. As a consequence, they generated neither a stronger support to the Algerian regime than that existing nor an attitude of prudence toward the Islamist political force. The Islamist phenomenon was understood in Paris essentially as an expression of popular discontent deriving from Algeria's problems of economic development and its democratic deficit⁵⁸. It

⁵⁵ Throughout the 1980s French official development aid to Algeria amounted on average to FF 300 million, accounting for 1 to 2% of French total official development aid (OECD, document obtained on request and ratios calculated from data in this document and the OECD's *Development and Cooperation* yearly reviews).

⁵⁶ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995. For an example of the French government's praise of Chadli and Hamrouche's reforms, see Dumas's press conference in Algiers on May 25, 1991 in MAE (mai-juin 1991), p. 41.

⁵⁷ *Le Monde*, 28 mai 1991.

⁵⁸ This analysis was held by the French minister for foreign affairs and the co-operation minister as early as 1988. See respectively MAE (septembre-octobre 1988), p. 72 and *Le Monde*, 13 octobre

was, thus, thought that the FIS vote of 1990 did not mean popular adherence to an ideology and that, subsequently, the popular protest which the FIS's success incarnated could be defused. This was the French Ambassador's message to the Elysée. It was also that of Algerian political figures, and notably of Hamrouche who went on a secret visit to Paris right after the elections⁵⁹. There, he may also have explained that, however unexpected the extent of the FIS's success was, it would help undermining FLN hardliners who protested against the Hamrouche government's liberalising economic measures. The French reaction to the result of the Algerian local elections -- largely inspired by what was being said in Algiers -- could not, therefore, be at the root of Hamrouche's harsh words.

As regards the effects of the Gulf War on Franco-Algerian relations, the issue is complex because of the different positions of the various actors involved. As in other parts of the Arab world⁶⁰, Algerian public opinion -- in particular, the Youth and some intellectuals -- was in favour of Saddam Hussein, in part in reaction to the disproportionate means engaged by the multinational coalition to destroy Iraq and the triumphal tone of the French news which are watched by about 12 million Algerians thanks to parabolic antennas. In their great majority, political parties also adopted a pro-Iraqi stance. The most active -- Ben Bella's Algerian Democratic Movement (MDA) and the FIS -- initiated a parallel diplomacy, travelling to various Middle Eastern capitals hoping to find a mediating solution. The FIS organised rallies, called on the government to dispatch volunteers to defend Iraq, and announced its intention to set up military training camps⁶¹. This pro-Hussein activity must be partly understood in relation to the domestic context of Algeria and, notably, the run-up to the parliamentary elections. Denouncing the multinational coalition was a means to differentiate one's policy from that of the government.

The Algerian government, like other members of the Arab League, first

1988.

⁵⁹ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

⁶⁰ See G. Joffé (1993b), pp. 186-90.

⁶¹ For details on Algeria's policy during the Gulf crisis as well as the parallel diplomacy of the MDA and the FIS, see R. Mortimer (1992), pp. 261-2 or N. Grimaud (1991), pp. 31-33.

reacted by condemning Saddam Hussein and calling for an unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. However, while not making infuriated declarations against the coalition, the government did not lend its support to Saudi Arabia. At the Cairo Extraordinary Arab Summit on August 10, 1990, it abstained on a firm condemnation of Iraq and the sending of a pan-Arab force to Saudi Arabia. Its position was to argue for an Arab-monitored and peaceful settlement. Chadli Benjedid attempted a mediation and turned, among others, to France which had sought a compromise. At the UN in September 1990, Mitterrand had advocated a proposal to resolve the various conflicts besetting the region after the Iraq-Kuwait conflict would have been settled. In addition, although French forces were sent to the Gulf, they were not part of the multinational coalition until the offensive was launched⁶². The French and Algerian positions, while not similar, were, thus, not far apart and Mitterrand agreed to meet Chadli in Paris on December 22, 1990. There, each party promised to do everything they could to avoid the war, even though they had doubts about their chances of success⁶³.

There was in France, particularly in the press and among certain politicians such as Cheysson⁶⁴, a certain fear that the Gulf War would provoke a fracture between France and Algeria. This perception was due to the trenchant discourse of the Algerian foreign minister. During his visits to France in January and February 1991, Sid Ahmed Ghozali had, indeed, been vehemently critical of France's participation in the Desert Storm operation which he denounced as submissiveness to the USA. However, Ghozali's position, although backed by a group within the FLN, was marginal within the Hamrouche government. This fact, underlined by the then French Ambassador to Algiers, also transpired in an interview with Georges Morin, responsible for the Maghreb at the International Secretariat of the Socialist Party. During the Gulf crisis, Morin went twice to the Maghrebi capitals as part of different

⁶² For a chronology of the conflict and the French proposals, see B. Kodmani-Darwish & M. Chartouni-Dubarry (1991), pp. 37-47.

⁶³ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

⁶⁴ Cheysson, who is a close friend of Ghozali, criticised Mitterrand's decision to fight Iraq as a "blind fidelity" to the Allies (interview with the author, April 22, 1994).

initiatives to explain to the governments and the civil societies of the region that France's policy did not constitute a crusade against the Arabs. He affirmed that if, in general, France's intervention in the Gulf was criticised by the civil society, governments understood France's position and that, when Ghazali was virulent in his talks with Dumas, he was essentially trying to reflect the *doxa*⁶⁵. It thus seems that the Gulf War did not have a strong detrimental effect on bilateral governmental relations, and that, in any case, Hamrouche's declaration that Franco-Algerian relations had not been at their best since 1988 was not motivated by a quarrel over the Gulf issue.

The only plausible explanation left refers to bilateral financial relations -- an issue pointed out by Hamrouche in his interview with the daily ; which proves that, in foreign affairs, what is perceived as the tip of the iceberg is sometimes the iceberg itself. In his interview, Hamrouche had reproached the lack of enthusiasm of French firms in investing in Algeria. More emphatically, he had criticised the French financial establishment for what he depicted as its negative attitude in relation to Algeria's proposal for a bilateral rescheduling of its debt towards France. The issue of Algeria's debt and its reluctance to sign a classical rescheduling operation sanctioned by an IMF accord is examined in chapter two. Suffice to say here that France, which holds about a quarter of Algeria's debt, has always been unwilling to satisfy Algeria's demand. There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, financial orthodoxy played its part. The rule has always been that countries in payment difficulties go through a structural adjustment programme as a counterpart to a debt rescheduling. The French government has never agreed to depart from it. As a compromise, it has proposed, particularly after January 1992, to plead in favour of Algeria to obtain important funds from regional and international organisations and good lending conditions from the IMF. Secondly, when Algeria first formulated its demand in 1989, there was an

⁶⁵ In August 1990, Morin accompanied Pierre Mauroy (ex-prime minister) who was sent by the Elysée in order to deliver France's message to Hassan II, Benjedid, Ben Ali and Arafat. In March 1991, Morin returned to the Maghreb, heading a socialist delegation of fifteen French people's representatives natives of the Maghreb. The delegation met members of government, opposition parties and the human rights leagues (Interview with Georges Morin, June 29, 1994).

important contentious matter over the payment by Algeria of the bills due to French firms. As part of the 1982 economic co-operation agreement, many French enterprises had participated to the construction of infrastructures and equipments. Payments (FF 3 to 4 billion) had been blocked as a retaliation measure against the litigious gas negotiations of 1986-89. In times of financial difficulties, the Algerian government tried as much as possible to further delay them. The French Finance Ministry considered that, in these circumstances, the kind of help the Algerians were asking for should not be granted⁶⁶.

Hamrouche may not have been that bitter over France's rejection of bilateral "reprofiling" if Italy had not agreed on May 3, 1991 to release a credit of \$ 7.2 billion out of which \$ 2.5 billion were meant to reschedule part of Algeria's short and medium term official debt towards that country⁶⁷. For, on the whole, France's attitude towards Algeria was not frosty. In July 1990, it had renewed its bilateral financial aid and had approved the principle of a rescheduling of part of Algeria's non-guaranteed debt by a international bank syndicate headed by the *Crédit Lyonnais* -- an operation that was not, however, concluded yet when Hamrouche formulated his grievances⁶⁸. In addition, France was active in promoting the European Community's "Redirected Mediterranean Policy".

Nevertheless, the French minister for economic and financial affairs, Pierre Bérégovoy, was sent to Algiers on July 29, 1991 in order to respond to the Algerian authorities' grievances. Old commercial credits amounting to FF 1.3 billion as well as a credit line of FF 100 million for the creation of joint-ventures were reopened. The revolving guaranteed credit of FF 3 billion was increased to FF 4 billion and a loan was granted for the import of cereals. Bérégovoy also promised to help in speeding up the *Crédit Lyonnais*'s debt reprofiling operation and argued for "a new impulse" in Franco-Algerian economic relations⁶⁹. His visit, although dominated by economic issues, partly aimed at providing political support to the new government that had

⁶⁶ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

⁶⁷ M. Hernando de Larramendi (1993), p. 504.

⁶⁸ *Le Monde*, 26 juillet 1990.

⁶⁹ M. Hernando de Larramendi (1993), pp. 520-1 and 560.

been appointed in June 1991.

2.3. The Quai d'Orsay urges elections (June - December 1991)

2.3.1. *The June 1991 events in Algeria*

The parliamentary elections announced by Benjedid for June 1991 were eventually postponed to the end of the year in a highly volatile political context since on June 5, 1991 martial law was enforced again and Hamrouche dismissed⁷⁰. At the root of the street fighting that occurred between Islamist militants and the police forces in early June was the controversy over a new electoral law which gerrymandered the constituencies. The secular parties denounced the bill, which also limited the number of candidates to two (as opposed to three as initially planned) at the second round, imposing the probable choice between the FLN or the FIS. The FIS's opposition to the law was reinforced by the adoption of decrees regulating the use of mosques and forbidding the Friday prayers to be turned into political rallies. It called for a general strike in Algiers on May 25, 1991 asking for the abrogation of the law and simultaneous parliamentary and presidential elections. The general strike was not followed but the FIS organised a sit-in at the main squares of Algiers for more than ten days. While on June 3 Abassi Madani had agreed with the Hamrouche government to end the demonstration, the *gendarmerie* was sent during the night to clear up the squares. The next day, demonstrations continued and, in the night of June 4, the Army intervened. Official sources recorded 17 dead and 219 wounded⁷¹. Sporadic street fighting continued throughout the Summer⁷² as the Army cracked down on FIS militants. Benhadj and Madani warned that armed resistance would be organised to meet the authorities' clampdown. Arms hide-outs had earlier been discovered and the FIS leaders were arrested on June 30, 1991 on charges of

⁷⁰ The following account is drawn from A. Charef (1994), pp. 131-74 and F. Rouziek (1993), pp. 597-610.

⁷¹ A. Charef (1994), p. 167.

⁷² By August 1, 1991 official reports accounted for 55 dead, 326 wounded and 2 976 arrests and interpellations since June 5, 1991. In *ibid.*, p. 174.

conspiracy against the state. Several members of the FIS *majlis ash shura* (Consultative Council) were also arrested.

2.3.2. France urges elections

Following the enforcement of martial law in Algeria, the spokesman for the Quai d'Orsay deplored the violence whichever its origin⁷³. The French minister for foreign affairs wished for calm to return and for a prompt resumption of the electoral process⁷⁴. This was his constant message until December 1991 -- his argument being that the elections were the key to political stability in Algeria :

"I think that Algeria will find a real balance only when the elections take place. These elections have to be held as soon as possible. (...) It is evident that [France] also has an interest in having an interlocutor whose governmental stability is confirmed."⁷⁵

Surely, Dumas would not have been so insistent in calling for a rapid holding of the elections if he had believed the FIS would win a parliamentary majority. He confirmed that he assumed the FIS would not carry such a majority⁷⁶. His statement is corroborated by Claude Silberzahn, head of the French secret services, who deplored that the French government had disregarded the DGSE's warnings that the FIS would win⁷⁷.

At this juncture, reference must be made to the issue as to whether the Algerian authorities themselves expected the results of the first round of the December 1991 parliamentary elections (see table 3). Pierre Dévoluy and Mireille Duteil have argued that these results came as a complete surprise in Algiers⁷⁸. Their argument is supported by the then French Ambassador to Algiers⁷⁹. By contrast, Abed Charef and George Joffé have suggested that, not only did the Algerian Army know about the

⁷³ *Libération*, 6 juin 1991.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Interview, June 27, 1991 in MAE (mai-juin 1991), p. 137.

⁷⁶ Interview with Roland Dumas, May 16, 1995.

⁷⁷ C. Silberzahn (1995), p. 292.

⁷⁸ P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), pp. 24-9.

⁷⁹ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

FIS's electoral victory, but that it had also favoured it in order to prove to foreign opinion that Chadli was incompetent, which justified the coup d'état that followed the first round of the parliamentary elections⁸⁰.

The contention that the results were unexpected in Algiers relies on internal information and can, therefore, prove as much the truth as misinformation. It is based upon the claim that the Algerian Ministry for the Interior's assessments conjectured that the votes would be divided in about three thirds with a big third for the FIS, another for the FLN and the rest for the various contending parties. This implied that an alliance between the FLN and the various parties in the future Assembly would put the FIS in the minority. The authorities' conviction that the FIS would not do badly, but not well enough to reach a majority, would have derived from three main factors. Firstly, there was a far greater choice in the parliamentary elections than in the local ones : fifty contesting parties as opposed to eleven in June 1990. Secondly, it was believed that the FIS had lost much of its popularity as a consequence of its management of the local and regional councils. The idea, conveyed in the Algerian and French press, that local Islamic governance had been catastrophic proved to be somewhat more partisan than objective. Economic results were perhaps not better than they had been. However, through various charitable activities, FIS-governed localities managed both to bring relief to the needy and to provide an activity for the young *hittistes*⁸¹. Equipping the slums with dustbins ; regularly picking-up the rubbish ; offering free tutoring ; setting up small shops managed by the unemployed ; offering lower prices in the Islamic *souq* ⁸²; all this had made this brand of politicians much closer to the needs of their constituency than most of the FLN officials had ever been. With regards to the most publicised and contested measures allegedly implemented by the FIS, such as sexual segregation on the beaches, the ban on swimwear and shorts, or on alcohol sales, John Entelis has argued that he saw no evidence of such

⁸⁰ A. Charef (1994), pp. 222-31 and G. Joffé (1994a), p. 8.

⁸¹ The *hittistes*, literally those who hold up the wall, are the many young unemployed who spend their days outside, leaning back against the walls, waiting for time to pass.

⁸² See the interview of R. Bekkar on the FIS policy measures in Tlemcen in H. Davis (1992), pp. 12-5.

restrictions in the Tipasa *commune*, and that "Islamic zealotness", although existent, had actually been much less important than the press had suggested⁸³.

Thirdly, the Algerian authorities' belief in the FIS's partial defeat would have been grounded in the view that the FIS was crippled by internal rifts. Discord within the FIS appeared during the crisis of May-June 1991 and touched upon three main issues : the alliance of the FIS with other Islamist parties, which Abassi Madani had refused ; the organisation of the strike to protest against the controversial electoral law ; and the participation to the legislative elections. Dissidence even occurred as three members of the FIS's Consultative Council criticised Abassi Madani's leadership on Algerian national television. After Madani and Benhadj were imprisoned, disunity was reinforced by the competition between the various currents making up the FIS for the party's leadership. During the Batna Congress of July 26, 1991, this power struggle was eventually concluded by the takeover of the *djeza'ara* current, led by Abdelkhader Hachani and gathering nationalist technocrats arguing for an Islam to the colours of Algeria, over the *salafiyyists* who saw the "Islamic solution" as one to be applied in the entire Islamic world. The Batna Congress also allowed to marginalise proponents of the armed struggle who formed the FIS's third trend, bringing together (although not exclusively) veterans of the war in Afghanistan, the "Afghans"⁸⁴. Hachani, president of the FIS provisional executive bureau, was then jailed for a month. Upon his release in late November 1991, he maintained the suspense as to the FIS's eventual boycott of the elections if the paramount FIS leaders were not discharged. Eventually, the decision to participate in the legislative elections was announced on December 14, that is, just two weeks before the first round⁸⁵.

Whereas Dévoluy and Duteil argued that the Algerian authorities viewed the

⁸³ J. Entelis (1992), pp. 78-9. François Burgat (1994, pp. 207-8) maintains for his part that some of the facts the FIS was reproached with were pure fabrications on the part of an Algerian press whose objectivity and independence is still not really up to the mark. This argument partly undermines the view that the Algerian authorities would have done everything they could in order to boost the FIS's electoral success.

⁸⁴ On the various components of the FIS, see S. Labat (1994), pp. 41-67.

⁸⁵ On the divisions within the FIS, see A. Charef (1994), pp. 108-18 and 214-22 and JJ. Lavenue (1993), pp. 122-7 and 162-6.

FIS's internal feuds as a factor undermining its electoral strength⁸⁶, Audibert -- who, besides, agreed with the contention that the results were unexpected and the coup not premeditated -- affirmed that it was thought in Algiers that, neither the quarrels between the members of the *majlis ash shura*, nor the hesitations of the new leadership in boycotting or not the elections, would affect the FIS's clientele. For, the FIS was leading campaign in the mosques⁸⁷.

Charef's and Joffé's argument is that a clan, linked in some way to Major General Larbi Belkeir (the new Algerian Interior Minister appointed in the reshuffle of October 16, 1991 to supervise the forthcoming elections) and to the FLN Boumedienist trend, was very well aware of the FIS's electoral import for the simple reason that it had bolstered it. These authors underlined several troubling elements. One is the release of Hachani as well as the suspension of the ban on the FIS press one month prior to the elections. Another is that the amendments to the new electoral law (passed on October 13) were of secondary importance. If gerrymandering to the benefit of the FLN was not questioned, nor was the majority vote principle whereas the latter favoured large parties and, as such, the FIS. Finally, Prime Minister Ghozali seemed to do everything he could to undermine the FLN party and to sponsor independent candidates in place of hardline ones, who by drawing upon the heritage of the Boumediene era, might have succeeded in prolonging the FLN's spell. The overall aim of this clan in preparing the FLN's bankruptcy would have been to demonstrate that Chadli, who had been the first to use the FIS as a means to undermine the Boumedienists, was "incompetent at being able to control the genie it had itself unleashed."⁸⁸ Deliberately bringing the country in front of a simple alternative -- a FIS takeover or a coup -- this clan would, thus, have been seeking to make it obvious that a coup was the only reasonable path for Algeria.

Conspiracy or not in Algiers, Paris did not expect the FIS's *razzia* of the parliamentary seats. The idea that many FIS voters would withdraw their support as a

⁸⁶ P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), p. 26.

⁸⁷ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

⁸⁸ G. Joffé (1994a), p. 8.

consequence of the party's intolerant policies was relayed by the Algerian authorities in their contacts with the French political establishment⁸⁹. Despite Dumas's claim that he was never won over by the Algerians on that point⁹⁰, it seems that the argument was rather well accepted in Paris. Inasmuch as the extent of FIS support within the population was not properly gauged, there was no risk in calling for rapid elections. It was quite logically thought that, even though the FIS might be included in the government, the elections would bring the popular legitimacy that all Algerian regimes had hitherto been lacking and, thus, would provide the governmental authority required to bring back Algeria on the track of political stability and economic recovery.

3. A hesitating support (Winter 1992 - Winter 1993)

Algeria's first free elections eventually occurred in late December 1991. The results of the first round indicated that the FIS would get a parliamentary majority. The Algerian Army subsequently intervened, staging a "constitutional coup d'état" which removed President Chadli Benjedid from power. New ruling institutions were created and headed by a veteran of the Independence War, Mohammed Boudiaf, who accepted the generals' proposition and returned to Algeria after a long exile. Although Boudiaf's coming into power generated hopes among the population, his rule was marked by tense relations with the Algerian political establishment as well as with the civil society. The regime's repressive drift, with its severe crackdowns on FIS militants and sympathisers, also initiated the repression-counter-violence spiral that has characterised Algeria's daily life since then. Boudiaf was murdered after six months of presidency, to all appearances, for having thought he could manage political affairs without the assent of the Army. The political reshuffle that followed Boudiaf's death in June 1992 brought back to power Boumedienists and notably Belaïd Abdesselam. As prime minister, he restrained economic liberalisation and

⁸⁹ See the article of Bernard Stasi (vice-president of the CDS and of the *Association France-Algérie*) in *Le Figaro*, 21 février 1991 and interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

⁹⁰ Interview with Roland Dumas, May 16, 1995.

engaged into a political dialogue with political parties (excluding the outlawed FIS) which turned short mainly because political parties refused to back the regime's growing repression policy.

The French government reacted to all these events with great embarrassment. It did not clearly condemn the coup because it did not wish the FIS's coming to power and because it would have been counter-productive in trying to influence the course of events in Algeria. It did not, however, welcome the coup either because it was feared that the marginalisation of the Islamist current would generate political instability, detrimental to the relations between the two countries. Reservation, more than a wholesale condemnation, is the accurate term to describe the French official discourse. Despite apparent governmental unity, the Socialist Party was split over the question of what France's attitude should be. However, supporters of the "preventive coup d'état" did not manage to influence foreign policy-making. Indeed, until January 1993, the French government's Algeria policy, despite talks of "solidarity" and "support", was rather one of minimal support to the new Algerian rulers either because it doubted their abilities to get the country out of crisis or because it resented their anti-French nationalism. The relationship became strained. France's attempts at promoting a political compromise, by suggesting that a new political personality capable of rallying the Islamists' allegiance was needed, was a central factor in the deterioration of the relationship between the two countries until the French *volte-face* of January 1993.

3.1. Political upheavals in Algeria

3.1.1. The coup d'état

The results of the first ballot of the parliamentary elections suggested that the FIS was heading for a clear majority in the second round scheduled for January 16, 1992. It had won 188 seats out of 231 and needed only an additional 28 seats to win an absolute majority. On the eve of the first ballot Chadli Benjedid had claimed that he

was ready to "cohabit" with the winning majority and that force would not be resorted to. Rumours of a meeting with Hachani seemed to confirm that the president was ready to reach a compromise with the FIS. The FFS and the FLN called for the second round to be held as planned. Other parties, such as the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD)⁹¹, the Algerian Movement for Justice and Development (MAJD)⁹² and the Socialist Vanguard Party (PAGS)⁹³, as well as a number of non-political associations gathered around the workers' union (UGTA) in a National Committee for the Safeguarding of Algeria, demanded the interruption of the electoral process. The Army, which all along had warned that it would defend democracy and the institutions, intervened. Its plan was to make Chadli resign -- which he did on January 11, 1992 -- after making sure he had signed the decree dissolving the National Assembly and then to replace him by the president of the Constitutional Council instead of the president of the parliament who was judged as too close to the Islamist current. The flaw in this grand plan which, by resorting to the Constitution, aimed at comforting the legalist image of the Army, was that the president of the Constitutional Council refused to assume presidential powers, pleading a constitutional blank on the type of power vacuum generated by the resignation of the head of state. The ruling authorities were led to hold the reins of power : on January 12, the High Security Council, originally created to provide counselling on matters of security and defence to the president, took power. It annulled the results of the first round of the parliamentary elections while cancelling the second round. Maintaining the Ghazali government, it then set up on January 14 a High State Council (HSC) to

⁹¹ The RCD, created by Saïd Sadi in 1989, was joined by militants of the FFS and the Berber Cultural Movement (MCB). The RCD is a Kabylia-based party, advocating secularism, social democracy and cultural pluralism. The FFS, born in 1963 but recognised only in 1989, shares the same objectives as the RCD. But the two parties differ on the issue as to how the FIS should be dealt with. The MCB, now legal, was a clandestine association which sprang from the 1980 Berber Spring and whose prime objective is to defend the Berber cultural heritage.

⁹² The MAJD was created in 1991 by Kasdi Merbah (head of the Military Security from 1962 to 1979 and minister until 1989). Merbah supported the establishment of a pluralistic democracy, but put more emphasis on cleansing the Administration from corruption. Although the MAJD supported the cancellation of the elections, it later advocated conciliation with the FIS.

⁹³ The PAGS was clandestinely set up in 1966 in opposition to Boumediene's regime. It was a resurgence of the Algerian Communist Party banned under Ben Bella. Made legal in 1989, the PAGS splintered in the early 1990s. One of the new parties, Ettahaddi, headed by Cherif el-Hachemi, advocates secularism, pluralism and socialism.

assume presidential powers until the end of 1993 with the assistance of a National Consultative Council. The HSC consisted of : Major General Khaled Nezzar (minister for defence) ; Ali Haroun (minister for human rights) ; Ali Kafi (secretary-general of the Organisation of the Mujahidins) ; Tijani Haddam (rector of the Paris mosque) ; and, as president, Mohammed Boudiaf. Boudiaf had been one of the historic leaders of the War of Independence and was, therefore, representative of the generation of November. However, he had been in exile since 1964 and was, thus, untainted by the economic mismanagement and corruption associated with the FLN. Moreover, as he had criticised the authoritarian drift of the Ben Bella regime, he offered a certain guarantee of democratisation⁹⁴.

3.1.2. The Boudiaf leadership (January 1992 - June 1992)

Boudiaf was not to stay long in power. He was shot on June 29, 1992 by a second lieutenant, Lembarek Boumaarafi, who belonged to the security apparatus protecting the president during his speech at Annaba. The death sentence pronounced against Boumaarafi on June 3, 1995⁹⁵ has not dispelled the suspicions about the official version according to which a zealot would have acted on his own. Rather, it is widely believed that the killing was ordered by "the politico-financial Mafia", afraid of losing its privileges in front of Boudiaf's determination to punish corrupted officials -- a resoluteness illustrated by the arrest of General Mostefa Belloucif in May 1992.

During his stay in power, Boudiaf was isolated. Mistrusting the political system to which he now belonged, he had taken as advisors his close friends who, like him, had been out of Algeria for the past thirty years. Within the HSC, disagreements appeared with this "Mister Clean" who projected to increase his popular legitimacy by purifying the system and creating his own support-base. Within the population, Boudiaf's past brought him some degree of legitimacy, but it is his

⁹⁴ The account of the unfolding of the coup is drawn from A. Charef (1994), pp. 234-59 ; P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), pp. 34-100 and JJ. Lavenue (1993), pp. 173-81.

⁹⁵ *Le Monde*, 6 juin 1995.

tragic end more than anything else that has now made him a national hero. As to the political parties, those who had initially supported the cancellation of the elections and the establishment of the HSC were rapidly disenchanted.

Two aspects of Boudiaf's policy particularly worried the opposition. Firstly, as early as February 1992, Boudiaf had announced his intention to mobilise the people around a Patriotic National Rally which would have played the role of a forum for discussion on a national programme for the establishment of a pluralistic democracy. As dialogue with the political parties was explicitly excluded (discussions were to take place within neighbourhoods and working premises), they denounced Boudiaf's initiative as a replica of the one-party system. The establishment, in April 1992, of the National Consultative Council which was to play the role of the dissolved parliament also generated much opposition because its members had been nominated by the state and reflected the professional civil society (journalists, academics, unionists, etc...) rather than the political parties.

The second aspect of Boudiaf's policy which generated opposition concerned the growing repressive drift and its correlative dangers. Cracking down on the FIS, while coopting some dissidents⁹⁶, was one of the first steps taken under Boudiaf. Most of the FIS leaders who were still free were arrested between January and February ; the control of the mosques was reinforced ; the FIS press suspended ; and, ultimately, the FIS was outlawed on March 4, 1992 while half of its local councils were suspended⁹⁷. The crackdown on the FIS provoked demonstrations which turned into violent clashes with the police forces stationed around the mosques. Numerous FIS militants and sympathisers were arrested. The state of emergency was imposed on February 9, 1992 (and is still in force today). The banning of the FIS led those who had never believed that the political system could be reformed from within and who had always advocated armed rebellion as a means to take power to put their ideal

⁹⁶ Saïd Guechi and Sassi Lamouri were included in Ghazali's third government (February 1992). Guechi, who had attempted to take over the FIS in July 1991, was appointed minister for employment. Lamouri, who belonged to an Islamist movement close to Hamas, was appointed minister for religious affairs.

⁹⁷ Although it is incorrect to talk of the FIS, as opposed to the ex-FIS, when referring to the banned party, it has become usual to do so. In this paper I shall follow the norm.

into practice. Their influence over the FIS's sympathisers grew for two main reasons. First, the arrest of FIS leaders beheaded the party of its cadres who had until then checked the violent inclination of some FIS members. Second, because of the repressive drift, many militants and sympathisers joined the armed groups merely to avoid being arrested. Terrorist attacks against security forces thus became frequent, while Rabah Kebir did not manage from his house arrest to make himself heard. His calls for a peaceful solution to the political crisis even seemed to be ignored by Abdezzarak Redjem, a member of the FIS provisional executive bureau who went underground and published communiqués warning the authorities that, in the absence of a political dialogue and of a political party channelling Islamic aspirations, the political struggle would be led by other means. Redjem is reported to have sponsored the formation of the Islamic Armed Movement (MIA) around ex-Bouyalists such as Abdelkhader Chebouti⁹⁸. In July 1992, Mansour Meliani, also a member of the former Bouyali Group, created the Islamic Armed Group⁹⁹. The Islamic Armed Group has never had a proper national structure. It has rather been an umbrella movement gathering several factions which, while sharing a common outlook and co-ordinating some of their ventures, have been independent from each other. As a consequence, it has been referred to as the Islamist Armed Groups (GIAs). In parallel with the crackdown on the FIS, gagging the media (through personnel reshuffles, financial pressures, temporary suspensions and judicial harassment of journalists criticising governmental policy) was reminiscent of the pre-1988 period. Equally worrisome was the dissolution of some local councils controlled by the FLN and the Independents. The political opposition apprehended with great concern the emerging repression-violence circle. The FFS, the FLN, the MDA¹⁰⁰, the Algerian Renewal Party (PRA), Hamas and the Movement of the Islamic Renaissance (MNI)¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ *Le Point* (1124), 2 avril 1994. Bouyali headed from 1982 to 1987 the first Islamist armed group in Algeria.

⁹⁹ P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), p. 224.

¹⁰⁰ The MDA was founded by former President Ben Bella in 1984 while he was in exile. The MDA was legalised in 1990. It advocates pluralistic democracy, reference to a tolerant Islam and soft economic liberalism.

¹⁰¹ The PRA (headed by Nourdine Boukrouh and created in 1989), Hamas (Sheik Mahfoud Nahnah,

criticised the dissolution of the FIS as an unviable solution. The whole opposition -- including the PAGES and the RCD which had approved the banning of the FIS -- called for the lifting of the state of emergency, the closing down of the seven detention camps opened in February, the respect of human rights and civil liberties, the establishment of a political dialogue, and a schedule for the reconvening of the electoral process.

Under Boudiaf, conflicts also characterised the economic scene. Ghozali had started his premiership by making the ostentatious announcement of the "selling out of Hassi Messaoud", the largest oil field. The anticipated sale of gas and oil, as well as the new possibility for foreign firms to participate to the limit of 49% in the exploration and exploitation of new and existing oil and gas fields, was publicised as potentially generating a revenue of \$ 7 billion, which would have allowed Algeria to face its financial difficulties. Because of the symbolic nature of oil as the source of Algeria's "economic independence", opposition crystallised around the project at the National Assembly. The technocrats who, under Hamrouche, had prepared the bill on foreign participation in the exploration and production of hydrocarbons expressed reservations on the politicisation of this measure. They pointed out that it could not be used as an alternative to economic structural reforms because it would not accrue the kind of money Ghozali promised and that it would produce results only in the medium-term¹⁰². Ghozali's policies also alienated foreign and domestic economic agents. He promised the IMF and the IBRD privatisation which never came. His refusal to impose price deregulation and currency devaluation at the recommended pace led to the blocking of an IMF credit in April. The Algerian employers' union protested against the insufficient funds and delays set by Ghozali for the financial stabilisation of public enterprises. The UGTA denounced the low budget devoted to the social net meant to compensate for price increases. The scope of the economic and

1990) and the MNI (Sheik Abdallah Djaballah, 1990) are three Islamist parties advocating the establishment of an Islamic state respecting democratic pluralism. They reject violence. Apart from the MNI, they fully support economic liberalism.

¹⁰² Interview with Sadek Boussena, April 19, 1994. S. Boussena was : minister for energy and petrochemical industries (1988-89) ; minister for mines and industry (1989-91) ; head of the Sonatrach (1988-90) ; and president of OPEC (1990-91).

financial disaster was illustrated in June 1992 by Ghozali's breaking of the debt rescheduling taboo. He was, however, about to be dismissed¹⁰³.

3.1.3. The Boumediénists' comeback¹⁰⁴

Ali Kafi was elected by the High State Council on July 1, 1992 to replace Boudiaf as president of the HSC and Redha Malek was included within the presidential collegiate. Discharged, Ghozali was supplanted by Belaïd Abdesselam, who became prime minister as well as minister for the economy on July 8, 1992. Seven ministers of the Ghozali government were renewed in their functions, of whom Khaled Nezzar (defence) and Lakhdar Brahimi (foreign affairs). The image projected by the new ruling team was that of Algeria's nationalist past, reflecting the regime's attempt to recapture the legitimacy which the Boumediene regime had benefited from. Kafi actively took part in the War of Liberation and, after a diplomatic career, became the general secretary of the organisation for the war veterans in 1990. Malek managed the governmental newspaper during the War, participated in the negotiations of the Evian Accords and in the drafting of Algeria's major doctrinal texts such as the Tripoli Charter and the 1976 National Charter. Malek had a diplomatic career, notably in Washington and London, before returning to domestic politics as the head of the National Consultative Council. As to Abdesselam, his return to politics marked a clear rupture with the Chadli era. As minister for industry and petroleum (1965-77), Abdesselam had, indeed, been a top figure in the Boumediene era and had virulently criticised Chadli's policies.

It thus came as no surprise that Abdesselam's economic programme (September 1992), without wholly rejecting the principle of the market economy, focused on renewed state control and questioned some of the implemented reforms, such as the Central Bank's autonomy or trade liberalisation. It also announced a "war

¹⁰³ The major events marking Boudiaf's leadership are drawn from J. Cesari (1994a), pp. 619-30 and A. Charef (1994), pp. 259-366.

¹⁰⁴ The following paragraphs concentrate on the policies of the HSC under Kafi only until the Winter 1993, for it is then that French policy towards Algeria changed. For details on this period, see J. Cesari (1994a), pp. 630-51 and A. Charef (1994), pp. 366-441.

economy", centred upon drastically reduced imports, in order to ensure the reimbursement of the foreign debt. On the political front, the policy of the new team was characterised in the first months of power by two main orientations : an overture towards the opposition (FIS excluded) and an attempt to eradicate the Islamist armed groups, which, with time, became identified with eradicating the FIS.

While Boudiaf had refused to open a political dialogue with the political parties, Kafi announced in July 1992 that he agreed to meet them in late September in bilateral talks as long as they abided to his conditions : condemnation of terrorism and a clear commitment to establish a modern state and a pluralist democracy, and to uphold the unity of the nation and the respect of fundamental liberties. From the outset, the RCD and the PAGES were hostile to a dialogue which would include Islamist parties such as Hamas and MNI. The other political forces were, on the other hand, favourable to such discussions which they saw as a means to organise the transition towards the resumption of the democratisation process. As to the banned FIS, it declared itself ready to participate in the discussion table on four conditions : releasing all prisoners ; ceasing the arrests ; reinstating the FIS local councils and organising the second round of the elections. Whatever the FIS's conditions, the HSC was not willing to discuss political matters with it. The political dialogue eventually turned short because the political parties refused to back up the HSC's authoritarian policies.

The authorities' second aim was to put an end to the terrorist violence organised by the MIA and the GIAs. A repressive security system was gradually put in place throughout the Summer to emerge fully in the Autumn with the adoption of a harsh anti-terrorist law (October 2), the systematic deployment of anti-terrorist squads, and the enforcement of a curfew in seven *wilayas* (December 2). Progressively, the struggle against terrorism transformed into a struggle against the FIS : on November 28, Abdesselam announced that most of the remaining FIS-controlled local councils would be dissolved. In accordance with an August 1992 decree allowing the authorities to dissolve any organisation labelled as a threat to

public order, he dissolved cultural and charitable organisations as well as Islamic Unions whose members had been FIS militants.

3.2. France's mixed support (January 1992 - January 1993)

3.2.1. The French response to the coup d'état

As indicated above, the French government urged a resumption of the electoral process when the parliamentary elections were postponed in June 1991. It was, therefore, in the order of things that the spokesman for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs would welcome the event. A certain embarrassment as to the results of the first round was, however, discernible in his declaration as well as in Dumas's : both refused to comment "prematurely" on the results of the elections. Nevertheless, the spokesman for the Quai d'Orsay adopted a well-disposed prudence towards the future parliamentary majority, arguing that :

"(...) whatever the choice of the Algerian people, the relations that unite them to the French people are so deep in all domains that they should maintain themselves. France, for its own part, will continue to promote their strengthening."¹⁰⁵

As the intervention of the Algerian Army became evident, the minister for foreign affairs claimed that "(...) France does not intend at all to call on anybody to correct the [results of the] first round (...)"¹⁰⁶, which, without indicating whether France would support a coup, at least, denoted that it was not itself acting behind the scenes for a cancellation of the elections.

Weighting the pros and cons

The coup d'état put the French authorities in a very uncomfortable situation because, in practice, they could neither officially support nor condemn the event. They consequently chose a middle-ground. It was clear that the French government

¹⁰⁵ Declaration, December 30, 1991 in MAE (novembre-décembre 1991), p. 176.

¹⁰⁶ Press conference in Abidjan, January 8, 1992 in MAE (janvier-février 1992), p. 24.

could not officially back the coup. Even though the Algerian Army presented its intervention as a means "to save democracy", it escaped nobody that it had reacted chiefly to safeguard its own position within Algerian politics. The cancellation of the elections represented a fundamental break in the democratisation process initiated by Chadli. Since France had been standing for this democratisation process, it could not suddenly retract and welcome the coup. In addition, this would have contradicted its official foreign policy orientation. No open support could, thus, be contemplated. But the coup also generated a certain apprehension. In particular, it seems that Mitterrand dreaded the consequences of a return of the military establishment to the forefront of Algerian politics. Even though the scope of armed confrontation between Islamist armed groups and the authorities was not projected, it was well suspected that the marginalisation of the Islamist current would not be done gently and that it would face some resistance. A new era of authoritarianism coupled with a greater state of instability was, thus, to be expected.

This apprehension had to be counterbalanced by the fact that the coup allowed to hamper the FIS from taking power. On the whole, the FIS was perceived as a reactionary and regressive political force. It was not doubted in Paris that the FIS was undemocratic. Commenting on the Algerian events in late January 1992, Mitterrand, indeed, argued that "(...) fundamentalism (...) does not appear to me as the surest way to reach democracy."¹⁰⁷ Yet, whatever the French politicians' personal feelings were, other considerations were at stake. The head of the secret services affirmed that he advised no support for the coup in order to preserve the future of Franco-Algerian relations in case the FIS later took power in less favourable conditions¹⁰⁸. Within the administration of the Quai d'Orsay, the head of the Maghreb-Mashreq department, Pierre Lafrance, projected that a FIS government in Algiers would not dramatically affect France's economic and strategic interests. He also thought that, within the FIS, there were some moderates with whom the French authorities could find an

¹⁰⁷ Press conference in Oman, January 31, 1992 in MAE (janvier-février 1992), p. 92.

¹⁰⁸ C. Silberzahn (1995), p. 292.

understanding¹⁰⁹. Part of this argument had found an echo at the Elysée. Indeed, the French president maintained that the Algerians were more dependent upon France than the reverse and that, consequently, the Islamists would have to tone down their anti-French positions, if in power¹¹⁰. As for Dumas, he had changed his discourse on the FIS prior to the coup. In a press conference held in Morocco in April 1991, he argued that the FIS represented "the expression of Algerian identity, of the Muslim religious spirit and of its political tradition"¹¹¹. Since the FIS had won the votes of a quarter of the electorate, it was thought that it might have to be included in the political game. This judgement was reflected in an August 1992 statement when Dumas said in relation to Ali Kafi's proposal for a political dialogue excluding the FIS : "Our hope remains to see a national dialogue taking place with the least exclusions possible."¹¹² Explaining today what he meant by that, he answers he thought that it was a mistake on the part of the Algerian authorities to have cancelled the electoral process and then to have assumed that the Islamist political force could be defeated by combat. He also says he then thought that, if a dialogue there was to be, it had to be established not with self-appointed interlocutors but with those who were at the centre of the political rift¹¹³.

Two linked factors, thus, militated in favour of a disapproval of the coup d'état : the risks entailed by the coup (authoritarianism, repression, counter-violence) and the view that a political compromise taking into account the Islamic aspiration of part of the population was possible. Yet, the French authorities could not wholly condemn the coup either. They would have had to take concrete measures, such as the non-recognition of the new authorities, a freeze of bilateral relations, etc... This was completely unimaginable because it would have implied that the French government wished the victory of the FIS, which was not the case. It simply wished the political situation to remain stable even if that meant that the Islamists be recognised as political

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ In MAE (mars-avril 1991), pp. 94-5.

¹¹² Interview in *Réalités*, 13 août 1992.

¹¹³ Interview with Roland Dumas, May 16, 1995.

partners, although under a strict control. In addition, clearly condemning the coup, would have had the consequence of blocking the channels of communication between the two rims of the Mediterranean. In that case, France could have lost a potential means of influence over the course of the events in Algeria.

France blows hot and cold

In order to express reservations without a clear condemnation, the French authorities chose to talk with two voices. Whereas Mitterrand protested against the interruption of the elections, Dumas cultivated a softer stance. The first statement of the French president (January 14, 1992) was undoubtedly critical of the Algerian authorities and the tone peremptory :

"(...) the engaged process towards elections in Algeria has been interrupted and that represents at the very least an abnormal act since it comes down to establish a state of exception. (...) the Algerian leaders have to knot again at the earliest the threads of a democratic life that had begun and which will have to (...) be carried through."¹¹⁴

Dumas's judgement on the Algerian High Security Council's decision was much less severe :

"It is not France's place to intervene in this affair. The Algerian leaders were faced to a difficult situation. They considered (...) that it was the least inadequate solution. We now have to trust them for things to be restored when the time comes."¹¹⁵

As to France's relations with Algeria, Dumas argued in the same declaration that France should maintain economic support to help stabilise the political realm :

"(...) France has to express its solidarity with the Algerian people. We have too many things in common not to take further interest in what happens in Algeria and to turn our back on this people and this country under the pretext that it is experiencing a difficult phase. (...) If we want to cure the causes [of the Algerian malaise], we have to (...) take measures to that effect, heal the disease, assist [economic] development so that this youth (...) finds a certain satisfaction in living at home rather than in finding refuge in extremist stances."

¹¹⁴ Press conference in Luxembourg, January 14, 1992 in MAE (janvier-février 1992), p. 55.

¹¹⁵ Interview on Radio Shalom, January 21, 1992, in MAE (janvier-février 1992), p.67.

Whereas Dumas had argued towards the end of January that economic aid to Algeria was not to be closely tied to the restoration of the democratisation process¹¹⁶, a week later, and in a context of emerging violence in Algeria, Mitterrand warned that :

"France is profoundly attached to the carrying-on and development of [Franco-Algerian] relations inasmuch as the principles that it judges as essential -- and the progress towards democracy and the respect of human rights are part of them -- will be respected."¹¹⁷

The deliberate discrepancy between the discourse of the president and that of his foreign minister aimed at showing that, even though the French government would not cease its relations with the new authorities in Algiers -- supposedly because of its solidarity with the people -- it strongly encouraged them to move beyond the accomplished fact. If, this time, a "telling silence" was not resorted to, it was because the French highest authorities were determined to put their message across. This, of course, generated strong reactions in Algiers. Ghozali denounced France's interference in Algeria's domestic affairs and -- as invariably occurs in such cases -- implicitly brought for consideration Mitterrand's ministerial functions in 1954 arguing that "There are some people in France (...) who continue to live Algeria's problems as though they were theirs because they still have not accepted our independence (...)"¹¹⁸.

Divisions within the Socialist Party

On the whole, the Cresson and Bérégovoy governments showed great unity over France's Algeria policy. Nevertheless, there were divisions within the Socialist Party. They did not have any particular impact on the formulation and implementation of France's Algeria policy which was well under Dumas's control. Yet, they are worth mentioning. In general, the attitude adopted was one of wait-and-see in front of

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Interview in *Al Hayat* on January 27, 1992 in MAE (janvier-février 1992), p. 81.

¹¹⁸ Quoted in *Revue de Presse Maghreb, Proche et Moyen Orient*, janvier 1992, (361), p. 11.

a dilemma that everybody would have preferred not to be confronted with. On each side of this general middle-ground, two currents of opinion can be guessed from the public interventions made by party or government members. Some were in line with the substance of governmental policy but went slightly further than the official stance by pronouncing the very words that had been avoided by Mitterrand. Thus, Bernard Kouchner, minister for health and humanitarian action, declared in late April 1992 that "the current [Algerian] government was born out of a coup d'état" and that "the progression of Islamism will not be stopped by force."¹¹⁹

On the opposite side, and somewhat against governmental policy, some supported the "preventive coup d'état". It was the case, for instance, of Georges Morin, Claude Cheysson and, it seems, Pierre Joxe (defence minister). On the basis of the analysis of the Algerian Army's officer corps¹²⁰, they projected that the FIS's coming to power was bound to lead sooner or later to the Army's intervention because of the risks that such an eventuality entailed. They diagnosed three main risks. Firstly, Chadli might be too weak to resist an initiative of the FIS-dominated parliament to revise the Constitution. He would probably make some concessions to the FIS whose moderate wing would have to give in to the radicals so as to catch votes in the run for the presidential elections. Presidential indulgence would generate opposition among the population, notably in Kabylia and in the Southern Sahara. There would, thus, be a risk of a secession war threatening the unity of the Army and, therefore, the cohesion of the Algerian state. Secondly, by searing off the world community, a FIS regime, would isolate Algeria internationally whereas it needed foreign financial resources for its economy to recover. Thirdly, if the FIS attempted to "export its revolution" it would seek to destabilise the neighbouring regimes and this threatened to suck the whole region in Algeria's political turmoil. Faced with risks of civil war, economic collapse, and regional instability, the Algerian Army would intervene.

Within the French Socialist Party those who supported the Algerian Army's

¹¹⁹ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 12 janvier 1993.

¹²⁰ An account of the Algerian Army's analysis of the risks entailed by an eventual seizure of power by the FIS can be found in A. Charef (1994), pp. 253-4 or in H. Roberts (1993a), pp. 451-2.

line argued that, since the Army would intervene, it would be more efficient if it did so before the FIS controlled the wheels of government. They also had a four-point argument to rebuff those who, like Mitterrand or Kouchner, pointed their forefingers at the military-backed takeover more or less discretely. In the Socialist Party's newspaper and in *Le Monde*¹²¹, Morin thus argued that : (1) emphasising the military nature of the coup was to ignore that for the past thirty years every Algerian governing institution had been military-backed ; (2) democracy made no sense if it resulted in the access to power of a party that had vowed to destroy it ; (3) with 3 million FIS-voters out of 13 million registered voters, the FIS hardly had a popular mandate to head for a revision of the Constitution towards the implementation of the *shari'a*; and (4) no one "could take the liberty of telling the Algerians that they should have 'attempted the experience' at all costs." Morin was joined in his views by Cheysson (European MP, chairman of the European delegation for the Maghreb) who described as sheer nonsense Mitterrand's and Dumas's fixation on the interruption of the electoral process in a country where there is not yet a democratic tradition¹²². Joxe seemed to share Cheysson's view when he argued that the French political establishment should be "a bit wary when it judges those countries that have acquired their Independence in very cruel circumstances"¹²³. This current of opinion, critical of the chosen course for France's Algeria policy, does not seem to have succeeded in influencing governmental policy towards a greater support to the HSC. As examined below, until January 1993, France's backing of the Algerian regime was more a matter of words than of deeds.

3.2.2. A strained relationship

After the coup and until January 1993, when Dumas went to Algiers specifically to repair the troubled relations, France's Algeria policy was characterised by inconsistency between official discourse and actual deeds. The official discourse,

¹²¹ *Le Monde*, 15 janvier 1992 and reprint given to the author by Morin of his interview with *Vendredi* in mid-January 1992.

¹²² Interview on April 22, 1994.

¹²³ In *Le Monde*, 21 janvier 1992.

after what had been perceived in Algiers as Mitterrand's diatribes, was one of support for, and solidarity with, the Algerian people and the regime. Dumas reiterated this policy stance all along. His address of February 5, 1992 to the Association of the Foreign Press sums up France's discourse :

"On several occasions and since the arrival in power of a new team, France has renewed its willingness to continue to help Algeria. (...) I would like to say here to the Algerian authorities France's willingness to help Algeria and the Algerian people at this critical juncture which, I do not doubt, Algeria will be able to overcome if an effort is made -- a significant effort to assist the economy of this country."¹²⁴

Yet, political relations did not illustrate France's discourse. Neither did economic co-operation.

After the coup, the relationship between the Cresson and the Ghozali governments opened with a mini-crisis which resulted, on the one hand, from Mitterrand's harsh words, and on the other, from Dumas's manoeuvres. Immediately after the establishment of the HSC, Dumas sent Pierre Lafrance, director of the Quai d'Orsay's Maghreb-Mashreq department, to Algiers. Press reports described the visit as "a mission of information and contacts with Algeria's political forces" and, whereas the spokesman for the Quai d'Orsay initially indicated that these would include the FIS, he thereafter denied that this had been the case¹²⁵. For his part, the French Ambassador accounted for Lafrance's trip as a mission of contact with the HSC¹²⁶. According to the Ambassador, the object of the visit was primarily to incite the Ghozali government to find a political remedy to the risks of instability stemming from the coup d'état by recognising the force of political Islam. Lafrance had a ready-for-use solution : to find a political personality who, as head of state, could please every political currents and rally behind him the allegiance of the Islamists. This personality was Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, a politician with whom Dumas was on friendly terms. As a young lawyer, Dumas had defended FLN members during the

¹²⁴ In MAE (janvier-février 1992), p.116.

¹²⁵ *Le Monde*, 18 and 21 janvier 1992.

¹²⁶ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

War of Independence. Taleb Ibrahimi was one of them. Taleb Ibrahimi represents the religious current of the FLN which, ever since Independence, has played the role of a lobby within the state apparatus for Arabisation and Islamisation. With the rise of the FIS, he has come to be seen as a "synthesis man" representing both historical and religious legitimacy, a "link man" between the FLN and the FIS¹²⁷. Lafrance's message made the Algerian foreign minister blanch all the more because Lafrance, a close friend of the Iranian foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, brought Iran into the picture. He argued that the *mullahs* could bring their help to a political solution by finding a way of cooling the FIS's ardour. Since the Rafsanjani regime was denounced in Algiers for meddling in Algeria's internal affairs -- Iran had condemned the cancellation of the elections and showed an open support for the FIS -- the suggestion was not only wholly unacceptable for Algiers but also dismissed as improper.

The French Ambassador to Algiers, whose services had been short-circuited, had warned Dumas's emissary that the message would provoke "reactions". If the political strategy behind the proposal was not senseless (had not Ghazali brought Islamists into government ?), he thought the approach ham-fisted. In addition to Lakhdar Brahimi's frank response to Lafrance, the Algerian government reacted by recalling its Ambassadors from Paris and Teheran. The Iranian Ambassador to Algiers was also expelled¹²⁸.

Throughout the year, all sorts of signs, including the presence of FIS activists in France¹²⁹, were underlined in the Algerian press as evidence of a Paris-Khartoum-

¹²⁷ Taleb Ibrahimi is the son of *Sheik* Bachir Brahimi who had been president of the Association of the Reformist Ulema after the death in 1940 of its founder, Abdelhamid Ben Badis. As a member of the wartime FLN, Ibrahimi was arrested by the French in 1957. Under Ben Bella, he was jailed (1963-65) for his criticisms of the regime and notably its socialist orientation. Under Boumediene, he benefited from the policy of co-optation of the *ulema* and was appointed minister for education (1965-70) and minister for information and culture (1970-77). Under Benjedid, he remained in government although he was attributed in 1982 a less sensitive portfolio -- the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was dismissed after "Black October". Biographic information in JJ. Lavenue (1993), p. 228.

¹²⁸ *Le Monde*, 21 janvier 1992 and *Middle East International* (417), January 24, 1992. Diplomatic relations with Iran were eventually broken off in March 1993 (*Le Monde*, 30 mars 1993).

¹²⁹ FIS militants of a high profile such as Kameredine Kherbane, Rabah Kebir and Anwar Haddam stayed in France before being expelled. In addition, the Algerian Brotherhood in France, created in February 1991 to support the FIS electoral campaign, continued to function and evidence of fundraising operations for the benefit of the FIS emerged with the dismantling of a counterfeiting trade operation in October 1992 (the *Lacoste* affair).

Teheran axis conspiring against Algeria. *El Watan* spread rumours of contacts between the French secret services and the FIS (then referred to as "France, Iran, Sudan") in Karthoum before the cancellation of the elections¹³⁰. *Le Matin* quoted the Spanish newspaper *El Pais* which leaked a French working document prepared for the account of the Elysée in which the hypothesis of a FIS takeover was duly analysed¹³¹. Members of the ruling elite also resorted to this conspiracy theme, recurrent in Algeria's politics. In August 1992 the Algerian prime minister denounced the work of "the foreign hand" -- i.e. France in the Algerian political wording -- in the bomb attack against Algiers Airport which killed nine people and wounded over a hundred¹³². At the end of the year, Ali Haroun, member of the HSC, condemned the French government for "having two irons in the fire"¹³³, which meant it had a "FIS joker" up its sleeve.

The Algerian press campaign and the authorities' unfounded accusations were a protest against France's attitude. Quite apart from the crisis triggered by Lafrance's visit, the Algerian government discovered that, despite its discourse of support and solidarity, the French government was, in fact, unwilling to throw its weight behind Boudiaf or Kafi. It was so because the French government doubted Boudiaf's ability to pull Algeria out of crisis while the security, political and economic situation was worsening. Thereafter, his murder in June 1992 reinforced the view that resistance to a from-top-to-bottom reform of the Algerian political system was strong within the state apparatus itself. The return to office of Boumediénists and, particularly, of Belaïd Abdesselam, was received with great reservation in Paris because of their nationalist, and strongly anti-French, outlook.

In this general context, the French government's policy was to maintain relations with Algiers, but to a strict minimum. Thus, the February 1992 financial accord amounting to FF 5 billion (about \$ 1 billion) was lower than before and was only made up of commercial credits. Certainly, the French government put pressure

¹³⁰ *Middle East International* (417), January 24, 1992.

¹³¹ *Le Matin*, 14 décembre 1992.

¹³² In *Le Monde*, 28 août 1992.

¹³³ Haroun's interview in the French newspaper *La Croix*, quoted in *Le Matin*, 14 décembre 1992.

on American and Japanese banks to stay within the international bank syndicate headed by the *Crédit Lyonnais*. An accord was eventually reached on March 4, 1992, allowing the release of a \$ 1.45 billion loan¹³⁴. Although this helped Algeria in repaying part of its non-guaranteed debt, the French government's mediation concerned an operation in discussion since 1991.

Throughout 1992, political relations were far from being at their best, as demonstrated by bilateral exchanges. Except for the visit of the Algerian minister for foreign affairs to Paris on March 4-5, 1992¹³⁵, there was no contact at high levels between the respective governments before July 1992, that is six months after the coup. Certainly, in June the French government had sent the minister for agriculture and his counsellor (Gorges Morin) to Algiers, as well as the deputy minister for trade, who headed the delegation of French enterprises at the commercial fair organised by Algiers¹³⁶. Yet, the absence of an official high-state visit, if only of the foreign affairs minister, indicated the French government's unwillingness to bring too strong an approval to the policies of the Boudiaf regime. At Boudiaf's request, Mitterrand had accepted to meet him in Paris on July 16, 1992. The meeting did not occur since Boudiaf was killed before. But, significantly, the visit was to be secret¹³⁷. Dumas eventually went to Algiers in order to attend Boudiaf's funeral and promised that "France [would] not economise on its help to Algeria and that this [would] be visible in the days that follow[ed]"¹³⁸. The Algerians were in fact to wait for another six months. In the meantime, it took an unusual four months for Sid Ahmed Ghazali, who had been replaced by Abdesselam and appointed in late July 1992 Ambassador to Paris, to be accredited (December 9, 1992)¹³⁹ by the Elysée. The official justification for this delay -- the French president's health problems and the protocol -- may have been true, but it is evident that the difficult relations with Ghazali that occurred during the Gulf War and the role he played during the coup did not favour him in Paris. In

¹³⁴ Y. Troquet (le) (1994), p. 500.

¹³⁵ *El Watan*, 6-7 mars 1992.

¹³⁶ Y. Troquet (le) (1994), p. 500 and interview of G. Morin in *Le Soir d'Algérie*, 28 juin 1992.

¹³⁷ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

¹³⁸ Quoted in *Le Matin*, 14 décembre 1992.

¹³⁹ Y. Troquet (le) (1994), p. 499.

any case, Ghozali's non-accreditation was perceived in Algiers as another mark of ostracism.

By the end of 1992 relations between France and Algeria were thus particularly strained. Neither political relations nor economic co-operation illustrated France's discourse of support to and solidarity with the Algerian regime. The coherence of France's Algeria policy was consequently seriously undermined. This was to change three months before the French parliamentary elections.

4. Friendship otherwise than just with words (January - March 1993)

Against all odds, Dumas made an official visit to Algiers only three months before the March 1993 French parliamentary elections, initiating a *rapprochement* with Algiers just as the socialists were about to exit from the political game. Increased economic aid was immediately granted. Firm political backing was provided with the formal invitation to Paris of Abdesselam whose nomination as prime minister had generated strong reservations in Paris several months prior to the invitation. There are not yet any truly satisfactory answers to this paradoxical attitude. Two clues can, nevertheless, be identified. It seems that a reassessment of the Algerian crisis and of the power struggle occurred to the effect that the Bérégovoy government thought that it was too late to seek a compromise and that not supporting Algiers could indirectly help a FIS violent takeover. The change in French Ambassadors may also have played a role to the extent that the new Ambassador wished to start his mandate on a friendly footing with Algiers.

4.1. Dumas in Algiers - Abdesselam in Paris

The decision to organise a visit of the French minister for foreign affairs to Algiers was taken during the Autumn of 1992. The new Ambassador to Algiers, Bernard Kessedjian, had taken his position in late September 1992 with the aim of improving the troubled relations. In October, he announced that Dumas would soon

come to Algeria to say that France wanted to maintain "a sure, friendly and trustful relationship" with the Algerian Republic¹⁴⁰. Because of the non-accreditation of Ghozali until December, Dumas's trip was, however, postponed until January 1993.

After his visit on January 8-9, 1993, Dumas declared :

"I think my visit was useful. More than misunderstandings, a shadow existed on the relations between France and Algeria (...) During my trip to Algiers I had the opportunity to say (...) that during this difficult phase France would stand by the side of Algeria and of the Algerians, and that this would translate into a political backing of the leaders of today's Algeria, as well as economic [and] financial support (...) As regards bilateral political relations as well as French backing of Algeria on the international scene, things have become normal again."¹⁴¹

In addition to Dumas's promises of a strong political and economic backing -- promises which were also made by Mitterrand in his message to the head of the HSC¹⁴² -- the French authorities moved to reassure their counterparts on the issue of Islamism. On January 7, the spokesman for the Quai d'Orsay expressed France's concerns as to "the rise of intolerance under the cover of democracy in Algeria"¹⁴³ ; Dumas declared that "France condemn[ed] terrorism and [had] proved (...) that when it was aware of activities [on French soil] which, in one way or the other, could lead to terrorist acts detrimental to Algeria, it took the appropriate measures."¹⁴⁴ To show that French reservations as to Abdesselam were over, the Algerian prime minister was officially invited to France by Bérégovoy.

In Algiers, Dumas had affirmed that it was "normal that, in a period such as this, friendship be expressed otherwise than just with words"¹⁴⁵. Almost immediately after his departure, the director of the French Treasury was dispatched to Algiers to discuss a financial accord which was concluded on February 13, 1993 by the French minister for economic and financial affairs, Michel Sapin. The credit package totalled

¹⁴⁰ In *Le Monde*, 21 octobre 1992.

¹⁴¹ Interview on RTL, January 10, 1993 in MAE (janvier-février 1993), p. 27.

¹⁴² Reproduced in *El Moudjahid*, 10 janvier 1993.

¹⁴³ Quoted in *El Moudjahid*, 8-9 janvier 1993.

¹⁴⁴ Press conference on January 9, 1993, Algiers in MAE (janvier-février 1993), p. 19. Dumas was referring to the expulsion of a few FIS militants.

¹⁴⁵ Quoted in *Algérie Actualité* (1422), 13-19 janvier 1993.

FF 6.1 billion (about \$ 1.1 billion) for 1993. It included : a FF 5 billion commercial credit guaranteed by the Coface (FF 1 billion deferred credits for the purchase of vehicles and spare parts, FF 800 million still available from the FF 4 billion revolving credit, FF 2.2 billion fresh credits for miscellaneous purchases and FF 1 billion for food credits) ; a state loan of FF 1 billion for balance of payments aid and the financing of capital equipment purchases ; a FF 100 million loan financed by the *Caisse française de développement* aimed at financing joint-venture operations. The release of this loan, blocked since July 1991, was allowed by the signature of a reciprocal accord on the protection of investments¹⁴⁶.

In general, the Algerian press welcomed the new aid package. However, *Algérie Actualité* pinpointed that French financial help was not more significant than in previous years and that the French authorities continued to reject the principle of a bilateral rescheduling of Algeria's debt¹⁴⁷. As to the Algerian authorities, they seemed to make the best out of it since Abdesselam accepted Bérégovoy's invitation and went to Paris on February 18-19, 1993. While Abdesselam's visit sanctioned the recovery of the dialogue with the French socialists, its main object was to prepare Algeria's future. The French parliamentary elections were due in March and opinion polls predicted the success of the Right. Avoiding tactlessness, Abdesselam's meetings with the opposition parties were not limited to the Right : he also met Georges Marchais whose Communist Party had called since January 1992 for strong French support for the Algerian regime. Whether in front of the French highest authorities, the French political parties, the employers' union, or the emigrant community, Abdesselam defended his programme : a three to five-year transition period to let the economy recover before heading towards the resumption of the democratic process. Despite spectacular terrorist outrages such as the attempted killing of General Khaled Nezzar on the very day Sapin was in Algiers, the Algerian prime minister argued that the security situation was under control and that the Islamist armed groups were soon

¹⁴⁶ *Le Monde*, 16 février 1993.

¹⁴⁷ *Algérie Actualité* (1427), 17-23 février 1993.

to be dismantled¹⁴⁸.

4.2. Unclear motives

It is difficult to understand why the decision to bring a firmer support to Algiers was taken at that particular stage since the French parliamentary elections were scheduled for March 1993 and the socialists defeated beforehand. In *Jeune Afrique*, Paul-Marie de la Gorce argued that the idea that it was no longer possible to "sulk" the Algerian regime arose from two main considerations. First, in a context of growing political violence, it was unrealistic to believe in the possibility of a prompt return to democratic life. Second, France would have much to lose if the FIS, now radicalised by its armed struggle, came to power¹⁴⁹.

Dumas explained his new policy in accordance with the first consideration. On January 7, 1993, in his declaration to the personnel of his Ministry, he said indeed :

"(...) the Algerians need our solidarity. The economic and social crisis that hits them directly has not allowed the pursuit of the democratic experience, let's regret it and go beyond our regrets. History commands us to keep up a dialogue in order to help them rediscover the way to development and democracy."¹⁵⁰

When asked today why the *rapprochement* with Algeria was decided, Dumas provides no additional clue. He repeats his January 1993 stance while emphasising that France dealt with the Abdesselam regime merely because it represented the legal government. France, he said, only aimed at supporting the Algerian people, not the regime¹⁵¹. All French governments have used this sophism in order to avoid criticisms highlighting compromising relations with a repressive and corrupted regime. Dumas's clarification, thus, does not help to understand the underlying reasons for the *rapprochement*. It merely indicates a willingness to minimise its impact.

In line with de la Gorce, it may be suggested that clearer support to Algiers as

¹⁴⁸ *El Moudjahid*, 19-20 février 1993 and *Le Monde*, 21-22 février 1993.

¹⁴⁹ *Jeune Afrique*, 4 février 1993.

¹⁵⁰ In MAE (janvier-février 1993), p. 14.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Roland Dumas, May 16, 1995.

from January 1993 derived from a reassessment of the Algerian crisis and of the power struggle taking place there. The idea that the FIS was unable to overthrow the regime by force arose only in Summer 1993. Until then, the risk of a violent takeover and of the establishment of a radical Islamist government was thought to be within the odds. Inasmuch as the Algerian authorities were unwilling to find a compromise with the FIS, not supporting them entailed the risk of indirectly helping a FIS takeover. The French government would have preferred a compromise with the Islamist substance in a framework where it could be controlled. In no way, however, did it wish to have to deal with a revolutionary Islamist regime in Algiers. Hence, it seems, the 1993 *rapprochement*.

The change in Ambassadors to Algiers may also have played a role in the redefinition of French policy. Kessedjian never hid his dislike for the FIS and was on relatively good terms with Abdesselam. In addition, Kessedjian had been Dumas's *cabinet*¹⁵² director for several years and thus counted among Dumas's close acquaintances, which may explain why Kessedjian's initiative for a *rapprochement* was well relayed to the Quai d'Orsay.

To sum up, it is worth emphasising that, whereas the French media tend to affirm that France's Algeria policy has been one of unconditional support to the Algerian regime since the January 1992 coup d'état, the Cresson and Bérégovoy governments, in fact, led a very cautious policy which, as indicated by the minister for foreign affairs, consisted in "manoeuvring on the razor's edge"¹⁵³. The French government did not wish to see a FIS regime in Algiers. But it also dreaded the consequences of a complete exclusion of the Islamist mainstream from Algeria's politics. In maintaining relations with the HSC, it hoped to be able to incite it to a compromise with the Islamists -- a compromise whose outline was not well defined

¹⁵² The French *cabinet* is the team of official and unofficial advisers grouped around each minister and thus bears no relation to the cabinet in the British sense.

¹⁵³ Interview with Roland Dumas, May 16, 1995.

but which could have led, under the leadership of such a personality as Taleb Ibrahimi, to a political solution of (controlled) integration of the Islamists in the political game. The Socialist Party as a whole did not support this policy line but governmental unity was maintained. In addition, supporters of the "preventive coup d'état" did not manage to influence Dumas's policy which, despite words of support and solidarity, was one of minimal contact with Algiers. In January 1993, after one year of tensed relations with Algiers which accused France of having a FIS joker up its sleeve, the French government unexpectedly decided to more clearly back the Algerian regime. It seems that this change in policy was taken in the light of two considerations. First, that it was too late for conciliation to be reached in Algeria and, second, that the risk of a FIS violent takeover was possible. This policy of greater support to Algiers was also followed, at least until a certain point, by the new right-wing government appointed after the Right's triumph in the late March 1993 parliamentary elections.

Chapter Two

The Balladur government (April 1993 - May 1995)

The Balladur government had to deal with three different governments in Algeria and with two presidents heading different governing institutions (see table 1). Despite these numerous and important changes, the Algerian leaders were all confronted with the same problem : getting their country out of a worsening economic and political crisis. Except under Abdesselam, they attempted to do so more or less in the same way : they dealt with the debt problem by finally agreeing to reschedule, sought to eradicate Islamist armed groups and opened a political dialogue with the opposition forces, including the FIS until September 1994. It is by reference to these issues that the Balladur government had to define its Algeria policy. They will thus be explored before turning to an analysis of the Balladur government's discourse and policy. The section dealing with Algerian domestic politics, while accounting for rescheduling, puts great emphasis on the political dialogue process. The various positions of the parties involved are identified along the "eradicator"/"conciliator" line in order to demonstrate that the current power struggle cannot be read as a mere fight of "democratic enlightenment" against "totalitarian obscurantism". In addition, particular care is devoted to demonstrate that the Algerian authorities' dialogue initiative was designed to fail. Indeed, it really looks as though dialogue with the FIS was initiated with the mere aim to discredit the outlawed party by pointing at its inherent uncompromising behaviour whereas, in reality, the FIS's unwillingness to submit to the Algerian government had its root in the latter's uncompromising negotiation strategy.

The inquiry into France's Algeria policy under Balladur is divided into two sections corresponding to a change in the French government's approach to political dialogue in Algeria. From April 1993 to September 1994, despite an apparently conciliatory stance, the main feature of the Balladur government's policy was its

espousal of the Algerian eradicators' arguments for refusing to negotiate a political settlement with the FIS. By contrast, from September 1994 to the May 1995 presidential elections which brought down the Balladur Administration, the French government showed more openness towards a conciliatory solution to the Algerian conflict. Regarding the first period, marked by French backing of the Algerian eradicators, the study focuses on the ambiguities and contradictions of the official discourse with the aim to demonstrate that, despite a discourse emphasising the need for conciliation in Algeria, the Balladur government opposed a compromise with the FIS. In addition, the ways in which the French government brought its support to Algiers are examined. Other states' positions in relation to the Algerian crisis are briefly reviewed in the light of France's drumming up international support for Algiers. Insofar as the second period is concerned, the shift towards greater firmness *vis-à-vis* the eradicators is accounted for by showing the evolution of Juppé's discourse on the issue of political dialogue in Algeria. Particular attention is given to the issue of governmental disunity which characterised this period (September 1994 - May 1995) and which made France's policy look like a muddle. Finally, the reasons for Juppé's change of heart are analysed as well as its limits : it was not accompanied by a change in policy measures, thus reflecting the government's unwillingness to force a conciliation with the FIS in Algeria.

1. Domestic politics in Algeria

1.1. Failed attempts at political dialogue

A detailed treatment of the various rounds of talks held from March 1993 to September 1994 between the Algerian Administration and the civil society (political parties, associations, and various personalities) would be repetitive. Indeed, most of the problems to be discussed and the positions of the various parties concerned have more or less remained the same throughout. It will suffice, therefore, to establish the central aim sought in the dialogue and to discuss the main issue at stake, that is the

inclusion or not of the banned FIS within the dialogue.

1.1.1. The aim of the dialogue : legitimacy

Kafi's attempt at starting talks with the opposition afresh, after the failure of September 1992, was driven by the prospect of the expiring mandate of the High State Council (December 31, 1993). New ruling institutions needed to be created and Kafi hoped that, if a consensus could be reached through dialogue on such institutions, these would acquire the legitimacy which the HSC had lacked. For Kafi, dialogue was not a framework within which proposals for Algeria's future institutions could be advanced by the civil society. Rather, he saw it as a means to get a public approval of the HSC's own scheme which he had outlined on January 14, 1993 and which had been advocated by Abdesselam during his visit in Paris.

The backbone of the HSC's programme was the creation of a new governing body with a three-year mandate to oversee the transition to the return to the ballot box¹. Most political parties were hostile to this proposal which they denounced as a means to maintain in power the HSC in another form. Yet, after discussions held with the civil society between March and June 1993, this was eventually the adopted solution in the "Draft platform on the national consensus on the transitional period"². Other rounds of talks were convened under the Malek government within the framework of a National Dialogue Commission³. They were aimed at bringing as many parties into the consensus before a National Dialogue Conference was convened to sanction the blueprint on the transitional period. The blueprint provided for three ruling bodies : a state presidency, a government, and a National Transition Council supposed to replace the former Consultative National Council but not fundamentally different since its members were to be state-nominated.

The National Dialogue Conference took place on January 25-26, 1994⁴. Most

¹ *MEI* (442), January 22, 1993.

² *The Financial Times*, June 23, 1993 and *Algérie Actualité* (1447), 6-12 juillet 1993.

³ The National Dialogue Commission was created on October 13, 1993. It was headed by five civilians and three Army Generals. *Le Monde*, 17-18 octobre 1993.

⁴ The convening of the Conference having been postponed to January 1993, the HSC's mandate was

political parties boycotted it. Among them : the FLN, the FFS, and the RCD. The RCD did so in opposition to the authorities' attempts at negotiating with the FIS (see below). The FFS, the FLN and other smaller parties were unwilling to participate in a "great show" aimed at "enthroning at the head of the state a candidate coming from the seraglio"⁵. Their boycott was also intended to protest against the government's neglect of their demands in favour of a return to civil peace : lifting the state of emergency, releasing political prisoners and ceasing executions. Hamas, the MNI, the PRA and others left the Conference because, on the eve of its opening, a provision on the selection process for the presidency of the Republic was reintroduced into the platform whereas they had previously obtained its abrogation⁶. The amendment of the platform implied that the president would be nominated, as usual, by the military establishment. Without surprise, it was exactly what happened. General Lamine Zeroual, who had been appointed defence minister in July 1993⁷, was designated president of the Algerian Republic on January 31, 1994. The Malek government was reconfirmed⁸. The National Transition Council was installed under Sifi's Premiership on May 18, 1994⁹.

Since the most significant political parties had boycotted the Conference, the legitimacy which the authorities had hoped for was simply not achieved. Under Zeroual, the objective sought in continuing to propose a political dialogue was to obtain *a posteriori* such a legitimacy. Between March and September 1994, there were four rounds of talks aimed at bringing the political parties that had boycotted the Conference to join the state-managed political game and to accept seats in the National

prolonged for a month.

⁵ H. Aït Ahmed in *Le Monde* 27 janvier 1994.

⁶ A reproduction of the amended platform can be found in *Liberté*, 24 janvier 1993. Initial versions and amendments are outlined in *El Watan*, 24 janvier 1993. For details on the National Dialogue Conference, see *Liberté*, 24 janvier 1993 ; *Le Monde*, 25 and 27 janvier 1994.

⁷ Zeroual replaced Major General Khaled Nezzar who kept his function within the HSC (*MEI* (455), July 23, 1993). Zeroual was reconfirmed in his function as defence minister in the Malek government and he kept this portfolio after having been appointed president. The High Security Council, the same body that dismissed Chadli, chose Zeroual as president. It was then composed of Khaled Nezzar, Major General Mohamed Lamari (chief of staff), Salim Saadi (interior minister), Redha Malek and Mourad Benachenhou (economy minister). *MEED*, 38 (6), February 11, 1994.

⁸ *Le Monde* 30-31 janvier 1994 and 1 février 1994.

⁹ *El Moudjahid*, 19 mai 1994.

Transition Council. During this period, the position of the political parties *vis-à-vis* the Algerian authorities was entirely dominated by the on-going debate on the place the FIS should be given in the political arena.

1.1.2. Dialogue with the FIS

The split between "eradicators" and "conciliators"

The issue as to whether FIS members should be invited to the negotiation table arose publicly during the round of talks convened between March and June 1993 under the Abdesselam government. It has never left Algeria's political debates ever since, and has divided both the civil society and power circles into two well-defined categories : the "eradicators" and the "conciliators".

Within the civil society, eradicators are represented by parties, such as the RCD and Ettahaddi ; associations grouped around the UGTA in the National Committee for the Safeguarding of Algeria ; most of the French-language press and part of the French-educated intellectual elite. Eradicators favour, as their name indicates, a strategy of eradication of the Islamist armed groups but also a strategy of complete exclusion of the Islamist movement from Algeria's political landscape. The Islamist political project, which they depict as archaic and totalitarian, is, in their view, wholly incompatible with their own, based upon the concept of a modern, secular and republican state. Organising several protest demonstrations¹⁰, eradicators have denounced the Algerian authorities' contacts with the FIS. They have argued that no bargaining should be made with "people who have deliberately and officially chosen murder and violence as a means to reach power"¹¹. They have also maintained

¹⁰ E.g. the demonstration of March 22, 1994 where marchers -- bolstered by Sadi's call for "resistance" against the Islamist armed groups' attacks -- threatened to organise themselves into self-defence groups (*Financial Times*, March 25, 1994), or the march of June 29, 1994 for "a republican rupture", aimed at "defeating fundamentalism and the regime that produced it" (see the Movement for the Republic's call published in *El Watan*, 27 juin, 1994. This Movement was created in December 1993 and is headed by Saïd Sadi). Counter-demonstrations were also organised by the "conciliators" such as that of May 8, 1994 where demonstrators called for a "national reconciliation" through a dialogue with the banned party (*Le Monde*, 10 mai 1994).

¹¹ Saïd Sadi (RCD) interviewed in *Le Monde*, 27 septembre 1994.

that no discussion should be held with any of the Islamist parties, whether or not they officially abide by the principle of democracy, for "(...) the Islamist movement is one (...) [and] its incarnation in different parties is just an adaptation to the conditions of formal multiparty politics and a judicious distribution of roles and tasks."¹² Proponents of the eradicator line have radicalised since Spring 1993 when they were taken into the whirl of violence : most politicians, journalists and intellectuals incarnating this trend have, indeed, been the target of the Islamist armed groups. Intolerance, which they denounce about the Islamists, has progressively become one of their characteristics¹³.

Conciliators are represented by parties with a greater electoral import than that of the eradicators. They notably include the FLN and the FFS, but also the MDA, the MAJD, the PRA, the PT (Trotskyists) and legal Islamist parties such as Hamas, the MNI and the Contemporary Muslim Jazair. Organisations such as the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights headed by Abdenour Ali Yahia and personalities such as Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi or Abdelhamid Brahim¹⁴ are also among the supporters of a compromising line. Conciliators, who do not necessarily share the Islamists' political project, have argued that the authorities must reintegrate the outlawed FIS within the political process for two main reasons. Firstly, in order to put an end to a civil strife which, by its very nature, hampers any return to democratisation. Secondly, in order to bring the FIS to compromise and to satisfy those who have seen in this party an answer to their social demands¹⁵. It is worth

¹² Hachemi Cherif (Ettahaddi) in *El Watan*, 15 juin 1994.

¹³ It is worth noting, for instance, the initiative of the Algerian Rally of the Democrat Women which staged a tribunal simulation where the chief leaders of the FIS were condemned to death and where the Sant'Egidio Community, which hosted meetings between opposition parties including the FIS, was denounced for being the "apologist of criminals" (*Le Monde*, 10 mars 1995).

¹⁴ Taleb Ibrahimi and Abdelhamid Brahim, prime minister from 1984 to 1988, created in September 1991 a National Committee for the Support to Political Prisoners who include the paramount leaders of the FIS (A. Charef (1994), p. 216). They have since then militated in favour of the re-legalisation of the FIS and its full reintegration in Algeria's political realm. See, for instance, Brahim's attempt at relaunching the Rome initiative in London (meeting of the signatories of the Rome platform without, however, the FLN and the FFS at the Royal Institute for International Affairs on March 22, 1995 (*The Guardian*, March 23, 1995)) See as well as A. Brahim (1994).

¹⁵ See the FLN's declaration in *Algérie Actualité* (1422), 13-19 janvier 1992 and the interviews or declarations of Hocine Aït Ahmed (FFS), in *Algérie Actualité* (1422), 13-19 janvier 1992 ; *Le Monde* 27 janvier 1994 and 23 février 1995 ; Mahfoud Nahnah (Hamas) in *Algérie Actualité* (1434), 6-12 avril 1993 and in *El Watan*, 21 avril 1994 ; Nourredine Boukrouh (PRA) in *Algérie Actualité* (1408), 8-14 octobre 1992.

mentioning that, even though politicians representing this trend have also been murdered, their respective parties have continued to support a compromising line¹⁶.

The split between eradicators and conciliators observed within the civil society also exists within power circles, whether at the civilian or military level. Within the military establishment much has been said about potential disagreements between high- and low-rank officers, but the split also exists among senior officers. This became patent in April 1995 : eight Generals called for reopening negotiations (officially suspended in late October 1994) with the Islamists¹⁷. But, let there be no misunderstanding : if conciliator officers favour a negotiated solution to the state of violence, they are in no way ready to give up power. They are merely inclined to accept a civilian *façade* to their exercise of power. Accommodation with the Army is a constraint that political parties wanting to be associated to government have come to terms with and it is probably for this share of civilian power that eradicator and conciliator parties are currently struggling.

This panorama would be incomplete if no reference were made to the population. To a certain extent, it is surprising to strictly dissociate the people from the organised civil society. For, in one way or the other, public opinion must be reflected in the positions of the parties and associations. It has become a custom, though, to ask what the majority of the people thinks and this may perhaps be justified in the light of the high abstention rates that have characterised the Algerian free elections. Since the coup, many in the West have wondered whether the terrorist attacks undertaken by Islamist armed groups sapped the popularity of the FIS. The question in itself is a clear demonstration of the success of the propaganda divulged by the Algerian regime. This propaganda, relayed by eradicator parties, has sought, by maintaining the confusion between the GIAs, the AIS and the FIS, to demonstrate that Islamists are all terrorists and, consequently, that negotiating with them is a risky

¹⁶ It was reported that, from January 1992 to December 1994, 200 political militants were killed, out of whom 50 were affiliated to the FLN (*Le Monde*, 24 décembre 1994). Islamist moderates of Hamas and the Guidance and Reform Association have also been the target of murderous attacks (*Le Monde*, 20 septembre 1994 and 14 octobre 1994). Whether they were all killed by the GIAs remains in question.

¹⁷ *Le Monde*, 8 avril 1995.

business. To straighten things out, it must be specified that the GIAs, which have been the likely perpetrators of the murders of (some) intellectuals, journalists, foreigners and unveiled women, have always claimed their independence from the FIS whose proclivity to dialogue they have denounced. The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), created in July 1994, owes allegiance to the FIS. It was founded by released FIS cadres who attempted to unify the various armed groups with the view to controlling violence to the benefit of the party's political strategy. The AIS is, as it were, the FIS's military arm and has centred its fighting strategy on attacks against the security forces and public goods¹⁸.

In Ahmed Rouadjia's view¹⁹, the people in Algeria make a clear distinction between the GIAs and the FIS so that the terror organised by the GIAs is not perceived as inherent in the Islamist movement nor as representative of the strategy of the movement as a whole. With regard to the AIS, its acts may well be perceived less as terrorism than self-defence or resistance for two main reasons. First, the majority of the people, according to Rouadjia, lay the responsibility of the current state of morbid outburst on the regime and not the Islamists, whether or not they are pro-FIS. Many saw the interruption of the elections as a confirmation that those in power do not want to relinquish it whatever the price²⁰. Second, whereas it is difficult for the few foreign journalists who have the courage to go to Algeria to understand what is going on there really (because they are almost systematically flanked by *ninjas* for their protection), the Algerian people do understand. They know that some of the murders blamed on the zealots are mere private settlements that are given a political signification. They know that some ordinary, not politically committed, people were executed in reprisal operations. They also know that the politicians, intellectuals and journalists who have always defended conciliation or who have, in front of the disaster, become reluctant to advocate eradication are the targets as much of the GIAs as of the Military Security²¹. As long as an election involving all the political currents

¹⁸ On the various Islamist armed groups in Algeria see S. Labat (1995), pp. 87-110.

¹⁹ A. Rouadjia (1995a), p. 110.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 108-110.

²¹ On the issue of state terrorism in Algeria see F. Burgat (1995), pp. 168-174.

crossing the Algerian society is not organised, it will be difficult to assess what the majority thinks and wants. Those who feel they cannot accept Roudjaïa's contention that the Algerian population secretly wishes the victory of the FIS, if only to get rid of the regime, will more easily accept Séverine Labat's point that the particularly repressive measures implemented by the regime lead the population "to estimate that an Islamist regime could not, after all, show itself worse than the regime in power."²²

Fake or real negotiations with the FIS ?

Overtures towards the FIS were initiated during Autumn 1993. The opening move came with the High State Council's public statement on November 23, 1993 in which it affirmed its willingness to open "a dialogue without exclusion". As an outlawed party, the FIS could not participate in the dialogue. But it was specified that FIS members who respected the law and certain engagements could²³. The option of a "dialogue without exclusion" was upheld by Zeroual in his speech of February 1994²⁴ and repeated by various political leaders until September 1994²⁵. Contacts with the FIS leadership were established in Winter 1993/94 and multiplied towards the end of Summer 1994. The Algerian authorities accompanied their dialogue propositions with "appeasement measures". In January 1994 part of the Islamist prisoners held in the Saharan camps were released and house arrest sanctions against FIS militants who had sat in local and regional councils were lifted. In February 1994 two high representatives of the FIS, Ali Djeddi and Abdelkader Boukhamkham, were released²⁶.

It is doubtful that the decision to accept the principle of the integration of FIS representatives into the dialogue represented a genuine attempt on the part of the regime to find a political solution to the crisis triggered by the 1992 coup d'état.

²² A. Rouadjia (1995a), p. 110 and S. Labat in *Le Monde*, 6 août 1994.

²³ *Algérie Actualité* (1468), 30 novembre-6 décembre 1993 and *Le Monde*, 11 décembre 1993.

²⁴ *Le Monde*, 9 février 1994.

²⁵ Notably by Prime Minister Sifi, see *Le Monde*, 23 juillet 1994.

²⁶ *Le Monde*, 21 janvier 1994 and 24 février 1994.

Under Kafi there had certainly been signs of a willingness to move towards conciliation. Kafi had taxed political parties and associations urging "a radical rupture with fundamentalism" with being "pseudo-supporters of the rupture"²⁷. The new president seemed to be along the conciliating side of the political divide. However, President Zeroual has been unable or unwilling to impose a fully conciliatory attitude, lest he would finish like Boudiaf or Merbah²⁸, one might think. This was reflected in the negotiation strategy adopted by the authorities. As explained below, this strategy could in no way lead to an agreement with the FIS.

The authorities' bargaining strategy was the following. FIS representatives would be allowed into the dialogue about the transitional period and its aftermath on two types of conditions : conditions applying to all parties and conditions that were specific to the FIS. Conditions required of all parties have varied from one round of talks with the Administration to the other. Those recurring were : respecting the republican character of the state ; the principles of pluralism and of political alternation ; observing private and civil liberties and rejecting violence. In addition to these general requirements, the FIS was asked to call for an end to violence.

Abassi Madani agreed in August 1994 to respect the "constitutional fundamentals" required to participate in the dialogue²⁹. He, however, refused to call for a ceasefire and presented counter-conditions : release of the FIS leaders ; possibility for the *majlis ash shura* to meet ; lifting of the ban on the party and of the state of emergency ; general amnesty ; return of the Army to its barracks ; formation of a neutral government to oversee the transition before new elections or a referendum on the "establishment of an Algerian republican state based upon Islamic principles"³⁰.

²⁷ Quoted in *Algérie Actualité* (1428), 23 février-1 mars 1993 and (1431), 16-22 mars 1993.

²⁸ Kasdi Merbah was assassinated on the very day Malek was appointed head of the government. Merbah had proposed to Zeroual, then defence minister, to play the role of a mediator between the FIS and the authorities before they enter into direct contact with the banned party. The murder has, of course, been blamed on (and claimed by) the GIAs but, as in the case of Boudiaf, the accusing fingers are all pointing at the eradicator army officers. See P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), pp. 304-10.

²⁹ Confirmed by the Algerian foreign minister in *Le Monde*, 1 octobre 1994.

³⁰ Content of the letters of August 25 and August 27 to Zeroual in *Le Monde*, 8 septembre 1994. It can be noted that between December 1993 and August 1994, one of the FIS's conditions for participation in the dialogue was dropped : the abrogation of the laws passed since January 1992 which implied among others the abrogation of the annulment of the results of the parliamentary elections. For details on the conditions put forward by the FIS, see Kebir's statement in *Le Monde*,

On September 6, 1994, in anticipation of the round of talks scheduled for September 20, the imprisoned FIS leaders also asked to include leaders of the AIS in the dialogue³¹. The authorities responded on September 13, 1994 by transferring Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj from prison to house arrest³². While affirming that the transfer was insufficient, Rabah Kebir suggested that Madani was ready to call a ceasefire before all his conditions were met³³. However, the authorities were not ready to discuss any truce directly with the AIS leaders. Zeroual argued on September 21, 1994 that nothing concrete had come out of the discussions with the FIS³⁴. The official decision to cut negotiations with the FIS was announced by the Algerian president in a press communiqué on October 29, 1994 and repeated in his commemoration speech of November 1, 1994. The simultaneous promotion to a new ranking grade of Major General Lamari was intended to show that eradication was the major item on the Administration's agenda³⁵.

The authorities' strategy had two (intended) flaws. They asked from the FIS to call for an end to armed rebellion. This demand, if satisfied, would have led to an additional one : that the FIS guarantee the enforcement of a ceasefire. This was, indeed, an implicit condition for the FIS to be accepted in dialogue. For, if the FIS called for civil peace without effectively enforcing a ceasefire, it would have been accused of taking back with one hand what it had given with the other. Was the FIS in a position to agree to call for an end to guerrilla action ? No. Doing so would have further divided its armed wing within which dissension had already appeared. As early as December 1993, Abdezzarak Redjem (head of the national commission of the FIS's provisional executive bureau and founder of the MIA) had issued a communiqué attacking those who were prepared to engage in a dialogue with the regime³⁶. In Spring 1994, important transfers from the FIS and the MIA to the GIAs

19-20 décembre 1993 and the content of Ali Benhadj's letter to Zeroual in *Le Monde*, 23 août 1994.

³¹ *Le Monde*, 11-12 septembre 1994.

³² *Le Monde*, 15 septembre 1994. Madani and Benhadj had been sentenced to twelve years of jail on July 15, 1992.

³³ *Le Monde*, 18-19 septembre 1994.

³⁴ *Le Monde*, 24 septembre 1994.

³⁵ *Le Monde*, 1 novembre 1994 and 2 novembre 1994.

³⁶ *Le Monde*, 29 décembre 1993.

occurred : Redjem would have joined the GIAs in May, as well as Mohammed Saïd who had headed the provisional executive bureau since Hachani's arrest³⁷. Saïd Makhloufi, author of call-up instructions on civil disobedience and second in command of the MIA, seems to have joined the GIAs by August 1994³⁸. These defections suggested that calling for a ceasefire would generate additional shifts to the GIAs, undermining further the FIS's control over the armed rebellion. The risk for the FIS was, therefore, to negotiate a truce which it would have been unable to enforce and which would, thus, have preempted it from being accepted within the dialogue.

The second flaw in the government's strategy was that it offered no guarantee to the FIS that if, indeed, it managed to restore order, it would be allowed to fully reintegrate into politics. The issue of the re-legalisation of the FIS, on the basis of the respect of the political conditions to which it agreed in August 1994, was addressed by the government as something that would need to be considered only once the authority of the state had been restored. Why would the FIS have run the risk of dissociating itself from the radicals if, in the end, it had no guarantee to be reinstated into legality ?

The manoeuvres surrounding the reshuffle of the military hierarchy in May 1994 give added weight to the view that the Algerian authorities' negotiation strategy had been designed to fail. Zeroual appointed his loyal men to the command of the ground, air, *gendarmerie* and police forces and of the military regions. He also appointed two conciliators as ministerial counsellors³⁹. Just as the exclusion of Interior Minister Salim Saadi from the new Sifi government (April 1994), this military reshuffle was apparently intended to reassure FIS leaders that eradicators were being marginalised. Yet, while this was indeed the case, one particular man was not only maintained in his functions but his authority bolstered : Zeroual gave him the right to sign decrees in his name just before the reshuffle⁴⁰. This man was Major General

³⁷ *Le Monde*, 24-25 juillet 1994.

³⁸ *Le Monde*, 28-29 août 1994.

³⁹ *Le Monde*, 7 mai 1994 and 19 mai 1994 and *MEED* (38)(20), May 20, 1994.

⁴⁰ *Le Monde*, 23 mars 1994.

Lamari, the incarnation *par excellence* of the eradicator line. As head of the ground forces, he was involved in the June 1991 crisis which was perceived by the FIS as a betrayal on the part of the regime. After having been dismissed from this function under Boudiaf (although kept as counsellor to the defence minister), Lamari was appointed commander of the anti-terrorist squads in September 1992. He was, thereafter, promoted to the rank of Major General and appointed chief of staff in July 1993. The FIS and the AIS's mistrust of Zeroual's real intentions is not then a great surprise. Before negotiations with the FIS were officially cut, a FIS representative, intervening in a conference in London, specifically addressed this point :

"At present, the FIS is asked to give guarantees that it would be able to control the armed groups in order to be allowed in the dialogue. (...) In the Army there are people who believe in eliminating everyone else. What are the guarantees that Zeroual can provide to control these elements ?"⁴¹.

Dialogue with the FIS, thus, does not seem to have been pursued to really find a solution to the political crisis shaking Algeria since 1992. It almost looks as though dialogue was led with the aim of discrediting the option of a conciliation by pointing at the FIS's uncompromising behaviour. To all appearances, this fake dialogue only allowed the government to buy time from the international community, particularly at a time when it was negotiating its stabilisation programme with the IMF. For, the international community as a whole has not been as ready as France to buttress the Algerian regime in its eradication strategy⁴².

All roads, it is said, lead to Rome

Eradicator opposition parties along with conciliator ones showed distrust in the regime's dialogue initiative with the FIS. This was not, in fact, very startling. Parties representing the eradicator line have always manifested their refusal of the very

⁴¹ Paper read in Rabah Kebir's place at the conference on "The Future of the Maghrib" organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre, 6-7 October 1994, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London.

⁴² See section 2.1.3. below, "Multilateral support".

principle of negotiations with the FIS by boycotting all rounds and denouncing the risk of a "Sudanisation" of the Algerian political system⁴³. As to the conciliator parties, they were for dialogue with the FIS. But, they were unwilling to back the regime's initiative because they were fully aware of its limits. So, they coolly welcomed Zeroual when he asked them to help the authorities in bringing Madani and Benhadj to denounce terrorism. The FFS warned of a potential "secret pact" between the Army and the Islamists that would exclude the democratic camp⁴⁴. Whether Aït Ahmed truly believed in this possibility or not, the break in the negotiations with the FIS in September 1994 allowed the conciliator opposition to bring the FIS under its own wing with the view to preempting such an alliance or simply in order to face the authorities in a united front.

Under the sponsorship of the Catholic community of Sant'Egidio in Rome, conciliator opposition parties met FIS representatives twice : on November 21-22, 1994 and on January 8-13, 1995. The second meeting was closed with the adoption of a common "Platform for a political and pacific solution to the Algerian crisis". It was signed by the FIS, the FLN, the FFS, the MDA, the PT, the MNI, the Contemporary Muslim Jazair, and the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights. It is worth emphasising that most of the provisions of the platform put forward by the National Dialogue Commission are to be found in the Rome platform. This underlines a certain consensus as to the way in which Algeria can be disentangled from the crisis. The similarities concern : the respect of the declaration of November 1, 1954 which established Islam as an integral part of the personality of the Algerian people ; the respect of the 1989 Constitution ; the rejection of violence as a means of access to or maintenance in power ; the respect of human rights and civil liberties ; the establishment of political pluralism and the respect of political alternation.

The Rome platform, however, contains other significant provisions. Some emphasise Berber heritage and religious freedom. Others are about guarantees of

⁴³ Saïd Sadi in *Liberté*, 19 avril 1994.

⁴⁴ *Le Monde*, 24 and 25 août 1994.

democracy : separation of powers ; respect of popular legitimacy and rejection of dictatorship. In addition, the Rome platform puts forward a series of specific measures to be taken by the government and the FIS before negotiations between the regime and the opposition about future free elections can be kicked off. Measures concerning the Algerian authorities included : lifting the ban on the FIS ; releasing its leadership ; closing the detention camps ; lifting the state of emergency ; ending censorship, torture and reprisals on the population. The FIS's obligations were to condemn violence and call for an end to the killing of civilians and foreigners and to the destruction of public goods⁴⁵. The advantage for the FIS of this opposition platform was that, provided it condemned the murder of civilians and took the necessary steps to enforce the cessation of the violence perpetrated by the AIS, it did not need to restore complete order to be accepted within the political game.

A word on the position of the FIS on the issue of violence is necessary at this stage because of the confusion that surrounds the question. It is important to recall, first of all, that when the FIS was created in 1989 it subsumed various currents and included proponents of armed struggle who had been, for most, activists within Bouyali's Armed Islamic Movement (1982-87) or veterans of Afghanistan. Until the cancellation of the elections and the outlawing of the FIS, partisans of the armed path had been marginalised within the party by those advocating a legalist way to reach power. When the FIS was banned and repression against Islamist militants organised, armed groups were formed and joined, not only by those who had always advocated armed rebellion, but also by militants threatened by repression.

The political wing of the FIS, without claiming the terrorist attacks, never condemned them, arguing that the first violence came from the state. Playing upon comparisons between the policies of the colonial state and of the current Algerian regime, it has presented armed rebellion as a legitimate resistance against state oppression⁴⁶. In March 1993, the armed groups' strategy shifted from merely

⁴⁵ The Rome platform is reproduced in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, mars 1995.

⁴⁶ See M. Al-Ahnaf *et. al.* (1991), pp. 129-41. The parallel with the debate in France during the War of Independence over the issue of the legitimacy of the FLN's terrorist acts is obvious. At the time, some French intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre or Francis Jeanson argued that the "the violence of

attacking security forces to eliminating civil servants, intellectuals and journalists. FIS representatives have argued the killings were justified as a response to active or passive collaboration with the authorities :

"Who are these so-called intellectuals ? Among them there are members of the National Consultative Council which has usurped the place of the people's elected representatives, persons who wrote murderous editorials, and those who, as psychiatrists, advised torturers on how to obtain confessions. The Algerian people has chosen as targets only those individuals upon whom the military-security system in Algeria relies."⁴⁷

FIS representatives have also underlined that none of these intellectuals "had lifted a finger" to denounce state repression against the Islamists, and that they had, therefore, chosen a side⁴⁸.

As regards the killings of foreigners, which started in September 1993 and which have been claimed in their great majority by the GIAs, the evolution of the position of the FIS is difficult to assess accurately because press reports did not systematically account for the declarations of FIS representatives. What can be said with a measure of certainty is that while maintaining that "It [was] not the policy of the FIS to kill foreigners (...)"⁴⁹, FIS representatives have not clearly condemned the killings until February 1994, arguing that foreign regimes supporting the Algerian authorities had to expect a reaction.

It is, it seems, the GIAs' intimidation campaign against the civilian population, clearly engaged since 1994 in order to establish Islamically ruled pockets⁵⁰, that has brought the FIS -- then, in negotiations with the Algerian authorities -- to condemn "the attacks against all individuals -- Algerians and foreigners, civilians and soldiers --

popular resistance" could not be equated with the "violence of aggression" and that counter-violence to the initial violence produced by the colonial political system was legitimate.

⁴⁷ Anwar Haddam (October 1993) quoted in A. Zerouali (1994), p. 164.

⁴⁸ Abdelbaki Sahraoui on *Transit*, "Algérie : comment sortir de l'impasse ?", Arte, November 1993.

⁴⁹ Rabah Kebir (October 1993) quoted in A. Zerouali (1994), p. 164.

⁵⁰ Intimidation measures include the killing of unveiled school girls (the first having occurred on February 28, 1994), threats to public transport owners to incite them to impose sexual segregation, or to traders to bring them to reduce their prices (*Le Monde*, 22 février 1994). Since August 1994, the GIAs have also threatened schools and universities of forced closure on the ground that current education programmes deviate the youth from the path of God (*Le Monde*, 7-8 août 1994). By October 1994, over 600 schools had been partially destroyed and some 50 academics murdered (*Le Monde*, 8 octobre 1994).

who do not participate in the operations of the security forces conducted with the use of force"⁵¹. Since February 1994 this has been the constant line of FIS representatives who make a distinction between "terrorism" and the "armed struggle". The armed struggle is defined as targeting the security forces. Terrorism is understood as aimed at the persons not involved in the security forces' violent operations. During the Rome conference Haddam was clear on this point. He also declared that the FIS condemned terrorism but supported the armed struggle with the specification that : "The armed struggle is not an end in itself, it is a means. If its goal can be reached through peaceful and civilian ways, we are for [them]."⁵²

Since their February 1994 declaration, FIS representatives have strongly condemned the killing of a monk and a nun (May 8, 1994), the bomb attack in the Mostaganem cemetery which killed four children (November 1, 1994), the hijack of the French Airbus (December 24, 1994) and the killing of four White fathers that followed (December 27, 1994) as well as the car bomb attack against the police station of Algiers which killed 38 persons and wounded over 250 (January 30, 1995)⁵³. While Haddam has blamed the GIAs for fulfilling the expectations of the eradicators, Kebir made an important move in January 1995, condemning "any act which aims at innocents whatever their tendencies or their religion and whoever the authors of such acts are."⁵⁴ The precision "whoever the authors of such acts are" is significant since it implies that were the AIS to commit terrorist attacks, in the sense defined by the FIS, the latter should no longer try to justify such acts.

⁵¹ A. Haddam in *Le Matin*, 3 février 1994. See also R. Kebir in *Le Monde*, 23 novembre 1994.

⁵² A. Haddam in *Le Monde*, 12 janvier 1995. As early as December 1993 a representative of the FIS had declared that the FIS's "armed resistance [was] directed only against the military dictatorship." (*Le Monde*, 7 décembre 1993). But the FIS's unwillingness to clearly condemn attacks against civilians and foreigners somewhat undermined this claim.

⁵³ Respectively in *Le Monde*, 17 mai 1994 ; 4 novembre 1994 ; 5 janvier 1995 ; 7 janvier 1995 and 4 février 1995.

⁵⁴ Both in *Le Monde*, 7 janvier 1995.

Algeria confronts an unsure future

The evolution of events in Algeria since Autumn 1994 casts doubts on a return to civil peace which is a necessary (but not sufficient) stepping-stone to the resumption of democratic life. The authorities' unwillingness to agree to the organisation of a transitional period on terms that they would not have wholly defined has pitted them against the opposition which is, thus, not inclined to co-operate. In parallel, whereas the FIS has softened, the authorities have striven harder than ever to stamp out the armed groups. This attitude somewhat breeds the risk of continued violence as it contributes to the undermining of the control of the political wing of the FIS over the AIS.

Zeroual's current political programme is to hold a presidential election in November 1995, followed by legislative and local elections. Elections are planned to go ahead without the Islamists as long as arms are not laid down. After bilateral talks with the Algerian government in April 1995, the signatories of the Rome platform and other parties have stood by their opposition to the organisation of presidential elections in Algeria's current insecurity situation⁵⁵. They propose the organisation of a short transitory period during which the return to the ballot box would be jointly monitored. The authorities, which condemned the Rome initiative⁵⁶, have remained deaf to the proposals of the conciliatory opposition which is, therefore, likely to boycott the elections. In this case, presidential elections will not constitute the first step in weathering the storm.

The Algerian government's attitude towards the Islamist current also suggests that a return to civil peace is far from being in reach. Not so much because the Army and the Islamists are not prepared to share power, or because of the hatred that separates both camps, as argued by Rouadjia⁵⁷. But because the Army has declared an all-out war on the armed groups precisely when the political direction of the FIS

⁵⁵ Bilateral talks took place with the FFS, the FLN, the MDA and Ettahaddi (*Le Monde*, 14 avril 1995).

⁵⁶ *Le Monde*, 20 janvier 1995.

⁵⁷ A. Rouadjia (1995a), p. 105.

started to denounce the use of violence within the limits indicated above. It is today less clear whether the AIS maintains its allegiance to the FIS. In January 1995, the AIS rejected the Rome agreement judging that, by approving the condemnation of violence as a means to reach power, its signatories showed "unjust towards the mujahidins". Without formally rejecting a political solution, the AIS expressed regrets that the objective of the Rome meeting had been to keep the FIS away from its military role⁵⁸. Two pieces of information, to be handled with great care considering the multiple manipulations taking place in Algeria, suggest that the AIS may no longer be prepared to follow the political wing's watchwords. One is the alleged takeover in March 1995 of the FIS provisional executive bureau by an armed chieftain of the AIS instead of the political figures in exile. The other concerns the announcement of the fusion between the GIAs and the AIS in April⁵⁹. If this were how the AIS is drifting, it would not be so surprising. The AIS has no guarantee that, if it renounces armed warfare, its fighters will be spared. The authorities refused to implement appeasement measures recommended by the conciliatory opposition and even vowed they would settle accounts with the armed groups by August 1995⁶⁰. In these conditions, if the AIS were to cease its struggle, its fighters, having nothing to lose, would join the GIAs. Whether or not the FIS would reconsider its censure of violence would not prevent guerrilla warfare from making the headlines for some time.

This bleak assessment can only be reinforced by the failure of the secret negotiations engaged by the Algerian authorities with the FIS in June-July 1995. The scenario was the same as that adopted a year earlier. The dismissal on July 2, 1995 of Interior Minister Abderrahmane Meziane-Cherif, who had proved as much of an

⁵⁸ *Le Monde*, 24 janvier 1995.

⁵⁹ Respectively in *Le Monde*, 17 mars 1995 and 16 mai 1995. With regards to the reaction of the GIAs to the Rome initiative, after having declared itself ready to "cease the war" under particularly harsh conditions (recognition by the authorities of the Rome platform, release of their chief Abdelhak Layada, dissolution of the communist parties and application of "the law of God" against the Generals, in *Le Monde*, 17 janvier 1995), they withdrew their support and called for the establishment of the caliphate through armed combat (*Le Monde*, 24 janvier 1995).

⁶⁰ The authorities' offensive started in November 1994 and has taken the form of "wiping out" operations to which both the ground and air forces take part. The population has been incited to get involved in the anti-terrorist struggle in practising denouncement or joining the communal guards (*Le Monde*, 7 mars 1995 and 15 avril 1995).

eradicator as Salim Saadi, his predecessor in the Malek government, was to be a goodwill token. Yet, in their negotiation strategy, the authorities did not waive their idea both to release paramount FIS leaders only after the latter called for an unequivocal ceasefire and to allow a relegalisation of the FIS (under another name) only once total calm had been restored⁶¹.

1.2. Rescheduling Algeria's foreign debt

Foreign debt has been a major troubling issue confronting the Algerian Administration. Although it had dominated Algeria's economic agenda since 1988, it became a particularly urgent case to be settled in 1993 when creditors increasingly lost patience in face of Algeria's refusal to deal with the Bretton Woods institutions.

Algeria's foreign debt rose at a high pace in the 1970s, passing from \$ 940 million in 1970 to \$ 19.4 billion ten years later. This resulted from the need to externally finance Boumediene's ambitious industrialisation programme. Whereas Algeria's debt decreased in the early part of 1980s, it grew again from 1986 to 1992, reaching by then \$ 26.8 billion. In 1993, foreign debt stood at \$ 25.8 billion⁶². The growth of the mid-1980s was partly driven by the adverse effects of the oil countershock on Algeria's revenues. Algeria was forced to borrow money on the international market not only to finance investment projects (besides, drastically reduced) but also current imports.

Despite a ratio of debt to gross domestic output evolving around 60% since 1991⁶³, Algeria's major financial problem was not its total debt stock. The root of its liquidity crisis lay in the time structure of its debt reimbursements which were concentrated in the late 1980s and early 1990s, that is at a time when export revenues were low because of falling oil prices and the dollar low value. Since 1988, the debt service (principal and interests) has absorbed between 60% and 80% of Algeria's

⁶¹ See *Le Monde*, 4 and 13 juillet 1995.

⁶² IBRD (1992), p. 2 and (1994), p. 6.

⁶³ IBRD (1994), p. 6.

export revenues⁶⁴, leaving but few resources left to finance imports and investments.

Although the cost of debt servicing strangled the economy, the Hamrouche, Ghozali and Abdesselam governments refused to implement a classical rescheduling of the debt service through the Paris Club (group of governmental creditors) because it required the signature of a stabilisation programme with the IMF and, thus the engagement to economic restructuring. In official speeches, the refusal to sign such a programme as a counterpart to IMF financial help was justified by the ensuing loss of national sovereignty. However, and even though the image of the IMF as an imperialist agent remains strong in Algeria⁶⁵, the successive Algerian governments were less opposed to the nature of the economic policies to be implemented under a stabilisation programme than to the pace planned by the IMF. The recommended measures, such as devaluation, freeing prices, reducing wages and state expenditures, adversely affect purchasing power. Rapid restructuring was seen as containing the seeds of a social explosion which the regime wanted to avoid, considering the already turbulent political situation. The closure of international financial markets to rescheduling countries was also an element explaining that refusal.

Instead of debt rescheduling, the different Algerian governments proposed bilateral debt “reprofiling” operations with their major creditors. In terms of result, debt “reprofiling” is a debt rescheduling since it aims at delaying the debt service payments. But it differs from a classical rescheduling operation because, by negotiating directly with the creditors and not with the Paris Club, the debtor avoids the requirement of dealing with the Bretton Woods institutions. Algeria was unable to put across this proposal. Indeed, with the exception of a bilateral reprofiling operation with Italy and with a consortium of banks led by the *Crédit Lyonnais*, Algeria's main creditors, and principally France, have blocked this initiative, considering that the engagement on the part of Algeria to implement an IMF/IBRD programme gave greater guarantees than a national programme.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ See for instance *Algérie Actualité* (1437), 27 avril-3 mai 1993 and M. Benhassine (1988), pp. 463-80.

The bleak financial situation, with a debt service forecasted to exceed export revenues in 1994, coupled with creditors' warnings that new funds would be channelled only once an agreement with the IMF was reached, drove the Malek government into a corner. In December 1993, it agreed to the principle of a debt rescheduling⁶⁶. In April 1994, Algeria sent its letter of intent to the IMF, securing a standby loan worth \$ 1.04 billion as a counterpart to a one-year stabilisation programme as well as the release of several credits from the World Bank and the EU. By June 1, 1994 a framework agreement with the Paris Club was reached to reschedule \$ 5.3 billion of official debt over 15 years with a four-year grace period⁶⁷. As the standby agreement expired in May 1995, Algeria signed a three-year IMF extended fund facility of \$ 1.8 billion accompanying a structural adjustment programme (1995-98) which provides, among others, for the privatisation of the public sector, currency convertibility, and complete trade liberalisation⁶⁸. A second agreement with the Paris Club concerning the rescheduling of another \$ 7.5 billion in official debt was reached in late July 1995⁶⁹. In parallel, after seven months of negotiations with the London Club (group of bank creditors), Algeria signed in May 1995 an accord to reschedule \$ 3.2 billion of private debt (financial and non-guaranteed) over 5 to 10 years⁷⁰.

It was expected that, by cutting the ratio of the debt service to export earnings by more than half in the next few years, rescheduling and foreign aid would allow the economy to breathe again. However, a study conducted by the consulting agency *Nord Sud Export* has shown mixed results⁷¹. Algeria's new comfortable financial circumstances have allowed import increases notably for current consumption and construction. Yet, according to this study, none of the funds granted by the IMF in 1994 would have been allotted to new investment projects (excluding hydrocarbons).

⁶⁶ *Le Monde*, 16 décembre 1993.

⁶⁷ *Le Monde*, 3 juin 1994.

⁶⁸ *Le Monde*, 24 mai 1995.

⁶⁹ *Le Monde*, 23-24 juillet 1995.

⁷⁰ *Le Monde*, 14-15 mai 1995.

⁷¹ Reported in *Le Monde*, 4 juillet 1995.

This pre-empts both an easing of the catastrophic unemployment situation⁷² and economic growth prospects.

2. The meanders of French policy under Balladur

France's Algeria policy under Balladur is quite difficult to decipher. Two main factors made France's policy look like a muddle. First, France's words did not always match the deeds. Quite cleverly, this gave France's Algeria policy a constancy that it did not have in reality. Juppé always argued that the status quo was no longer tenable in Algeria. As a consequence, it seemed that ever since its coming to office the Balladur government had supported conciliation in Algeria. In fact, the Balladur government did so only after September 1994. But, as of then, there was no governmental unity as to whether the Algerian government should open negotiations with the FIS and as to whether the French government should encourage such negotiations. This brings us to the second point. During the last nine months of the Balladur government's term, France voiced different opinions about what its Algeria policy should be. Quarrels between the Elysée and Matignon and, most importantly, between the Quai d'Orsay and Place Beauvau gave a dim picture of France's approach to the Algerian conflict.

To make sense of France's Algeria policy under Balladur, the following analysis focuses on the two periods characterising Balladur's shifting policy : buttressing governmental eradicators in Algeria until September 1994 and showing greater firmness against these same eradicators afterwards. Eradicators, indeed, were praised as reasonable politicians seeking a political solution rejected by unyielding armed factions, then accused of blocking a political perspective in Algeria.

⁷² Although somewhat outdated, the following data on joblessness in Algeria illustrate the stakes : according to official records, there were 1.3 million unemployed persons in December 1991 against 435 000 in April 1985. 80% of the unemployed were young people. The rates of unemployment by categories of age were in December 1990 : 63.5% for those aged between 16 and 19; 45.5% for those aged between 20 and 24; and 17.3% for those aged between 25 and 29. See ILO (1993), p. 639 and ONS (1992), p.9.

2.1. Buttressing the eradicators (April 1993 - September 1994)

It is no longer a matter open to debate whether the Balladur government supported the Algerian regime or not. Its economic and military assistance to Algiers as well as its intelligence and police co-operation and its role as Algeria's defender on the international scene made it obvious that France was siding with the Algerian authorities, at least until Autumn 1994. The question, therefore, is whether by buttressing the Algerian regime the French government was supporting its conciliator or eradicator strands. It is the contention of the following account that, despite a conciliatory discourse, the Balladur government supported the eradicators. In order to underline the ambiguities and contradictions that point to this conclusion, the official discourse must be expounded first. After showing that France backed the eradicators, I shall focus on the policy measures which were implemented.

2.1.1. *The official discourse*

The Right in the opposition

Prior to their victory at the parliamentary elections at the end of March 1993, some politicians in the opposition had clearly indicated that a right-wing government would support an anti-Islamist policy. After the first round of the Algerian 1991 parliamentary elections, some public statements reinforced the Algerian Army's viewpoint that, were the FIS let to relish the fruits of its victory, Algeria might be ostracised at one stage or the other. Such signals came from Charles Pasqua (chairman of the RPR at the Senate) and François Léotard (MP, UDF). Both claimed that a right-wing government would revise its co-operation policy with Algeria if the FIS came to power. Léotard specified that a FIS-regime would not be backed if it did not respect the principles of democracy, pluralism and equality between the sexes. What the FIS would have done seemed, however, clear to him since he compared it to Hitler's National Socialist party⁷³. Reference to Nazism has been the principal credo

⁷³ Pasqua's statement is quoted in *Le Monde*, 7 janvier 1992 and Léotard's in *Le Point*, 11 janvier

of the Algerian government and of the eradicators to legitimise the coup. By reformulating their claim, Léotard was, thus, indicating that he agreed with the thesis justifying the coup. By recalling the failure of the inter-war "appeasement policy", he also attempted to touch the right chord within public opinion. For his part, Alain Juppé (general secretary of the RPR) had followed a cautious line, avoiding saying anything that could have been interpreted as some form of "aiding and abetting". His hope that the FIS's electoral success would provoke a "salutary shock" to Algeria's "democratic opposition"⁷⁴ was, nevertheless, indicative of his concerns regarding a FIS takeover. The cancellation of the elections was thus welcomed with relief. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (UDF) was the only centre-right personality who openly criticised the popularised view that the coup served "to save democracy"⁷⁵.

Prior to its coming to power, the Right had criticised the socialists for being too unsupportive of the Algerian regime. Juppé had deplored their low profile during his visit to Algiers in early December 1992. He then promised that inasmuch as "France, has an interest in Algeria being a stable and modern state", the Right, if elected, would intensify relations with Algeria⁷⁶.

The Right in Matignon

"Cohabitation" between the socialist president and the right-wing government did not cause many problems throughout Balladur's premiership, at least in so far as Algeria was concerned. President Mitterrand made very few statements on France's Algeria policy, perhaps because of his sickness or simply because he preferred to remain cautious. With the exception of his proposal of February 1995⁷⁷, he took no initiative. Mitterrand reasserted that "One cannot be a democrat here, and contest to a people over there the right to decide for itself of its destiny."⁷⁸ But he was in line

1992.

⁷⁴ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 29-30 décembre 1991.

⁷⁵ Interview on France-Inter on January 17, 1992, BIPA.

⁷⁶ See *El Moudjahid*, 2 décembre 1992.

⁷⁷ See section 2.2.1 below, "A muddle".

⁷⁸ Interview on French television, May 10, 1994 in MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 68.

with Matignon when arguing that France must support those forces promoting the establishment of a "modern, tolerant and hospitable state"⁷⁹, for France could not wish "(...) the victory of whoever would make the mores [and] the institutions regress back to medieval conceptions."⁸⁰ In general, his declarations expressed a certain disillusionment and detachment :

"We wish (...) the Algerian people to put its business in order by itself in the best way, the best known [and] the most evident manner, and become able to pronounce itself through the ballot box : naturally, we are far from it."⁸¹

France's Algeria policy was thus designed by the government rather than the president. As Prime Minister Balladur did not have his own policy line⁸², French policy was chiefly conceived by the Quai d'Orsay and Place Beauvau. This did not generate a dual discourse before Autumn 1994.

Until Autumn 1994, the Balladur government was led to determine the orientation of its Algeria policy by the basic idea that, while a FIS takeover would be "a catastrophe", it was not "ineluctable". Upon this consideration, it was decided, in the words of the foreign minister, Juppé, that everything had to be done in order to avoid the risk of a FIS takeover⁸³. With this objective in mind, the Balladur government threw its weight behind the Algerian regime.

While backing the Algerian regime, the French authorities suggested in August 1993 a crisis-overcoming scenario based upon Juppé's argument that "the status quo is not tenable". As Juppé invariably explained, moving beyond the status quo meant the implementation of two courses of action by the Algerian government : (1) completing the transition to a market economy ; and (2) opening a political dialogue with opposition forces provided they respect the principle of democracy and

⁷⁹ Best wishes address to the diplomatic corps in January 1994 reported by *El Watan*, 9 janvier 1994.

⁸⁰ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 2 septembre 1994.

⁸¹ Speech to the French Ambassadors, August 31, 1994, quoted in *ibid*.

⁸² Balladur made few statements on the Algerian crisis. He intervened mostly at times of crisis to reiterate the principles of non-intervention in Algeria's internal affairs and of refusing that France become a terrorist haven. See his radio interview reproduced in *Le Monde*, 16 août 1994.

⁸³ These considerations appear in various interviews and statements. A. Juppé's interview in the Tunisian newspaper *Réalités* on June 30, 1994 (in MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 360) mentions them all.

disavow violence. The ultimate objective would be the return to the electoral process once the security situation was mastered⁸⁴. Although the French government advocated this surpassing of the status quo as a means to solve Algeria's crisis, it always maintained that it would not intervene in Algeria's domestic affairs and that, consequently, it would not seek to impose this solution but merely encourage the Algerian authorities to follow its recommendations.

The policy line of transcending the status quo was defined in a particular context. It was spelt out ten days before the dismissal of Prime Minister Abdesselam. Throughout Abdesselam's premiership the rumour had always been that he might depart soon, so unpopular at home and abroad was his economic policy and his political statements so at odds with the HSC's decision to open a political dialogue⁸⁵. Whether or not the French government knew exactly when Abdesselam would be dismissed and by whom he would be replaced, the definition of its policy line at that particular moment can be understood as a signal of what it wished the new Algerian government to do. It was an encouragement to find an agreement with the IMF and to continue discussions with the opposition (then excluding the FIS) within the framework of the National Dialogue Commission scheduled for Autumn 1993. The appointment of Redha Malek as prime minister was welcomed favourably in Paris precisely because he satisfied these expectations⁸⁶.

Even though France's policy line was defined in this specific context, it remained its constant message throughout Balladur's mandate. France's discourse was so static because things were slowly evolving in Algeria. It took the Malek government almost a year to sign an agreement with IMF. The dialogue process unfolded over two years before reaching a virtual deadlock. Another reason for such

⁸⁴ A. Juppé interviewed on Europe 1, August 11, 1993 in MAE (juillet-août 1994), pp. 103-4.

⁸⁵ Although Kafi had been critical of the eradicator parties, Abdesselam went further, taxing them with being "secular-assimilationists", which, by referring to the colonial question of Independence / assimilation, implied that they belonged to the "party of France". In addition, whereas the HSC had opened negotiations with political parties (September 1992 and March-June 1993), Abdesselam had maintained that "the parties represent only themselves and are, consequently, of no use." See *Algérie Actualité* (1431), 16-22 mars 1993 and (1459), 28 septembre-4 octobre 1993.

⁸⁶ See Juppé's statement (August 24, 1993) on the nomination of Malek in MAE (juillet-août 1993), p. 115.

an unchanging discourse was that it was so general and steeped in ambiguities that it applied to both the pre- and post-September 1994 periods. Constancy does not necessarily mean consistency...

2.1.2. Putting the discourse to the test : ambiguities and contradictions

The French discourse on its Algeria policy was characterised by several ambiguities and contradictions, of which two are underlined below. They concern the issue of the integration of the FIS within the political process in Algeria and that of economic aid.

On the inclusion of the FIS into the political process

Despite its apparent simplicity, Juppé's discourse on the political dialogue contained a major ambiguity : it was never crystal clear on the issue of the inclusion of the FIS within the dialogue. In what follows I attempt to demonstrate that the Quai d'Orsay -- as much as Place Beauvau -- did not support the inclusion of the FIS within the political process at least until September 1994, that is until negotiations between the Algerian authorities and the FIS were about to break down.

It is noticeable that Juppé apparently always refused to answer reporters' questions whether he included the FIS in his vision of the dialogue that had to be opened by the Algerian government. His response was to repeat the necessity of a confabulation and to say that if "Islamic forces" were ready to play by the democratic game, they should be included in the process. He then hastened to add that it was not up to him to designate which such forces were, for this would have come down to interfering with Algeria's domestic affairs⁸⁷. This argument allowed the French government to avoid falling out with the eradicators and conciliators of the Algerian regime. Perhaps more importantly, it also left open the possibility for the Balladur government to change its course of policy without having to change its discourse.

⁸⁷ See e.g. his interviews on February 9, 1994 and December 17, 1994, respectively in MAE (janvier-février 1994) and (novembre-décembre 1994), p. 173 and 367.

There are, however, several elements that allow us to affirm that Juppé, along with Pasqua, did not wish the integration of the FIS in the political dialogue and, more generally, in Algeria's political landscape. These are to be found in their speeches which emphasised the French government's opposition to a FIS takeover as well as the claim that there is no such thing as an "Islamist moderate". The Balladur government's soft attitude *vis-à-vis* the Algerian authorities' negotiation strategy with the banned party also gives added weight to the argument that, while calling for a conciliation, the French government opposed a compromise with the FIS. Finally, the way in which crackdown operations against FIS militants and sympathisers were conducted in France suggest that the French government made no difference between the Islamist militants who advocate violence and those who do not. This undermined its public claim that a dialogue could be opened with Islamic forces rejecting violence.

The French government constantly made it plain from June 1993 to September 1994 that it was opposed to a FIS takeover. On several occasions⁸⁸ Juppé argued that the coming into power of the FIS would be a "catastrophe". But he never specified whether he was thinking of a takeover through violent means (with the revolutionary radicalism that it would involve) or of a coming to power through a negotiated settlement. Logic would want that, since Juppé had consistently appealed for a political dialogue, he had in mind a takeover through violence. But, in explaining why France would side with Algeria in its struggle against "fundamentalism", Juppé underlined France's opposition to the *political project* of Islamism :

"(...) we will not be lenient with political movements whose values, objectives, [and] aims are exactly in contradiction with everything we believe in. (...) I believe that we have nothing to gain in showing indulgence *vis-à-vis political Islamism* (...)"⁸⁹.

By April 1994, Juppé no longer referred so bluntly to the "clash of civilisation". In substance his argument remained, nevertheless, the same. From then on, he stated

⁸⁸ See, for instance, his speech to the French parliament on April 21, 1994 (in MAE (mars-avril 1994), p. 210), his press conference in Washington on May 12, 1994 and his interview in the Tunisian newspaper *Réalité* on June 30, 1994 (in MAE (mai-juin 1994), respectively p. 90 and 360).

⁸⁹ Address to the diplomatic press, September 8, 1993 in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 53, emphasis added.

that, if the FIS came to power in Algiers, the confidence of similar Islamist movements throughout the Muslim world would be boosted and anti-Western regimes might thus mushroom⁹⁰. Inasmuch as the French government was opposed to the political project of the FIS and highlighted its anti-Western outlook, whether the FIS seized power by force or came into office through a negotiated settlement, did not make much difference : in either case it would have had consequences which the French government wanted to avoid (these are spelt out in part two). This implied, in turn, that the French government saw no prospect in a middle-of-the-road solution involving the FIS in the government. Consequently, there was no point in trying to associate it to the political dialogue on the transitional period.

The French authorities also gave an informal support to the Algerian eradicators when arguing that there were no moderates within the Islamist movement as a whole. Although the interior minister is remembered as the one having said that "(...) the idea that a moderate Islamist regime might emerge is nothing but rubbish."⁹¹, he was never alone in saying so. In his May 1994 press conference in Washington, the foreign minister argued that :

"(...) there may be here and there this or that representative of the FIS with whom one can talk, but globally and in its very essence, it is an extremist, terrorist, anti-European [and] anti-Western movement (...)"⁹².

Moreover, it was argued in the Quai d'Orsay that the legal Islamist parties such as Hamas or the MNI were mere "screens" of the FIS⁹³. This contention implicitly meant that their formal allegiance to the principle of democracy was not to be taken seriously.

The third way in which the French government showed its hostility to an inclusion of the FIS within the political establishment appears in its attitude *vis-à-vis*

⁹⁰ Juppé referred to the domino effect theory for the first time in August 1993 and maintained it at least until June 1994. See MAE (juillet-août 1993), p. 115 ; (janvier-février 1994), p. 163 and 247 ; (mars-avril 1994), p. 210 ; (mai-juin 1994), p. 90, 314 and 360.

⁹¹ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 6 août 1994.

⁹² See MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 90.

⁹³ Interview with Christophe Bigot (assistant to the deputy-director of the Maghreb-Mashreq department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs), April 21, 1994.

the strategy of the Algerian authorities in their negotiations with the FIS. As pinpointed earlier, this strategy could not lead to the success of a political perspective because the FIS was not given sufficient guarantees that it would be allowed back into politics. In front of this vitiated negotiation strategy, the French government congratulated the Algerian authorities for their political openness while blaming the deadlock not only on the FIS but also on other political parties. Thus, Juppé declared in June 1994 :

"The willingness to talk exists on the side of the political establishment. The whole problem is to know with whom [hold negotiations]. It is evidently very difficult to negotiate with someone who puts a kalachnikov on the table pointing the barrel directly to your chest ! But I note that, while maintaining a security policy that is often rough, the government proves more and more open to discussion."⁹⁴

And he concluded in October 1994 :

"(...) unfortunately, [the dialogue] has not progressed since the political parties such as the FFS or the RCD as well as the FIS still refuse to get involved in the dialogue."⁹⁵

Juppé feigned to ignore that, in the same way as the Algerian authorities had imposed conditions for participation in the dialogue, opposition parties had their own requisites. By putting forward their own terms, opposition parties showed that they were not against the principle of a dialogue but that they were willing to participate in negotiations only if they were meaningful to them. As regards the FIS, it had signalled in December 1993 that it was not shut to the idea of a dialogue since it had submitted its conditions which were, moreover, open to bargaining. When Abassi Madani wrote in his letters of August 1994 that he accepted the Algerian government's conditions to participate in the dialogue, his flexibility was greeted with great scepticism by the Quai d'Orsay : it was argued that "we shall wait and see how things

⁹⁴ In MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 314. See also the declaration of the spokesman for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in relation to the January 1994 "appeasement measures" (*Le Monde*, 22 janvier 1994) and Juppé's felicitations in relation to the transfer from jail to house arrest of the paramount leaders of the FIS in September 1994 (*Le Monde*, 16 septembre 1994).

⁹⁵ In MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 176.

evolve" and that Madani's renouncing violence had to be "verified and confirmed"⁹⁶. If Juppé may not have been wholly wrong in expressing some scepticism towards the FIS, his contrasting attitude with regards to the Algerian regime's dialogue initiative revealed an over-enthusiasm that should not have existed if the French government believed that a political perspective in Algeria required the reintegration of the FIS within the political game.

The last indicator of the French government's reluctance to see a compromise being reached with the FIS is revealed by the way in which some of the round-up operations against FIS militants and sympathisers were conducted in France. Under the Balladur government four large-scale crackdown operations took place⁹⁷. Only one point need be made now about the French government's contradictory stance. The French authorities themselves recognised that the first two crackdowns -- that of November 1993 on the Algerian Brotherhood in France and that of August 1994 which led to the expulsion of twenty suspected FIS militants and sympathisers to Burkina Faso -- did not concern persons involved in terrorist activities or in the armed struggle in Algeria. Indeed, the house arrest sanctions against some of the defendants rounded-up in November 1993 were lifted because "the reproached militancy [did] not relate in any way to what is usually called terrorism"⁹⁸. Regarding the second crackdown, the board for civil liberties and legal affairs attached to the Interior Ministry openly declared that the majority of the persons who had been expelled was reproached for grievances of an ideological nature while only a small minority was suspected of logistical support to the FIS networks in France⁹⁹. The official recognition that most persons had been indicted or expelled on the ground of opinion offence and political militancy wholly discredited the French government's public stance on the political dialogue in Algeria. For, indeed, whether or not the Islamists left "the kalachnikov in the cloakroom", they had to be fought because, for the French

⁹⁶ See Juppé's statements on September 5, 1994 and September 16, 1994 in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 35 and 104.

⁹⁷ November 1993, August 1994, September 1994 and November 1994.

⁹⁸ *Le Monde*, 7 mai 1994.

⁹⁹ *Le Monde*, 2 septembre 1994.

government, what was really at stake was not violence but ideology¹⁰⁰.

By emphasising its opposition to the FIS on ideological grounds, by arguing that there were no FIS moderates, and by backing the Algerian authorities' negotiation strategy, the Balladur government showed, merely through its discourse, that debating with the FIS was not considered as a vector of the political solution it was, otherwise, calling for. For all that, did France's discourse contribute to obstructing the chances of a conciliation, as suggested by Hugh Roberts¹⁰¹ ? The argument, however logical at first sight, requires careful examination. The causal relationship between France's discourse and the unfolding of the events in Algeria is, indeed, difficult to establish with certainty. By upholding compromise rather than eradication, the socialists probably managed to boost the conciliators' confidence. However, this did not translate into a breakthrough in favour of the conciliators. There is, thus, no *a priori* reasons for the French Right to have succeeded where its predecessors had failed. It is doubtful that the Balladur government actually hampered a conciliatory solution through its mere discourse. What may be most important is perhaps less what France says than what it does. In supporting the Algerian regime the Balladur government essentially acted in three ways. It refused to tie its economic aid to political conditions as demanded by some Algerian conciliator parties and segments of the French public opinion. It impeded the FIS's progress in France both as a political movement and as a support to guerrilla warfare in Algeria. And, it encouraged the international community to follow in its wake. It is in doing so, more than through its declarations, that the French government contributed to obstruct the reaching of a conciliatory solution since it allowed the regime to buy time. Yet, it is unclear whether conciliators in government would have appreciated another policy on the part of France. For, in attempting to compel the Algerian regime to negotiate a true conciliation, France would have forced it to negotiate in a position of weakness and this was (and remains) the governmental conciliators' least eager wish.

¹⁰⁰ This contradiction was underlined by F. Burgat in a personal conversation. Any error of interpretation is of course mine.

¹⁰¹ H. Roberts (1994a), p. 27.

On economic assistance and non-intervention

Under the Right, like under the socialists, bilateral economic assistance to Algeria continued to be justified as a support to the people as opposed to the regime¹⁰². This is less a contradiction than a mere lie. Financial support may, of course, have benefited (some of) the people, at least by ensuring a level of imports. But it has first and foremost helped the regime in three main ways. Firstly, financial aid symbolises no ostracism and, as such, it provides political backing. Secondly, this financial aid allowed the Algerian government to allot funds -- otherwise devoted to finance current imports, investments, or debt repayment -- towards repression expenditures : buying anti-guerrilla hardware, regularly and well paying the security forces when living-standards had been collapsing, etc. Finally, considering the corruption system surrounding import contracts¹⁰³, France's tied commercial loans indirectly allowed the military establishment to distribute this income and buy its clientele.

On the ground that its economic aid was meant for the people, the French government refused to put political conditions to such financial flows. However, it found itself in contradiction when it eventually tied this aid to the reaching of an economic agreement with the IMF. By warning that its 1994 financial aid would be made dependent upon rescheduling the debt and implementing structural reforms, the French government also contradicted its initial claim that it would not force a departure from the status quo. French willingness to directly intervene in the economic sphere partly ensued from the belief that acting on the economic lever meant serving Algeria's long-run political stability.

¹⁰² See the statements of the European affairs minister (*Le Monde*, 10 décembre 1993), of Mitterrand (*Le Monde*, 12 août 1994) and of Juppé in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 208.

¹⁰³ Foreign firms must pay tidy "commissions" to import directorates controlled by the Algerian military establishment if they want their export contract to be signed. On corruption and its foreign links, see A. Rouadjia (1995b).

2.1.3. *Bilateral and multilateral support : the means*

France's support to the Algerian regime took two forms : bilateral and multilateral. In general, on the international scene France advocated the adoption of policies similar to its own, notably, economic support and constraining the activities of exiled FIS militants. But France also did much more than that bilaterally.

Bilateral support

The Balladur government expressed its bilateral support to the Algerian authorities through traditional diplomatic means (speeches and visits), economic and military aid and by clamping down on exiled Islamists.

Until Autumn 1994, bilateral visits were relatively numerous and of a relatively high standing. In addition to regular meetings, they included the visits to Paris of Foreign Minister Malek in June 1993¹⁰⁴ and of Prime Minister Sifi in June 1994¹⁰⁵. Juppé and Léotard (minister for defence) went to Algiers in early August 1994 in order to pay homage to the three *gendarmes* and the two agents of the French Ministries for Foreign and Economic Affairs killed in Algeria¹⁰⁶. If this visit had an impromptu character, it had been preceded in July by the trip of a senatorial delegation headed by the president of the foreign affairs and defence commission of the French Senate, Xavier de Villepin, who also happened to be the director of Juppé's *cabinet*¹⁰⁷. On the whole, during these visits, the Algerian emissaries explained the merits of their government's policy in the political realm. They also at first attempted to convince the Balladur government to "reprofile" Algeria's bilateral debt. As France refused, they pleaded for other forms of support. Most Algerian visits to France preceded an international forum pending which Algeria's financial problems or its political situation were to be discussed (e.g. Paris Club meeting, EU summit in

¹⁰⁴ *El Watan*, 17 juin 1993 and *Le Monde*, 20-21 juin 1993.

¹⁰⁵ *El Watan*, 23 juin 1994 and *Le Monde*, 25 juin 1994.

¹⁰⁶ *Le Monde*, 5 août 1994.

¹⁰⁷ *El Moudjahid*, 10 juillet 1994.

Corfu, G7 summit in Naples). The French authorities assured their Algerian counterparts of their support and understanding : President Mitterrand transmitted messages of support to President Zeroual and the Balladur government positively responded to Algeria's lobbying.

Regarding financial flows, after disbursing the amount of the Sapin financial accord without economic conditionality, the French government threatened to cut off the tap if Algeria did not reach an agreement with the IMF. It also warned that its efforts at mobilising international finance would be dependent on Algeria's signature. France's admonitions to the Algerian minister for economic affairs during his visit to Paris on March 3, 1994¹⁰⁸ were essentially aimed at putting pressure on the Algerian authorities which were, however, hardly in a position to further postpone the agreement. Once Algeria signed its letter of intent in April 1994, Paris kept its promises. In May 1994 a three-year financial protocol (FF 200 million) for the purchase of pharmaceuticals was signed¹⁰⁹. It was followed in July by a new credit package worth FF 6 billion (\$ 1.1 billion). The first portion of the package was a FF 1 025 million protocol of mixed loans from the Treasury and from the export credit agency which were allotted for balance of payments relief and project financing. The second component concerned a FF 2 billion guaranteed trade credit available for three years and meant for the purchase of medicines, vehicles, and consumer goods. The third component was a FF 1 billion credit to finance the purchase of French cereals. The remaining sum of about FF 2 billion comprised private project financing guaranteed by the Coface¹¹⁰.

If this financial package was quite traditional in relation to both its amount and structure, France's support to the Algerian regime was best illustrated by military assistance, police and intelligence co-operation. Both are reviewed in turn. The military aid provided to Algeria was, in fact, very limited. It was, nevertheless, highly symbolic of France's agreement to assist the eradication strategy. Military cooperation

¹⁰⁸ *Libération*, 4 mars 1994 and *Le Figaro*, 4 mars 1994.

¹⁰⁹ *Liberté*, 27-28 mai 1994.

¹¹⁰ *MEED* (38)(29), July 22, 1994.

between the two countries has never been very intense despite Algeria's willingness to diversify away from its Soviet military hardware. A military co-operation agreement was signed in 1983 but it has never been clear what it was about and whether it was actually given substance because of the secrecy that has surrounded it. Questioned about it, Cheysson vaguely answered that one aspect of the agreement concerned the *gendarmarie*¹¹¹. From press reports it seems that military cooperation has, indeed, mainly concerned the paramilitary : training by the French GIGN (elite unit of the French *gendarmarie*) of their counterparts now involved in the repression and supply of armoured cars and light armament¹¹². In Autumn 1994 France also supplied Algeria with helicopters and night vision material for helicopters used in anti-guerrilla warfare¹¹³. In December 1994, it was officially announced that France had cancelled its anti-guerrilla material supplies, although it maintained its helicopter sales in a civil version¹¹⁴. The final use of these helicopters raises few doubts. The decision to cut anti-guerrilla equipment supplies seems to have been taken under the pressure of the Foreign Ministry. The supply of military hardware was, indeed, hardly compatible with Juppé's new criticisms of the Algerian government's all-repressive line.

Although the Balladur government's crackdowns on exiled Islamists in France fitted within a counter-terrorist frame, the measures implemented in order to restrain exiled Islamists' activities were also one of the means by which the French government politically supported the Algerian regime. Indeed, if some individuals were implicated in unlawful activities, others were merely involved in (lawful) political militancy. Measures taken against these persons amounted to the muzzling of a political opposition movement. In this regard, it is noticeable that prior to the first large-scale round-ups, Juppé, who had pledged to "help Algeria in struggling against extremism and fundamentalism" during Malek's visit¹¹⁵, justified such assistance less

¹¹¹ Interview with Claude Cheysson, April 22, 1994.

¹¹² *Le Nouvel Observateur* (1573), 29 décembre 1994-4 janvier 1995 and *Le Monde*, 10 novembre 1994. These supplies were revealed in November 1994 but it remains unclear whether they occurred after January 1992 and, if so, whether they took place under the Left or the Right.

¹¹³ *Le Monde*, 10 and 16 novembre 1994.

¹¹⁴ *Le Monde*, 14 décembre 1994.

¹¹⁵ Juppé quoted in *Le Monde*, 20-21 juin 1993.

on anti-terrorist grounds than on ideological ones. Juppé certainly invoked the possibility of "violent activities undertaken from our soil against this friendly country"¹¹⁶. But the main argument lay in the following claim :

"Since the month of April [1993], the new government has made it clear that it would not be lenient with religious extremism, simply because this extremism is a vehicle for values and ideas that are not ours and are against us (...)"¹¹⁷.

It was only after the first round-up of November 1993 that Juppé argued that France refused to become "a rear-haven for terrorism" and that it should not "show leniency towards those who have made terrorism and violence the essential feature of their programme"¹¹⁸. Pasqua, however, underlined that, despite a preoccupation for terrorism, the principal concern was subversion :

"(...) the Republic cannot accept that, under the cover of cultural associations, operations of a subversive type be put in place with the view to destabilising a neighbouring country or even to conduct later subversive or terrorist actions in France."¹¹⁹

Tracking down Islamists seeking refuge in France has benefited the Algerian government as well as the two other Maghrebi regimes. In December 1993, a small police raid aimed at the Tunisian Islamist milieu and was concluded by the putting under house arrest of Saleh Karkar, a founding-member of the Tunisian *al-Nahda* movement¹²⁰. Police operations also concerned the Moroccan Islamist milieu in early September 1994¹²¹. Needless to emphasise that cracking down on Maghrebi Islamists in France was conducted in close collaboration with the Maghrebi regimes. The December 1993 police raid on Tunisian Islamists followed the French interior minister's visit to Tunis on September 24, 1993 and is said to have been conducted "(...) under a request from the Tunisian judiciary to investigate whether the Islamists were plotting attacks on Tunisians."¹²². Similarly, there have been rumours of

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Interview on August 24, 1993 in MAE (juillet-août 1993), p. 115.

¹¹⁸ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 12 novembre 1993.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Le Monde*, 10 décembre 1993.

¹²¹ *Le Monde*, 3 septembre 1994.

¹²² M. Dunn (1994), p. 143 and *Le Monde*, 26-27 septembre 1993.

Lamari's presence in Paris prior to the November 1994 crackdown¹²³. Franco-Moroccan police co-operation was successfully put to the test in late August 1994 when Hassan II asked the French authorities to communicate information on Franco-Algerians and Franco-Moroccans suspected to belong to Islamist networks and involved in violent acts in Morocco¹²⁴.

Forbidding or constraining the political activities of exiled Islamists in France was mainly achieved through the close surveillance of the activities of well-known or suspected militants or sympathisers. It was characterised, in particular, by an assiduous attendance at the mosques among which some are led by members of the FIS or the old Bouyali group¹²⁵. Several *imams* (who were not Algerians) were, subsequently, expelled for having declared that "Allah's law comes before French law" or for having called to *jihād*¹²⁶. Propaganda material in favour of the FIS and of the armed struggle in Algeria has also been banned¹²⁷. To track down those who organised logistical support in France for the FIS, the AIS and the GIAs and who organised arms transfers, massive round-up operations were undertaken. With the exception of the November 1994 round-up, only a few persons were retained in custody and charged. Punctual police checks were also used to discover arms traffic operations¹²⁸.

¹²³ *Le Monde*, 11 novembre 1994.

¹²⁴ See chapter three, footnote 67.

¹²⁵ For instance, the imam of the *Khaled-ibn-Walid* mosque in Paris used to be Abelbaki Sahraoui. After having been a member of the Bouyali group in the 1980s, Sahraoui took part in the creation of the FIS in 1989. He was then drawn aside in the 1991 Batna congress and left for France. He was murdered in Paris in July 1995 (see *infra*).

¹²⁶ See *Le Monde*, 12 novembre 1993 and 24 mars 1994.

¹²⁷ On June 4, 1993 the FAF's newspaper was banned and on August 9, 1994 five publications were outlawed on the grounds of their anti-Western tonality and of their appeal to violence (respectively *Le Matin*, 17 juin 1993 and *Le Monde*, 11 août 1994).

¹²⁸ The first case of arms transfers from France to Algeria was discovered in 1992. A French national converted to Islam was condemned to death in Algeria for this operation. Under the pressure of the French authorities, the death sanction was turned into life imprisonment (*Le Monde*, 5-6 juin 1994). It is, however, only from March 1994 that a series of police checks led to the arrest of about 20 persons involved in arms traffics for the account of armed groups in Algeria. For a reminder of the various arrests from March 1994 to June 1994 see *Libération*, 8 août 1994. Thereafter, see *Le Monde*, 29 juillet 1994 and 16 mars 1995.

Multilateral support

The Balladur government played the role of Algeria's defender on the international scene, undertaking an active advertising campaign in favour of the regime and selling its product to major international actors. Under the socialists, there had been a bid to influence the EU in order to obtain an emergency loan for balance of payments relief. However, the ECU 400 million loan which was granted did not represent a support to the new Algerian ruling institutions since it was signed in September 1991. There are two main reasons explaining the "diplomatic campaign" launched by the Balladur government. First of all, considering Algeria as France's backyard, the international community waited for Paris to show the way -- even though, in practical terms, it has not systematically followed France's recommendations. As to the French government, it felt directly concerned by the Algerian crisis not only because of the multiple ties that link France to Algeria but also because of the foreseen consequences of this crisis for France itself. But it did not want "to go it alone", as underlined by the French minister for foreign affairs, primarily because the international community's financial help was necessary. In addition, the Algerian crisis raised fundamental issues about political change in the Arab Muslim world. Beyond its specificities, the Algerian crisis was thus for France a co-operation test between the North towards an increasingly turbulent South.

In its endeavour to drum up international support for the Algerian regime, the Balladur government sought financial support from international and regional organisations as well as from individual states. It also advocated the adoption of its own restrictive behaviour towards exiled FIS militants. If, in the process, it managed to get clear political statements backing the Algerian regime, this was of course welcomed. France reached its aim concerning financial support but found it harder to obtain a consensus about the merits of its own policy with regards to exiled Islamists and the exclusion of the FIS from dialogue. These three issues are reviewed below by focusing on the European Union, individual European countries and the USA. Political dialogue is examined first and international financial support last.

On the whole, the EU's political statements on the Algerian political crisis were very close to those of France. At the fourth meeting of the EU-Algeria Co-operation Council (February 7, 1994), for instance, the Union appealed for a "frank and open national political dialogue with those who renounce terrorism and support the return to democracy and the reconciliation of all Algerians"¹²⁹. During its visit to Algeria on May 30, 1994, the European troika also showed satisfaction with the Algerian authorities' conduct of the dialogue. The Greek foreign minister noted "the sincerity of the Algerian government in its will to face political and economic challenges" and the Belgian foreign minister, Willy Claes, declared :

"We will return to Brussels with the conviction that the Algerian government is determined to boost national political dialogue with all the nation's active forces."¹³⁰

The EU formally showed a greater interest than France in voicing concern regarding human rights violations in Algeria¹³¹. However, no sanction was taken to protest against Algeria's poor human rights record. The second instalment of the ECU 400 million loan was suspended in March 1992. But this freeze was not prompted by the European foreign ministers' willingness to tie economic aid to Algeria to the "respect of human rights, tolerance and political pluralism", as they had suggested after the coup¹³². It was linked to Algeria's refusal to go through IMF structural reforms.

Despite this apparent consensus between France and the EU, it would be wrong to conclude that all member states were in complete agreement with France. As time went by and as the option of supporting the Algerian regime did not produce greater stability, some expressed scepticism as to the eradication strategy. Schematically, states closer to the scenes of violence gradually became more independent from France's own position. Thus, the other three Southern European

¹²⁹ *Europe Daily Bulletin* (6166 n. s.), February 9, 1994.

¹³⁰ *Europe Daily Bulletin* (6241 n. s.), June 1, 1994.

¹³¹ Juppé recognised that violence had led to human rights violations on all sides (MAE (mars-avril 1994), p. 175) and Balladur affirmed that France was attached to the respect of human rights and tolerance in Algeria (*Le Monde*, 16 août 1994). However, the issue of human rights was raised only occasionally by the French government.

¹³² *Le Monde*, 19 février 1992.

states -- Italy, Portugal and Spain -- became more inclined to publicly support the view that the Algerian regime was "illegitimate" and that a distinction had to be made between Islamist moderates rejecting violence -- with whom dialogue had to be established -- and Islamist radicals supporting terrorism¹³³. By contrast, Northern European countries such as Britain or Germany, in general, supported France's approach. This was less because of their total agreement with it, than because of their concern to avoid a public quarrel with France over an issue which remains, after all, peripheral to their interests in Europe. But, if Britain and Germany did not attempt to block France's initiatives, neither did they issue political statements supporting the Algerian regime¹³⁴. Their case must, therefore, be differentiated from Belgium whose foreign minister argued in June 1994 that it was "naive" to advocate a dialogue with Islamist moderates who, if they existed at all, were to be found "on the benches of the national conference" (i.e. the legal Islamist parties) and not elsewhere¹³⁵.

Within the Clinton Administration the debate between supporters and detractors of a political recognition of Islamism has been settled to the advantage of the former. Since the Algerian government's initiative to open "a dialogue without exclusion", the USA has constantly advocated the solution of a power-sharing between the regime and what Clinton has called "dissident groups not involved in terrorism"¹³⁶, a category within which the FIS is included. The position of the American Administration on Algeria derives both from a general viewpoint on political Islam and an assessment of the Algerian situation itself. Contending that "Today, Islamic political groups vary in their attitudes and ideas about how to address the needs of their societies"¹³⁷, the Near Eastern affairs department has firmly argued that existing extremist and anti-Western groups do not represent the Islamist movement as a whole and are not an inherent expression of the Islamists' political agenda. The

¹³³ On Italy see *Le Monde*, 6 and 13 août 1994 ; on Portugal see F. Faria (1994) and on Spain see *The Times*, September 15, 1994.

¹³⁴ On Germany, see V. Perthes (1994).

¹³⁵ Quoted in *El Watan*, 21 juin 1994.

¹³⁶ Quoted in *MEED* 38 (24), June 17, 1994.

¹³⁷ Robert Pelletreau, assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, in R. Pelletreau, D. Pipes & J. Esposito (1994), p. 3.

department has concluded that the tree should not hide the forest and that political accommodation should be sought with Islamist movements which agree to work within existing political structures to effect change. Regarding the Algerian situation, the American Administration, which did not at first condemn the coup, made the simple assessment that : "Events of the past two years demonstrate that Algeria's leaders cannot ease the crisis through over reliance on repressive policies." Washington subsequently urged Algeria to broaden political participation and encompass "all political forces in the country, including Islamist leaders who reject terrorism."¹³⁸

Apparently, the solution advocated by the USA was similar to that of France since the latter never explicitly argued that the FIS should be excluded from talks. But the difference between the two states concerned this very issue. It showed in a difference in discourse over two main points. Firstly, whereas the French purposely blurred the frontier between the GIAs and the FIS, the Americans maintained that the FIS was not responsible for the acts committed by the GIAs¹³⁹ which has been on their terrorist movements list since May 1995¹⁴⁰. Secondly, the Americans adopted a harsher discourse towards the Algerian regime than France did. The acting assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs, Mark Parris, emphasised that the violation of human rights in Algeria was not unilateral¹⁴¹. Likewise, whereas the French government congratulated Algiers despite its vitiated political dialogue strategy, Parris expressed his doubts about the Algerian government's sincerity in attempting to open a real political dialogue. On March 22, 1994, he declared before the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Africa :

"I regret to say (...) that despite the stated intention of all Algerian governments in the past two years to undertake genuine political and economic reforms, we have seen little progress toward these goals. The failure of the government-sponsored "national conference" in January, which all major opposition parties boycotted, demonstrated that the regime has yet

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹³⁹ *MEED* 38 (22), June 3, 1994.

¹⁴⁰ *Le Monde*, 25 mai 1995.

¹⁴¹ *Le Monde*, 1 avril 1994.

to convince opposition elements of its willingness to permit them a meaningful role in governing during a transition period."¹⁴²

France's position on the political dialogue, from which it wished to exclude the FIS, and on the political support that had to be provided to the Algerian regime was, thus, progressively contested by some European countries and the USA. France's efforts at bringing the international community to constrain the activities of exiled Islamists did not meet with a particular success either. To the great disappointment of the French authorities, foreign governments were careful to make a clear distinction between political militancy and involvement in terrorism.

The USA, Britain and Germany which host official representatives of the FIS and high figures of the Tunisian Islamist movement were asked to restrict the political activities of FIS representatives by limiting their freedom of movement and by imposing on them the "duty of reserve". In early August 1994, the deputy spokeswoman for the French Foreign Ministry indicated that contacts with a number of countries had been taken so that these countries would do everything to prevent the FIS representatives from "engaging in political activities and renewing declarations that were inadmissible."¹⁴³ The failure of the USA, Britain and Germany to meet France's demand led Interior Minister Pasqua to depict as an "unfriendly act" the fact that they sheltered "persons who not only did not disavow attacks but underwrote them."¹⁴⁴

The authorities concerned have defended a policy of abstaining from crackdowns on Islamists as long as there was no evidence of a shift from political activism to terrorist or illegal activities. The White House indicated that no special measures against Islamists could be undertaken as long as expatriates were on American soil lawfully and as long as there was no proof of their financial support to listed terrorist groups¹⁴⁵. Germany, where Rabah Kebir and the sons of Madani

¹⁴² Speech reproduced in *Middle East Policy* (1994), III (2), p. 190. On US policy see also P. Golub (1994/95); C. Moore (1994) and PM. Gorce (de la) (1993).

¹⁴³ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 7-8 août 1994.

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in *Ibid.* See also *Le Monde*, 6 août 1994.

¹⁴⁵ *Le Monde*, 6 août 1994.

obtained asylum status, declared that Kebir's role was essentially political and that, in these circumstances, he could not be subjected to special surveillance. He was fined in August 1994 for disregarding his obligation not to express publicly his views on the Algerian political crisis, but the German authorities did not expel him¹⁴⁶. Britain answered Pasqua's allegations of laxity by maintaining that, as a matter of principle, political refugees benefit from freedom of expression. The Home Office, however, refused to grant a visa to Anwar Haddam when he was supposed to deliver a speech at the Royal Institute for International Affairs in September 1994¹⁴⁷. This concession was made to Pasqua in order to ease relations with France. On French television, Britain was depicted as a country "soft on Islamists". French reporters pointed at several "elements of proof" of Britain's "laxity" : the Home Office's unwillingness to ban the Wembley and Sheffield meetings respectively organised by *Hizb el Tahrir* and the Islamic Mission of the United Kingdom on August 7 and August 28, 1994 ; the granting of asylum rights to Rashid Ghannoushi (leader of the Tunisian *al-Nahda*), to FIS sympathisers and militants such as Mohammed Dnidi, ex-director of the FIS newspaper ; and the Royal Institute for International Affairs' organisation and hosting of meetings where FIS representatives were present in June, September and October 1994.

In supporting their viewpoints the three states concerned were in line with the EU. In October 1993 a communiqué of the European Parliament had urged member states not to allow FIS representatives living in their borders to condone acts of violence¹⁴⁸. But the Council had specified that "political action must not be confused with terrorism"¹⁴⁹. France's efforts at bringing the states where Islamist militants had found refuge to put a break on their political militancy were thus thwarted.

The only area where France's multilateral diplomacy in favour of the Algerian regime produced tangible results was the financial one. While refusing "bilateral debt reprofiling", France declared itself ready to lobby in favour of Algeria in order to

¹⁴⁶ *Le Monde*, 13 août 1994.

¹⁴⁷ *Le Monde*, 2 septembre 1994.

¹⁴⁸ *Europe Daily Bulletin* (6097 n. s.), October 30, 1993.

¹⁴⁹ *Europe Daily Bulletin* (6065 n. s.), September 16, 1993.

obtain flexible and advantageous conditions from the IMF and the Paris Club as well as fresh financial loans from regional institutions and individual countries once Algeria had rescheduled. Paralleling Algeria's financial diplomacy¹⁵⁰, France first exhorted Japan and Italy to accept the principle of a rescheduling of Algeria's debt and then attempted to gather international support for fresh credits to be channelled to Algeria. In Spring 1994, Juppé multiplied his foreign visits, calling for economic support notably in Tokyo (April 1), Luxembourg (April 18) and Washington (May 12)¹⁵¹. Emphasising the risks of bandwagoning in the Mediterranean, Juppé criticised the view that the West should prepare itself for, instead of opposing, a FIS takeover and argued that the economic card was one way of ensuring stability in Algeria.

All the governments contacted by Algeria and France agreed to support Algeria's case within international organisations (IMF, IBRD, EU, Paris Club) under the condition that Algeria signed a stabilisation programme with the IMF and filed its rescheduling dossier with the Paris Club. However, with the exception of France and Belgium¹⁵², none immediately granted new bilateral financing. This may be because they preferred to wait for their bilateral rescheduling agreement to be finalised after the signature of the framework agreement with the Paris Club. This may also be because, while recognising the necessity for rescheduling and international financial support, they were unwilling to give too much moral and material support to the Algerian regime. Such was the USA's stand¹⁵³.

After its rescheduling operation, Algeria, thus, received new financing mostly from international institutions. In addition to the IMF standby loan, Algeria benefited from a series of loans from the IBRD. In July 1994, the blocked \$ 175 million second tranche of the World Bank's structural adjustment loan was released, triggering the

¹⁵⁰ Visits in May 1994 of the Algerian finance minister to Brussels and London, of the industry and energy minister to Madrid and of the trade minister to Bonn (*El Moudjahid*, 12 mai 1994 and *El Watan*, 23 mai 1994) ; visits in June 1994 of the Algerian prime minister to Brussels, Paris and Rome and of the foreign affairs minister to Washington (*El Watan*, 21 and 29 juin 1994).

¹⁵¹ See MAE (mars-avril 1994), p. 119 and 189 and (mai-juin 1994), p. 90.

¹⁵² Following the Algeria-Belgium joint-commission meeting in April 1994, Belgium is to provide development assistance worth \$ 8.3 million per year until 1997 in addition to balance of payments support and project financing (*MEED* 38 (16), April 22, 1994).

¹⁵³ *MEED* 38 (22), June 3, 1994.

disbursement of the remaining \$ 150 million instalment of a programme approved in 1991 and co-financed by the Import-Export Bank of Japan. The IBRD also planned the granting of new loans for the development of the agrarian, housing and construction sectors¹⁵⁴. In May 1994, the EU agreed to release the frozen second tranche (ECU 150 million, \$ 180 million) of the 1991 balance of payments loan¹⁵⁵. In Summer 1994, it also paid into a locked account of the Algerian Central Bank an ECU 70 million (\$ 84 million) structural adjustment grant to finance work in the housing sector¹⁵⁶. Lastly, in December 1994, the EU signed with Algeria a new credit of ECU 200 million (\$ 240 million) for balance of payments relief. Its first instalment of ECU 100 million was granted in May 1995¹⁵⁷.

2.2. Greater firmness towards the eradicators (September 1994 - May 1995)

During the last nine months of the Balladur government France's Algeria policy was the most confusing. A dual discourse appeared within the government. Whereas Juppé (as well as Léotard) made an overture towards the conciliators, Pasqua maintained the previous policy line of support to the eradicators. Yet, Pasqua also engaged in a secretive diplomacy, initiating contacts with the FIS. This contradicted both France's official policy and Pasqua's apparent alignment with the eradicators. A rift also occurred between the Elysée and Matignon over the issue of organising an EU conference on Algeria in order to unlock the crisis. It was, nevertheless, short-lived. Juppé soon recognised that Mitterrand's February 1995 proposal was not completely unsound. These quarrels and contradictory attitudes stemmed in part from the electoral context. However, it would be a mistake to believe that the prospect of the French presidential elections of April-May 1995 had a significant impact on policy-making. The main consequence of the battle for the

¹⁵⁴ *MEED* 38 (32), August 12, 1994.

¹⁵⁵ *Le Monde*, 18 mai 1994.

¹⁵⁶ *MEED* 38 (32), August 12, 1994.

¹⁵⁷ *Le Monde*, 17 mai 1995.

elections was to allow governmental disunity to appear to the public eye.

The Juppé/Pasqua split and its consequences regarding the coherence of French policy are expounded below. Then, the causes and the limits of Juppé's shifting vision will be analysed.

2.2.1. The Juppé/Pasqua split

August, September or December 1994 ?

It has been argued that the Juppé/Pasqua split was discernible as early as August 1994 and that it came out in open light after the hijack of an *Air France* Airbus by a GIA commando in December 1994¹⁵⁸. Because Juppé did not change his views from one day to the other, choosing a date is necessarily somewhat arbitrary. Nevertheless, September 1994 may represent the best compromise. Juppé had, indeed, fully developed his new stance before the hijack occurred. Hence, the hijack cannot have played the role of a "catalyst" in the adjusting of his policy. The crisis of confidence that crystallised during this event between the Quai d'Orsay and the Algerian authorities merely reinforced Juppé in his newly formed views. Regarding the other side of the time-scale, the starting-point of Juppé's personal doubts as to the merits of supporting the eradicators may well have arisen in August 1994. However, he did not share them publicly before his speech to the Senate on September 15, 1994. There he warned that political dialogue between the Algerian government and the Islamists may not succeed because on both sides some wished to torpedo it¹⁵⁹.

Intra-governmental disagreements occurred notably between Place Beauvau and the Quai d'Orsay in August 1994. This explains why many observers have taken this date as the starting-point of Juppé's changed perceptions. It is not, however, absolutely certain because Juppé did not publicly indicate a policy change prior to mid-September 1994. Consequently, there is a risk of interpreting the quarrel between Juppé and Pasqua as stemming from disagreements of substance over France's

¹⁵⁸ J. Cesari (1994/95), pp. 189-90.

¹⁵⁹ In MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 100.

Algeria policy whereas it may have derived from mere disagreements of form. The tension may also have been the sole result of intra-governmental competition. For instance, Pasqua's tough call on "allied countries" to crackdown on exiled Islamists irritated the diplomatic corps. But, as was mentioned earlier, the Quai d'Orsay issued a communiqué confirming that steps to that effect had been taken. Disagreement was, thus, less driven by a fundamental difference in viewpoints than by Pasqua's large interpretation of the powers allocated to him through his interior portfolio and by his undiplomatic manners. Similarly, the war logic into which Pasqua entered after the AIS and the GIAs had issued threats to protest against the internment of twenty-six Islamists in Folembay may have been perceived by the Quai d'Orsay as over-dramatic¹⁶⁰ and dangerous for the security of French nationals in Algeria. But Juppé had also always maintained that France would not let Islamist networks operate in France.

In the midst of this confusion ensuing from bureaucratic politics, it is thus safer to choose the date of the official text clearly instituting the difference in viewpoint as the starting-point of the Juppé/Pasqua split.

Overtures towards the conciliators : the Juppé line

Between September and December 1994 Juppé changed his views by feeling his way along as events unfolded in Algeria. Because of this gradual process of change, his speeches on Algeria and on France's policy incorporated both old and new elements. On the one hand, Juppé reiterated that France would not be lenient with terrorism on its own soil ; that it would struggle against ideologies that combat what France represents ; that it would continue to promote political dialogue in Algeria and that it would pursue its policy of financial help as long as the Algerian authorities

¹⁶⁰ Anti-riot police forces were deployed in Paris and major provincial cities. In Paris, over a period of twelve days, they proceeded to about 27 000 identity checks and 10 000 car searches. About 500 persons were said to be liable for prosecution but none were arrested during these identity checks for their potential links with Islamist networks. Apart from drinking and driving offences or the like, the bulk of the arrested persons were illegal immigrants (*Le Monde*, 18 août 1994).

maintained their economic liberalisation policy¹⁶¹. On the other hand, Juppé adopted a more conciliatory attitude towards the FIS and a harsher one towards the eradicators, thereby moving towards a more balanced policy stance.

Juppé's perceptions on the FIS partially evolved. By early September 1994, he recognised that the Islamist movement was divided¹⁶² -- a point that the French authorities had hitherto been unwilling to publicly uphold. Juppé still expressed a certain scepticism regarding Madani's written acceptance of the authorities' conditions to participate in the discussion table. He also refused to pronounce the expression "Islamist moderates"¹⁶³. Yet, he tried to play down Pasqua's declaration (and his own) according to which there is not such a thing as an Islamist moderate. He argued that the interior minister's statement aimed solely at the terrorist movements with which no dialogue was to be considered¹⁶⁴. Claiming that the solution to Algeria's crisis was to be found in "the reconciliation of the different trends of the Algerian society"¹⁶⁵, Juppé seemed convinced as from early September 1994 that the most representative Islamist party would have to be integrated within the political process. If he did not exclude the principle of a coalition government¹⁶⁶, he nevertheless consistently maintained that the arms would have to be laid down first and that strong guarantees from the FIS that it would respect the principle of democracy, and notably political alternation, were needed¹⁶⁷. This was essential to prevent any dominance or "hijack" of the government by the FIS once it was accepted within its fold.

If Juppé's perceptions on the FIS partially evolved with the recognition that it should be associated to a political solution, a change also occurred *vis-à-vis* the Algerian government. Between September and December 1994, Juppé became more critical of the eradicators. In his speech to the Senate, five days before the last round

¹⁶¹ See notably Juppé's speech to the National Assembly, October 11, 1994, in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), pp. 205-6 ; on economic aid linked to continued economic liberalisation see *Le Monde*, 8 février 1995.

¹⁶² Interview, September 5, 1994, in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 35.

¹⁶³ Interview, September 16, 1994, in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 104.

¹⁶⁴ Interview, September 14, 1994, in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 87.

¹⁶⁵ Interview, September 5, 1994, in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 35.

¹⁶⁶ Hearing at the National Assembly, October 5, 1994, in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 179.

¹⁶⁷ See his statements on September 1, 1994 and October 11, 1994 in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 25 and 208 and on December 8, 1994 in MEA (novembre-décembre 1994), pp. 237-8.

of talks (September 20) between the Algerian regime and opposition parties, Juppé depicted as kith and kin diehards in the Algerian government and the Islamist armed groups, and notably the GIAs. He suspected both of doing their best to block a political perspective in Algeria. On the very day the first Rome conference was held (November 21, 1994), he further declared that "our party in Algeria is the party of democracy"¹⁶⁸ and specified in early December that this was addressed to all "hawks" whether on the side of the Algerian authorities or of the "extremist opposition"¹⁶⁹. This new firmness towards the eradicator trend was also reflected in the defence minister's discourse. In September, Léotard claimed that "the best solution for Algeria would have been to accept the poll of December 1991"¹⁷⁰. This U-turn provoked the summoning of Kessedjian by the Algerian authorities. More skilful in the art of diplomacy, Juppé made a clever declaration which, while apparently intended to the Islamists, could also concern the Algerian authorities :

"(...) when one wants to participate in a democratic process, the rules of democracy must be respected. The basic rule of democracy is alternation, that is, when one wins elections, it is fine ; but when one loses, one goes. (...) A certain constitutional framework, the respect of the fundamental rights of the human person (...) must be accepted. If there are some Islamic forces ready to play by the game (...) they must be allowed into this [political] process."¹⁷¹

More than criticising past decisions, which would have amounted to questioning the soundness of France's past policy, Juppé focused on the near future. In particular, he issued warnings with regards to the planned Algerian presidential elections. While arguing that the FIS had to recognise democracy to participate in them, he was addressing the Algerian government when he stated that the elections should represent a "*true* democratic consultation" and that they could not occur in "such a climate that their legitimacy could be contested"¹⁷².

The hijack of the *Air France* Airbus by a GIA commando did not generate a

¹⁶⁸ Interview in MAE (novembre-décembre 1994), p. 114.

¹⁶⁹ Interview, December 8, 1994, in MAE (novembre-décembre 1994), p. 237.

¹⁷⁰ Interview in *Echarq Al Awsat* reported in *El Watan*, 5 février 1995.

¹⁷¹ Interview, December 27, 1994, in MEA (novembre-décembre 1994), p. 377.

¹⁷² Interview, December 8, 1994, in MEA (novembre-décembre 1994), p. 238. Emphasis added.

return to a one-way tough stand on the "religious fanatics of the FIS". Rather, it drove Juppé to be even more explicit in his criticism of the eradicators. He now designated them as those who "satisfy themselves with repression and an all-security line"¹⁷³. While consistent with his new more balanced position, this qualification expressed his degree of irritation towards the Algerian authorities. Their attitude during the tragic event and, notably, their misinformation as to their intentions on how to manage the crisis had antagonised Juppé who feared both the execution of hostages by the hijackers and an intervention by the Algerian special forces which could have turned into a blood bath. He felt that the Algerian government was unjustly playing with the hostages' lives by refusing to accept the commando's demand to let the plane take off. Algiers' attitude seemed only intended to demonstrate the government held the situation under control -- a fact that Juppé obviously doubted¹⁷⁴.

The fact that as from September 1994 Juppé was no longer opposed, as a matter of principle, to an integration of the FIS within the political process is reflected in the French government's attitude towards the second Rome conference. The Quai d'Orsay brought its support to the Rome initiative only through hints : on January 16, 1995 the spokesman for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs called all the political forces in Algeria to engage in a dialogue¹⁷⁵. But Léotard was clearer in saying that the Rome initiative was "rich in hope to get Algeria out of the bloody face-to-face that tears it" and that the Rome platform represented "a groundwork from which Algeria ha[d] to initiate the process towards the return to a democratic order"¹⁷⁶. There was, indeed, nothing more explicit than this statement to indicate to the Algerian authorities that France now tilted towards conciliation. Let us note that the change in France's discourse was reflected in the EU's statements. On September 23, 1994 the EU asserted that all parties had to be included in the political process in order to reach political conciliation and the return to stability¹⁷⁷. In January 1995 the European

¹⁷³ Interview, December 27, 1994, in MEA (novembre-décembre 1994), pp. 376-7.

¹⁷⁴ *Le Monde*, 27 and 28 décembre 1994 ; *Le Nouvel Observateur* (1573), 29 décembre 1994-4 janvier 1995.

¹⁷⁵ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 18 janvier 1995.

¹⁷⁶ Respectively quoted in *El Watan*, 5 février 1995 and *Liberté*, 5 février 1995.

¹⁷⁷ In MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 127.

Commissioner for relations with the Mediterranean countries openly said that the moderate wing of the FIS should be allowed to share power¹⁷⁸, while the European Parliament recognised the Rome platform as a working basis¹⁷⁹.

After the second Rome conference and the problems surrounding the organisation of the presidential elections in Algeria, the Balladur government issued very few statements on its policy. When interviewed, Juppé maintained that France supported dialogue between the conflicting parties and that "all initiatives allowing to engage dialogue dynamics ha[d] to be taken in consideration."¹⁸⁰ However, his statements became stripped from their harsh words towards governmental eradicators.

Maintaining support to the eradicators : the Pasqua line

Whereas the Ministries for Foreign Affairs and Defence partly revised their positions on France's Algeria policy, the Ministry for the Interior maintained the previous course, grounded in the view that even though the Algerian regime was not "a model of democratic government", "the choice [was] between the capacity of the (...) regime to control the situation or the coming to power of the fundamentalists."¹⁸¹ The Pasqua/Juppé split became patent over two main issues : the recognition of the existence of Islamist moderates and the Rome initiative. While Juppé had realised that the Islamist movement was divided and had played down the "no Islamist moderates" line, Pasqua reiterated in October 1994 that :

"(...) there are some moderate Muslims, but, in this case, they are not Islamists (...). Is anyone capable of telling me, in relation to the Islamist movement, where the FIS stops, where the AIS and the GIA begin, knowing that, anyway, in Islamist circles, double language is considered an integral part of politics, that the right hand should not be knowing what the left hand does ?"¹⁸²

In contrast with Juppé and Léotard, Pasqua did not regard the Rome conference as a

¹⁷⁸ *Le Monde*, 6 janvier 1995.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 30 mars 1995.

¹⁸¹ Pasqua quoted in *Le Monde*, 6 août 1994.

¹⁸² Interview in *Le Monde*, 15 octobre 1994.

positive step in the resolution process of Algeria's crisis. He stood, in fact, with the Algerian authorities, questioning the popular representativeness of the opposition parties having signed the platform, taxing of "angelism" the attitude consisting in believing that "FIS people would become democrats" and arguing that :

"To believe for two minutes that these people will abandon the idea of an Islamic Republic appears to me unreal. What is at stake is the return to the application of the shari'a (...) that is [to] the Muslim society of the seventh century."¹⁸³

Although in his official statements Pasqua made it clear that, to him, Islamists were all backward fanatics prone to terrorism, he initiated behind-the-scenes contacts with the FIS through his special mission man, Jean-Claude Marchiani. Press reports indicated a meeting with Kebir in April 1994 where a French mediation between the FIS and the Algerian government would have been proposed as well as talks with the two paramount FIS leaders and a meeting with AIS representatives in October 1994¹⁸⁴. There were also rumours of contacts initiated by the French government with Khartoum to incite the Sudanese regime to work towards a *rapprochement* between the FIS and the Algerian regime. Whereas the occurrence of contacts with Hassan al-Turabi were officially denied¹⁸⁵, Marchiani's manoeuvres were not.

The rationale behind Pasqua's secretive diplomacy is difficult to establish. Meetings with the FIS contradicted France's official policy of not being in touch with the banned party. They were initiated by the person in government who was apparently the least inclined to arrangements with the FIS. In trying to find an explanation, it may be suggested that these contacts came within the framework of Pasqua's security policy. In November 1993, following the kidnapping of three consulate agents in Algeria, Pasqua had already approached a founding-member of the FIS (the expatriated imam of the *Khaled-ibn-Walid* mosque, Abdelbaki Sahraoui) in order to get his help for the release of the French hostages¹⁸⁶. Meetings with the FIS

¹⁸³ Pasqua in *L'Heure de vérité*, France 2, January 29, 1995.

¹⁸⁴ *Le Monde*, 26 octobre 1994 and 13 décembre 1994.

¹⁸⁵ See *Le Monde*, 3 and 7 septembre 1994.

¹⁸⁶ *Le Monde*, 5 novembre 1993

can also be seen as part of an attempted mediation to bring the outlawed party to a give-and-take policy. Asserting that negotiations are out of the question and conducting secret talks on the side is standard practice in conflict settlements. The discrepancy between Pasqua's discourse and his acts is consequently not that baffling. What is most troubling is that, if these contacts are to be seen as a mediation attempt, this raises questions about Pasqua's apparent alignment with the eradicators. Unfortunately, as long as it remains unknown whether we are dealing with mere confabulations or with hard bargaining -- in which case the very terms of Marchiani's negotiations are important -- it will be impossible to ascertain whether these contacts invalidate the thesis according to which Pasqua sided with the eradicators all the way.

A muddle

To add to the confusion created by intra-governmental disunity and Pasqua's parallel diplomacy, a dispute occurred between the Elysée and Matignon. It arose on February 3, 1995 when Mitterrand launched the idea of organising a conference on Algeria within the framework of the EU with the aim of enhancing the chances of a national reconciliation on the basis of the Rome platform¹⁸⁷. The government which had not been informed of Mitterrand's idea protested. Juppé reacted by saying that there was no plan to take any new initiative on the Algerian issue¹⁸⁸. The Quai d'Orsay deplored Mitterrand's lack of subtlety. Calling so bluntly for the organisation of a dialogue upon the basis of a platform that the Algerian government had rejected could only be met by a refusal in Algiers. All the more since the conference would be organised by a foreign forum. In the eyes of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the proposal was not only useless but could also prove counter-productive because of the nationalist sensitivity of the Algerians¹⁸⁹. Actually, the Algerian regime reacted strongly to the proposal. It denounced it as an intervention in Algeria's internal affairs and recalled the Algerian Ambassador from Paris. The newly appointed French

¹⁸⁷ *Le Monde*, 5-6 février 1995.

¹⁸⁸ *Le Monde*, 8 février 1995.

¹⁸⁹ *Le Monde*, 7 février 1995.

Ambassador, Michel Lévêque, was also summoned to receive Algiers' protestations¹⁹⁰.

Despite the Quai d'Orsay's initial disapproval, by the end of February, Juppé was apparently no longer opposed to the principle of an EU mediation. Indeed, he argued that if France had no right to tell the Algerian authorities what they should do and with whom they should talk, other powers could, precisely because they were not France and had not the same past with Algeria¹⁹¹.

Parallel diplomacy, reversals of discourse and dissension within the state apparatus generated perplexity among observers. Discord between the Elysée and Matignon was to be expected in those days of "cohabitation". Intra-governmental disunity and, even more so, its being allowed on the public space, produced puzzlement. As minister for the interior, Pasqua was in charge of immigration, security and religious affairs. He was at the crossroads of problems raised by the Algerian crisis and, thus, naturally led to make statements relating to Algeria. However, he meddled with Juppé's business when making statements that did not relate to the domestic consequences of the Algerian conflict. It was all the more shocking as Pasqua, whose statements did not comply with official policy, was never called to order by the prime minister. This phenomenon stemmed, in part, from the electoral context in France which burst the principle of governmental unity. The great peculiarity of France's presidential elections of April - May 1995 was that two candidates belonging to the same party ran for the presidency : Prime Minister Edouard Balladur and MP Jacques Chirac. This double RPR candidacy had the effect of splintering loyalties within the government : whereas some, as Pasqua or Léotard, supported Balladur, others, as Juppé, backed Chirac. Instead of maintaining governmental unity, Balladur gave his two lieutenants a free run to express their views. Whereas Léotard's statements stayed in line with the position of the Quai d'Orsay, Pasqua's did not. By having two contradictory living electoral campaigns, Balladur could not then be reproached by anybody for adopting a particular stance on

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ Juppé in *La France en direct*, France 2, February 27, 1995.

the Algerian conflict.

2.2.2. Causes and limits of Juppé's shift towards conciliation

Causes

Juppé's and Léotard's shift towards accepting the principle of a political dialogue encompassing the FIS primarily flowed from their analyses of the Algerian situation and from France's growing international isolation. As demonstrated below, electoral calculations did not play a significant role (if any) in the shift towards conciliation. For, very few criticisms had been voiced in the civil society against the government's support to the Algerian regime. Three main factors explain why Juppé and Léotard gradually came to favour conciliation. First, their progressive awareness that eradication had failed in its objectives and that it did not constitute a viable long-run strategy. Second, their view that the FIS was bound to negotiate with the regime since it could not overthrow it¹⁹². Third, their sense that in opposing conciliation France was increasingly alone and that this may later prove a hindrance in its relations with Algeria. These explanatory factors are reviewed below before turning to the issue of electoral calculations.

The Foreign and Defence Ministries' shift in favour of conciliation in Algeria thus started with the assessment that eradication had not produced the expected results. Despite the Algerian authorities' constant assurances that terrorist groups would be neutralised soon, the guerrilla war has continued unabated. As from 1994, the duel between the Army and the armed groups also changed in nature. As indicated by a confidential report, dated March 23, 1995 and drafted by the French Defence Ministry, both state and terrorist violence now aimed at the civilians :

"Throughout 1994, one has progressively passed, from one side or the other, from a war logic (...) to a terror logic aimed at isolating the adversary from the population, at weakening

¹⁹² These elements of analysis draw upon an interview by the author with a high civil servant who expressed the wish to remain anonymous. As this civil servant is not named in the list of persons who brought a contribution to this work, I would like to thank this person now for the valuable insights I was provided with in the interview.

it and at causing it to splinter. Ever since then, on both sides, the target of the acts of violence is the population and the method, terror : massive repression on villagers by official troops, or collective assassination of bus passengers by the Islamists, what difference does it make ? The counter-guerrilla strategy used by the armed forces is quite a simple technique of terrorisation of the population (...). In the same way, the violence dynamics created by the GIA prevails more and more over selective violence "193

The equally despicable behaviour of the Army and the armed groups probably contributed to Juppé's and Léotard's tougher stance on the eradicators. But this new stand derived principally from the view that state repression had added fuel rather than water to the flames. If this were to continue, there was a risk of a turning a fratricidal war into an all-out civil war or, as the Defence Ministry's report indicated, a risk of "Somalisation". While the security advantages of eradication were thus undermined, it was also realised that, even if the armed groups were eliminated, there would be a political and social survival of the Islamist current. Some Islamist parties were still allowed to function in the Algerian political system. FIS cadres were still alive, even though imprisoned. There also was a functioning Islamist associational fabric. Accordingly, it was illusory to believe that, by neutralising the armed groups, the problem of the political force of Islamism would be solved.

The view that the FIS would have to negotiate its share of power, since it was not in a position to overthrow the regime, was also important. It implied that the FIS would have to work from within the political system to effect change and that a *modus vivendi* would have to be struck with the authorities. Revolutionary fury would thus be avoided. Coupled with Juppé's more sceptical view on eradication and with the risk of the Algerian crisis bogging down, this argued in favour of a compromise.

Lastly, as the USA and some European countries voiced their support for a negotiated solution to the Algerian conflict, France felt more and more isolated. At the same time, since it was recognised -- however reluctantly -- that a lasting solution to Algeria's protracted conflict required a compromise with the FIS, stubbornly backing the eradicators could only prove detrimental to France's future relations with Algeria ;

¹⁹³ Leaked to *Le Canard enchaîné*, 5 avril 1995.

it could eventually cause a new governmental team in Algiers to broaden its horizons somewhat away from the ex-colonial power towards those states that had shown more understanding during the crisis. As dealt with in part two, the Algerian government -- whatever its ideological outlook -- could not wholly question the relationship with France. It could, however, question some of its aspects to the benefit of other countries, undermining, thereby, France's multi-dimensional influence in Algeria.

The change in Juppé's discourse derived from these considerations rather than from electoral calculations. In general, the view expressed, notably in the press, that the presidential elections had played a role in the formulation of France's Algeria policy related not to the shift in Juppé's stance but to the policy of support to Algiers. It was suggested that the French government had backed the Algerian regime in order to avoid political change in Algeria prior to the French elections. The risk of an immigration flood which threatened to boost the constituency of the extreme right would have been the prime motive behind France's categorical refusal to see the FIS associated to a political perspective. This argument became difficult to uphold with the September 1994 change in discourse which preceded the French elections by eight months. The French government probably preferred the status quo to be maintained until the French elections in order to avoid a panic effect in France. Yet, the prospect of the elections did not hamper a change in policy stance and, in that respect, did not have an inhibiting role in policy-making.

If the prospect of the French elections did not play an inhibiting role in policy-making, did it, by contrast, trigger Juppé's change ? In other words, is Juppé's shift towards conciliation in Algeria to be explained, at least in part, by a pressure coming from the French civil society ? The answer is quite certainly negative. Neither political parties, public opinion, the media nor the intellectuals voiced strong criticisms about France's support to Algiers before August 1994. It was the reprisal threats issued by the AIS and the GIAs in August and the Airbus hijack in December that provoked the general recognition that by backing so strongly the Algerian regime France had created enmities among people who may become its interlocutors in the future. Because this

general recognition was almost concomitant with the change in Juppé's discourse, it is unlikely that the criticisms to which it gave rise were at the root of his policy change.

French opposition political parties have been surprisingly silent over the Balladur government's policy. Parliamentary questions to ministers have essentially been about the domestic dimension of the Algerian conflict : security of French citizens in Algeria and the FIS's influence on the Muslim community in France. Reservations were expressed only when the Algerian conflict clearly crossed the Mediterranean as in August and December 1994. Such reservations came from the centre-right but only from specific persons who were either particularly interested in international affairs or directly concerned by Algeria. Jean-François Deniau called for a "double distance" from the Algerian government and the FIS¹⁹⁴. Bernard Stasi, head of the *Association France-Algérie*, claimed that France "should not give the feeling it unconditionally supports the Algerian government, an incompetent, corrupted and illegitimate government." In his view, the Algerian government was to be helped only "provided that it clearly manifest[ed] its will to establish a dialogue with those among the Islamists who condemn violence."¹⁹⁵ The Socialist Party also expressed some criticisms against France's support to the Algerian regime. In August, Dumas opposed his "balanced policy" to Juppé's¹⁹⁶. In December, Henri Emmanuelli, the Socialist Party's general secretary, urged the Balladur government to reconsider its Algeria policy, arguing that French support to Algiers' repressive policy had shown its limits¹⁹⁷. However, the socialists remained split over the Algerian issue. This transpired in Cheysson's reaction to the criticisms against Pasqua's August 1994 crackdown on Algerian Islamists. Cheysson then declared that : "The fundamentalists are declaring war on us ; we must fight them. Even though I am a socialist, I consider that the current government is showing more enlightened on this issue than the previous one (...). It is out of the question to pursue a policy of

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 11 août 1994.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ Reported in *Le Monde*, 11 août 1994.

¹⁹⁷ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 26 décembre 1994.

dialogue under these conditions."¹⁹⁸ The same internal disagreements seem to have occurred within the Communist Party. Whereas its leader, Robert Hue, argued in August that the French government should stop giving a blind support to the Algerian authorities¹⁹⁹, Paul Euzière questioned the political reality of moderate Islamism in the Communist Party's periodical of September 1994²⁰⁰. In general, the PCF preferred to criticise the Balladur government for having driven Algiers to accept "the diktat of the IMF" and for refusing to cancel Algeria's debt²⁰¹ rather than for its support to the Algerian regime. This may be explained by the Communist Party's embarrassment towards Algerian communists who, in general, sided along with the eradicators.

Those political parties or politicians who criticised France's unconditional backing of the Algerian regime did so during the very period Juppé changed his own discourse. That these criticisms may have played a role in the change in the official discourse cannot be wholly excluded. But, their timing may essentially reflect a general acknowledgement that supporting a regime opposed to a political perspective was no longer tenable. For, in their electoral run, political parties did not attempt to entice voters with their proposals on Algeria. Out of the nine competing candidates only three (Independent Jacques Cheminade, Communist Robert Hue and Socialist Lionel Jospin) mentioned their future policy regarding Algeria in the electoral brochures mailed to voters. Only Cheminade, who, as a black horse, had nothing to lose, wrote in black and white that he supported the Rome platform.

Even less than political parties can public opinion be seen at the source of Juppé's change. The average French person has formed her/his understanding of the Algerian conflict through the images projected by the media. On the whole, the French media have consistently given a simplistic vision of this conflict as a war between enlightenment and obscurantism, where the good secular democrats were being beheaded one by one by the bad and unscrupulous zealots. Television news, by far

¹⁹⁸ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 12 août 1994.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ P. Euzière (1994), p. 73.

²⁰¹ See the PCF's call for a demonstration in "solidarity with the Algerian people", October 13, 1994 in *Les Cahiers du communisme*, 70 (11), 1994, p. 180.

the most popular means of quick information, have been the privileged channel for this message. Television programmes on Algeria have reproduced this flaw as they were invariably about the struggle of the French-speaking Algerian "democrats"²⁰². In the press, until August 1994, few journalists argued that the FIS should be included in the political process. Few criticised France's support for eradication. If they did²⁰³, the impact of their statements was annihilated by the numerous articles focusing merely on the barbarity of the conflict and particularly on "Islamic barbarity". Although *Le Monde*, for instance, began talking of state violence in October 1993²⁰⁴, it rarely emphasised this aspect of the conflict until December 1994. The French media's bias in favour of Algerian French-speaking "democrats" upholding no dialogue with the religious "regressive forces" was reflected in the almost total monopoly of expression they benefited from on French television and in the newspapers. The numerous interviews conducted with Algerian supporters of eradication rather than with representatives of secular or Islamist conciliator parties have resulted in the generalisation of a truncated vision of Algerian society, which is perceived by the French layman as wholly opposed to the Islamist political project. As seen at the beginning of this chapter, the situation is more complex.

In general, the French intellectual community has also failed in providing a balanced criticism of governmental policy towards Algeria. While some openly supported the 1992 coup d'état, arguing that "between two ills, the lesser must be chosen, that is secular authoritarianism that saves us from fundamentalist totalitarianism"²⁰⁵, many intellectuals were torn by their antipathy for the Islamists and their recognition that "the lesser evil" still proved to be one. As a consequence of their embarrassment, French intellectuals chose not to meddle with Algerian politics,

²⁰² Up to the time of writing, only one television broadcast partly avoided this flaw by having a relatively more diversified panel of intervening parties, including, however, no Islamists : "Femmes courage", *Envoyé Spécial*, France 2, June 29, 1995.

²⁰³ For instance, Jacques de Barrin in *Le Monde*, 29 octobre 1993.

²⁰⁴ *Le Monde*, 17-18 octobre 1993 and 21 octobre 1993.

²⁰⁵ Jean Daniel, quoted by I. Ramonet in *Le Monde diplomatique* (décembre 1993). Ramonet was one of the first to ask in this paper : "Do the abominable killings committed by the religious extremists justify the excesses of the Algerian regime ? Or the accomplice silence of the European democracies ?"

claiming it was not their business to recommend or condemn a specific solution to the Algerian crisis²⁰⁶. They preferred to devote their energies in existing or new associations to provide moral comfort and material support to Algerian intellectuals, academics and artists threatened by the Islamists²⁰⁷. Accordingly, their criticism of France's Algeria policy was confined to its immigration aspect only. Intellectuals joined associations for the defence of human rights or for foreigners' rights and participated in demonstrations against the government's restrictive attitude in granting tourist visas and asylum status to their Algerian peers seeking refuge in France. They put forward "the duty to host" and the crime of "non-assistance to endangered persons"²⁰⁸. It was not before the 1994/95 Winter that the French intellectuals suggested what they thought France's policy towards the Algerian conflict should be. They then signed the *Algérie urgence* communiqué accompanying the demonstration of December 3, 1994 in which French trade unions, associations and political parties as well Algerian parties participated. They then all argued for a "double distance" from "murderous fundamentalism" and the "authoritarian, violent, corrupted and discredited regime"²⁰⁹. By then, Juppé had already made his harsher declarations on the eradicators and advocated a conciliation which had, nevertheless, some limits as underlined below.

Limits

Despite the adoption of a new policy stance over the way to resolve Algeria's political crisis, no concrete measures were implemented under Balladur to illustrate an eventual determination to actively promote conciliation in Algeria. The only sign of innovation compared to past behaviour was the content of a leak to the press made

²⁰⁶ See P. Bourdieu and J. Leca in *Le Monde*, 7 octobre 1994.

²⁰⁷ Among newly created associations the most well-known is the CISIA (International Committee of Support to Algerian Intellectuals) created in June 1993 and headed by Bourdieu and Leca.

²⁰⁸ Three demonstrations were organised, out of which two specifically targeted the Balladur government's immigration and asylum policy. That of October 11, 1994 for which a "Common platform for the hosting in France of Algerian asylum seekers and exiles" was elaborated and signed by many associations. And that of March 25, 1995. See *Le Monde*, 16-17 octobre 1994 and 28 mars 1995.

²⁰⁹ *Le Monde*, 6 décembre 1994.

between the two rounds of the French presidential elections -- a period that also followed the failure of bilateral talks between the Algerian authorities and the FFS, the FLN and the MDA. It was then intimated that France's 1995 financial assistance to Algeria may be reduced by FF 1 billion (about \$ 200 million)²¹⁰. Press reports suggested that this could represent the first gesture of active involvement in promoting a meaningful political dialogue. The decision now lies with the Chirac Administration. It remains to be seen whether this decrease will eventually occur and, if it does, whether it will explicitly be given a political significance.

Beyond discourse, there has been no policy output under Balladur for at least two distinct reasons which, more than appearing from the government's discourse, can be inferred. First, Juppé never envisaged intervening, otherwise than through diplomatic means, in order to break the Algerian political deadlock. Second, direct interference entailed risks of retaliation from the eradicators.

In January 1995, Juppé clearly indicated that foreign interposition was out of the question :

"It is up to it [Algeria] to create for itself a real society project which will not be imposed by anyone, neither from the interior nor the exterior, for it can only be the fruit of a dialogue between the different political and social components of the Algerian people."²¹¹

He seemed convinced that foreign intervention in order to dragoon the Algerian regime into conciliation was not the best strategy for Algeria's long-term stability. In thinking so, he was probably right. It is, indeed, difficult to imagine how an externally forced compromise with the FIS could be sustained in the long-term. Without a consensus between governmental eradicators and conciliators over the issue of striking a deal with the outlawed party, there are few chances of a return to calm. If governmental conciliators were to find a give-and-take deal with the FIS under duress, they would have to oust eradicators from the spheres of decision-making. Conspiracies to overthrow the new rulers could not to be excluded. If a coup d'état

²¹⁰ *Le Monde*, 29 avril 1995.

²¹¹ Speech to the Centre d'analyses et de prévisions, January 30, 1995, quoted in *Le Monde*, 1 février 1995.

orchestrated by dismissed eradicators were successful, nothing would be solved while a new problem would arise : how to restore the authority of the previous government ? By sending troops ? A scenario *à la* Haiti is hardly applicable to Algeria, if only because of the psychological impact that sending troops to Algiers would have in both countries. By cutting aid ? A sound evaluation as to how exactly minus \$ 1 billion per year would have on policy-making in Algiers would be required before actually closing the tap. Reactions from Algiers would also need to be considered. Would not France be in danger of becoming a target for state-sponsored terrorism ?

This question, apparently so far-fetched, brings us to the second point explaining Juppé's reluctance to bring pressure to bear upon the Algerian regime. Direct intervention entailed risks of reprisals. The change in France's discourse generated protests on the part of the Algerian authorities. They showed their irritation by resorting to codified diplomatic behaviour (recalling their Ambassador, convoking the French one) and by denouncing the existence of a pro-Islamist lobby within the French establishment by interposed media. The Algerian regime, or some of its elements, also used less classical methods. It is quite seriously suspected that some foreigners supposedly killed by the GIAs in Algeria were, in fact, killed by the Algerian Army. Suspicion hangs over the murder of a French nun and a French monk in May 1994 and of four White Fathers (out of whom three were French) immediately after the December 1994 Airbus hijack²¹². In addition, a survivor's account of a May 1995 attack in which five foreign technicians were killed by an Islamist commando underlines that the Algerian Army is not always there to protect foreigners against reprisal operations triggered by its habit of displaying the bodies of killed Islamists in the street for half a day²¹³. Knowing that the Algerian Army prides itself on acting as it would when playing pool²¹⁴, one wonders whether, in this particular case, the Army aimed at a specific ball (the killing of Islamists) merely to move another one

²¹² *Le Canard enchaîné*, 2 août 1995.

²¹³ See *Le Monde*, 10 mai 1995.

²¹⁴ Remark of a former Commander reported in P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), p. 41.

(the killing of foreigners). The Army's underlying motive for killing foreigners, while blaming the murders on the GIAs (which are widely believed to be infiltrated by the Military Security), would be both to generate further antipathy against the Islamists and to dissuade foreign governments from actively supporting conciliation. The French government was probably aware of the risks entailed by its turnabout inasmuch as it had had a compromising hand in the shady business of the Algerian Military Security in relation to the Mécili affair (1987) and perhaps as well in the kidnapping of the three French consulate agents (September 1993). There have been lots of unanswered questions about the circumstances and unfolding of this kidnapping and some have argued that it was a fake abduction²¹⁵. True or not, it is worth mentioning that this happy-end kidnapping absolved the Algerian regime of its repressive excesses. It also justified the crackdown on the FIS's relays in France -- a crackdown that had more in common with a frame-up than with a terrorist-hunt, as the Kraouche affair was to demonstrate²¹⁶. Being tempted by the devil does not shield from becoming its victim, however. This probably explains quite well why the Balladur government undertook nothing to promote conciliation and why Juppé, after having lost his temper with the eradicators, stripped from his discourse his severe remarks.

To conclude this chapter, it may be underlined that although the principles of France's Algeria policy -- summed up in Juppé's "untenable status quo" -- were constantly advocated under the Right, the Balladur government did not always support a true conciliation involving the FIS. In fact, until September 1994, it was

²¹⁵ F. Burgat (1994), p. 205.

²¹⁶ Kraouche was in custody after the November "Chrysanthemum operation", because he was allegedly found in possession of copies of documents emanating from the GIAs and, notably, of copies claiming the murder of the two first Frenchmen killed in Algeria and advising foreigners to leave Algeria. In January 1994, however, a policeman, having serious doubts as to the origin of the documents found in the flat of Kraouche, leaked to the press. A police enquiry into the matter concluded that it was, indeed, possible that documents, thought to be in Kraouche's possession, had been introduced in his flat by the police at the time of the search (See *Le Monde*, 8, 10, 12 and 26 janvier 1994).

clear as a bell that the Balladur government as a whole rejected the principle of a compromise with the FIS even though it called for conciliation in Algeria. I showed that there were four main factors allowing us to make this claim : (1) the Balladur government opposed the FIS because of the nature of its political project ; (2) it also considered that there was not such a thing as an "Islamist moderate" ; (3) the Balladur government showed soft on the Algerian eradicators' fake negotiations with the FIS, thus indicating that a political compromise with the FIS was not seen as a prerequisite in the weathering of the storm ; and (4) the way in which the Balladur government conducted its crackdown operations on FIS militants and sympathisers exiled in France undermined its public stance on the political dialogue in Algeria since political militancy was almost equated with terrorism. The Balladur government thus backed the Algerian regime's eradicator trend. This support was accompanied with a bilateral and multilateral backing. France granted economic aid to Algeria although it tied it to economic restructuring. Following Algeria's agreement to reschedule its debt in April 1994, France successfully drummed up international support for fresh credits to be transferred to Algeria and for the IMF to be lenient in its lending conditions. While selling some military hardware to Algiers, France also hampered the progress of the FIS and of the GIAs on its own soil by cracking down on exiled Islamists, which, in some cases, came down to muzzle political opponents not involved in violence. France, however, failed to convince European countries or the USA to follow in its wake as these countries made a clear distinction between political militancy and terrorism.

As the security situation deteriorated in Algeria, Paris became increasingly isolated in supporting the Algerian eradicators. This growing isolation, allied with the view that the eradication strategy, led the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and for Defence to revise their positions regarding eradication/conciliation. Juppé and Léotard became more critical of the eradicators, now accused of blocking a political perspective in Algeria. Apparently, however, there was no governmental unity over that matter since Pasqua continued to argue that conciliation could not be envisaged with "fanatics". If

the May 1995 French presidential elections played a role in France's Algeria policy, it was merely by allowing governmental unity to appear to the public eye, since virtually no segment of French society criticised the Balladur government's support to eradication up to December 1994. The Quai d'Orsay's September 1994 shift did not, however, translate into effective policy measures seeking, if not to force, at least to influence the reaching of a political settlement encompassing the FIS. Such a lack of concrete initiative, while driven by the view that foreign intervention might not bring the lasting solution required and by fears of reprisal operations by the Algerian eradicators, also highlights that France's change of heart was made reluctantly. Why was it that the Balladur government (and to some extent the Bérégovoy government) was so attached to refusing a compromise with the FIS in Algeria ? This is the question that part two will attempt to answer.

Part Two

Motives

Part one was concerned with confronting the discourse to the deeds so as to understand what the successive French governments did as opposed to what they said they were doing. The purpose of part two is to identify the French political establishment's underlying reasons or motives for opposing both a violent FIS takeover and the inclusion of the FIS into the political process in Algeria. Much of this study concerns the Balladur government's motives since it was under the Right that opposition to the FIS was most patent. This inquiry into the motives for opposing the FIS, however, also applies to the socialists. Under the Cresson government, governmental policy was not pro-Islamist but aimed at encouraging a compromise with the Islamist substance by propelling to the forefront of Algerian politics a personality who could carry out the junction between the FLN and the Islamists and who would, therefore, ensure a smooth continuation of Franco-Algerian relations. This plan failed and, after relations with the new Algerian rulers strongly deteriorated, the socialists eventually shifted from sulking to backing the Algerian regime. In addition, under the socialists, some government or party members did not wholly agree with the course chosen for France's Algeria policy which they saw as too unsupportive of the Algerian regime. The (publicly silent) backbenchers' motives for opposing the FIS and, thus, for supporting the Algerian regime as well as the Bérégovoy government's motives for shifting policy were in all points similar to those of the Balladur government.

It must be strongly emphasised that the motives underlying the Balladur government's opposition to the FIS did not hamper it from finally calling for conciliation in Algeria, even though conciliation would not necessarily have solved the foreseen risks implied by a FIS takeover or by its re-integration into politics. In this sense, however strong concerns about a FIS victory were, they did not constitute a stumbling block to a rethinking of the Algerian quandary.

Chapter Three

Perceived risks, ideological and psychological bearings

Until September 1994, Juppé always argued that the FIS's coming to power would be a "catastrophe". As underlined earlier, he was never precise, when saying so, whether he was thinking of a takeover through violent means or through a negotiated settlement. Christophe Bigot, assistant-deputy to the head of the Maghreb-Mashreq department of the Quai d'Orsay, made the point that, in assessing the consequences of a possible FIS takeover, the issue as to how it came to power had to be taken into account. If the FIS seized power violently, revolutionary ardour had to be expected. The Franco-Algerian relationship might be questioned by the new regime, at least in the short- to medium-run. On the other hand, if the FIS was part of a coalition government, its radicalism might be tempered and conciliation lay perhaps ahead. Yet, Bigot also mentioned that, even if a negotiated settlement occurred, not all problems would be solved¹. Obviously, this was also Juppé's viewpoint. For, when he argued that an Islamist regime in Algiers would be a catastrophe, it was already thought since Summer 1993 that the FIS was unable to take power through warfare.

What were then the envisaged consequences of a FIS takeover or of an inclusion of the FIS within the political process ? Juppé never greatly expanded on the issue as to how precisely Islamists in government would prove to be a catastrophe. Nevertheless, from his own speeches and interviews with members of the political establishment, it appears that there were two types of concern : the domino effect that a FIS victory might have throughout the Mediterranean and the consequences that such a victory might have for future Franco-Algerian relations as well as for France itself through the issues it raised in the fields of immigration, national security and economic relations. In addition to these issues, which corresponded to the perceived risks foreseen by the French political establishment, opposition to the FIS was

¹ Interview with Christophe Bigot, April 21, 1994.

justified on ideological grounds : a FIS victory needed to be resisted because it was inevitably perceived as bringing Algeria back to “seventh century Medina”.

Regarding perceived risks, the French government' overriding concern seems to have been the domino effect that a FIS takeover or inclusion in government might have throughout North Africa. Bandwagoning was thought to potentially have two major consequences. First, it might generate instability in the region with risks of intra-regional conflicts. Second, and perhaps most importantly, with falling dominoes, the (negative) consequences of a FIS victory on Franco-Algerian relations would be multiplied on a larger scale, thus rendering the situation "unmanageable".

The FIS's coming to power was thought to have several negative effects on France. I sorted out such effects under three headings : immigration, national security and economic relations. Immigration issues raised by a FIS takeover or an inclusion of the FIS within the political process dealt with the risk of a massive influx of refugees from Algeria and with the risk of re-Islamisation within the Muslim community living in France. Such issues played a crucial role in the French government's hostility to the FIS, first, because it was forecasted that they would be raised even if the FIS was included in government through negotiations and, second, because they entailed profound tensions in France's sociopolitical system. National security issues (revolving around terrorism) as well as economic considerations did have a role to play in the French government's opposition to the FIS but essentially as contributing factors. Indeed, issues of state-sponsored terrorism were most likely to occur if the FIS came to power by toppling the regime. As it was rapidly understood that the FIS was not able to do so, the problem was not of the highest salience. Nevertheless, the FIS's ambiguous attitude towards violence, notably against France, contributed to the view in Paris that France would be better off without Islamists in government in Algiers. In the economic domain, the reasoning was similar. It was assumed that a FIS regime would not question Algeria's economic relationship with France. If it did, it was assessed that, while incurring a cost, this would not constitute a major blow to France's economy. However, if avoiding a change of regime allowed

the maintenance of the economic relationship intact, it was all the better.

In addition to these perceived risks, the prospect of the FIS coming to power (by violence or not) stirred concern because its political project, based upon the restoration of a supposed divine will, was understood as profoundly regressive and intolerant. French opposition to the FIS on ideological grounds, although similar to most Western states' wincing at a new form of nationalism involving the ideological and cultural sphere, was primarily motivated by the fact that the challenge to Western political culture came specifically from Algeria. Algeria has always remained a part of France in the French collective imaginary. In addition, contacts between the French and Algerian elites have also nourished a truncated vision of Algerian society which, to French eyes, has been a somewhat mirror image of France. The FIS vote was lived as a "psychological trauma" because it implied that part of the Algerian people did not recognise itself in France. This very fact was not accepted. In addition, the French political establishment was led to oppose the FIS in its defence of the Algerian gallicised elite with whom bonds of understanding and friendship were woven throughout the years.

Deconstructing French policy-makers' perceptions as to the risks involved by a FIS takeover leads us somewhat into the realm of political fiction. Political fiction does, however, have real implications for policy-making. Indeed, at least until September 1994, a series of hypotheses as to the consequences of a FIS's coming to office led the French government to decide on its Algeria policy. In addition, on the basis of these hypotheses, the government also took practical steps to limit the effects of a potential change in regime. This was particularly perceptible in the field of immigration. To a certain extent, this was also true in its promotion of the EU "partnership policy" in the Mediterranean and its involvement in various initiatives dealing with "comprehensive security" in the Mediterranean. I shall thus comment on these specific policies when dealing with the issues they were responding to. When dealing with the ideological and psychological aspects of French opposition to the FIS, I shall also be brought to briefly review the existing academic literature on the

rise of Islamism in Algeria in order to confront it to the French political establishment's views on that question.

1. Bandwagoning in the Mediterranean

When trying to drum up international support for Algiers, the major argument put forward by the Balladur government was the falling domino risk. Even well after it was thought in Paris that the FIS was unable to topple the Algerian regime, it was argued that the FIS should be contained because its coming into power might have spillover effects throughout the Muslim world and notably, from the viewpoint of France's immediate concerns, in neighbouring countries prey to Islamist agitation : Morocco and Tunisia. Libya, Egypt and the Occupied Territories were, however, also identified as potentially falling dominoes². French policy-makers never made a (public) detailed treatment of the risks entailed by Islamist bandwagoning throughout the southern rim of the Mediterranean³. The reconstruction of their projections, however, points to two major connected concerns. First, the region could become highly unstable with risks of intra-regional tensions. Second, anti-Western Islamist regimes could eventually emerge on Europe's doorstep, multiplying the problems generated by the presence of a FIS regime in Algiers. The view that a FIS victory might generate turmoil elsewhere and, especially, in Morocco and Tunisia led the French government to support the Algerian regime's eradication strategy. At the same time, together with Southern European countries, the French government supported initiatives for an inter-shore political dialogue as well as the EU's "Euro-Mediterranean economic area" policy with a view to promoting economic development and political stability in the Mediterranean.

² See Juppé's press conference in Washington, May 12, 1994 in MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 90. The domino theory was also mentioned by Jean Audibert (interview, June 7, 1995) and Christophe Bigot (interview, April 21, 1994).

³ Juppé's declarations dealing with falling dominoes were, indeed, of the following type : "(...) [Algeria] 'matters to us'. I think there is no need to explain why : History, geographic proximity and the importance for France to have in Algeria a stable partner because instability in Algeria, the destabilisation of the Maghreb, I shall not follow on, we can see the consequences." (in MAE (janvier-février 1994), p. 247).

1.1. Falling dominoes and their foreseen consequences

As mentioned above, the risk of falling dominoes in North Africa generated two major concerns. One was that the region become highly unstable with risks of intra-regional tensions. This hypothesis drew attention to the fact that North Africa could become a theatre for violence. Their morale boosted by a FIS victory, muzzled Islamist movements would conclude that violence could pay, if not in overthrowing regimes, at least in forcing an overture of the political game. If, switching from having been the "leader of the Third World" to being "the light of Islam", Algiers attempted to export its revolution by supporting like-minded movements, inter-state conflicts might emerge. Increased intra-regional tension -- already illustrated by Algeria's closure of its border with Morocco from August to September 1994⁴ -- could be accompanied by destabilising arms races in a context where the proliferation of non-conventional weapons is becoming an acute issue on the world stage. In this respect, Algeria's interests in chemical technology and its development of nuclear power, purportedly for civilian use, could become a more worrisome concern than it has been until today⁵. This dramatic scenario was never brought to its possible conclusion, namely the direct involvement of foreign powers in regional conflicts with a view to containing Islamist expansion. Certainly, Juppé maintained that "Naturally, France will not economise on its help to preserve the security and stability of

⁴ In late August 1994, Algeria closed its land, air, and maritime borders with Morocco as a protest against Morocco's decision to reintroduce entry visas for Algerians. Such a measure followed the murder of two Spanish tourists in a Marrakech hotel and the arrest of several persons having, in most of the cases, the dual French and Algerian nationality (See *Le Monde*, 31 août 1994 and 24 septembre 1994). Drug and arms traffics between the borders (in June 1994, six Moroccans and two Algerians were charged by the Moroccan military court for arms traffics to the benefit of Algerian Islamist armed groups, see *Le Monde*, 17 juin 1994), have increased the tension between the two states which periodically accuse each other of intended destabilisation.

⁵ Although the *Asmidal* chemical plant in Annaba is reported to have stopped its research activities in Summer 1992 under American pressure (A. Charef (1994), p. 71), it is estimated that Algeria has the industrial infrastructure and basic technology to acquire a chemical offensive capacity (R. Aliboni (1993), p. 49). Algeria also bought two small nuclear reactors. The *Nour* reactor (low power of 1 megawatt) was built in co-operation with Argentina. In operation since 1989, it is regularly visited by the IAEA. The *Es Salam* reactor (15 megawatts), constructed with the help of China, was inaugurated on December 21, 1993 at Birine. An IAEA visit occurred in 1991 after American satellite images revealed the construction of this nuclear plant. Western experts estimate that the Algerian *Es Salam* reactor could produce plutonium for military use (*Le Monde*, 23 décembre 1993). Up to the present day, the French authorities have considered nuclear developments in Algeria as an issue of secondary importance compared to the more urgent problems of underdevelopment and political instability (Interviews with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995 and Christophe Bigot, April 21, 1994).

[Morocco and Tunisia]"⁶. But French policy-makers were advised to keep current state to state arrangements in case of changes in regimes across the Mediterranean, precisely to avoid feelings of ostracism and risks of confrontations⁷.

In addition to intra-regional instability, the other major concern generated by bandwagoning was its "multiplier effect" : whereas the foreseen negative consequences in France of a coming into power of the FIS could be faced, a generalisation of these problems to the entire North African region would become "unmanageable" for France and perhaps for other European countries⁸.

In order to countercheck potential bandwagoning particularly in the Western Mediterranean, France paralleled its support to the Algerian authorities with bilateral aid to Morocco and Tunisia. Most importantly, however, it encouraged regional initiatives aimed at fostering economic development in the Maghreb in order to favour political stability and to undercut radical Islamism.

1.2. Promoting regional initiatives for stability

Concerns about stability in the Western Mediterranean did not simply grow out of the Algerian crisis. In the late 1980s, despite a slackening of tensions resulting from the end of the Cold War and the creation of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)⁹, France as well as Southern European countries were worried about the destabilising effects both for Europe and the Western Mediterranean of the widening socioeconomic development gulf between the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean. In the early 1990s, two initiatives were sponsored by the Southern European countries in order to deal with socioeconomic development problems and their implications for political stability and security in the Mediterranean. The

⁶ Interview in *Réalités*, June 30 1994 in MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 360.

⁷ See Commissariat général du Plan (1993), pp. 90-1.

⁸ Christophe Bigot, interview, April 21, 1994.

⁹ The AMU (*Union du Maghreb arabe*) was founded on February 17, 1989 between Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Its formal aim was political and economic integration. Since its creation, however, the AMU has made few progress towards these goals. For details, see G. Joffé (1993c), pp. 203-12 and C. Spencer (1993), pp. 46-8. See as well J. Damis (1993) for details on the AMU and the resolution of regional disputes in North Africa.

Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM), which applied to North Africa and the Middle East, was meant to reproduce the success of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in contributing to the end of the Cold War. The ambitious CSCM initiative, however, got bogged down from the very start. Because of its field of application extended to the Middle East, it generated hostility, notably, from the USA. For their part, the French preferred their "5+5" dialogue initiative which specifically focused on the Western Mediterranean by gathering the four Latin European states (France, Italy, Portugal and Spain), Malta and the five members of the AMU. After two meetings in 1990 and 1991, where proposals for socioeconomic co-operation and for the promotion of mutual trust were brought forward, the 5+5 framework collapsed as a result of the 1992 coup d'état in Algiers and mounting tensions between Europe and Tripoli following Libya's suspected involvement in the Lockerbie and UTA affairs¹⁰.

Since the Algerian parliamentary elections, however, the link between socioeconomic problems, the rise of radical Islamism and instability has been considered all the more relevant as demonstrated by the conclusion of the Lisbon European Council's meeting in June 1992 : "Demographic growth, repeated social crisis, large scale emigration and the rise of religious fundamentalism are all problems which threaten the stability [of the Maghreb]"¹¹. The idea that the Western Mediterranean should be "anchored" to Europe in a stable and long-run relationship has thus continued to inspire Euro-Mediterranean initiatives. Today, there are two main types of framework which attempt to answer the problems caused by political developments in the Mediterranean. One is the Mediterranean Forum. It gathers the foreign ministers of eleven Mediterranean countries with a view to providing a framework for informal discussions on economic, political and cultural issues concerning the region¹². The other is the EU's "Euro-Mediterranean economic area"

¹⁰ For details see e.g. T. Niblock (1993), pp. 251-5 ; M. Ortega (1993), pp. 75-6 and M. Bonnefous (1992), pp. 79-85

¹¹ In MAE (mai-juin 1992), p. 194.

¹² Two meetings have occurred so far. The first was held in Alexandria, on July 3-4, 1994 (*Europe Daily Bulletin* (6266), July 4-5, 1994). The other took place in Sainte-Maxime (France) on April 8-9, 1995 (*Le Monde*, 11 avril 1995). The following states participated in the Mediterranean Forum :

proposal which aims at transforming the "co-operation agreements" signed with Mediterranean countries back in the late 1960s or 1970s into "partnership accords"¹³. Since 1992, exploration negotiations for the conclusion of such accords have been conducted, notably with Morocco and Tunisia. Tunisia eventually signed a partnership accord with the EU in April 1995¹⁴. Discussions with Morocco have been in a deadlock since February 1994 as a result of major disagreements over the transitional terms to be found in order to smooth out the effects of opening the Moroccan economy to European industrial goods and over quotas in agriculture. In addition, since a disagreement occurred in April 1995 regarding the renewal of a fisheries accord between the EU and Morocco, Rabat has linked the conclusion of a partnership accord to a satisfactory one over fishing¹⁵. As to Algeria, informal exploratory talks began in June 1994¹⁶.

In addition to traditional issues of financial, technical, social and cultural co-operation, partnership accords revolve around the creation of bilateral free-trade zones and the institutionalisation of a political dialogue. The latter is seen by the EU as a means to discuss issues pertaining to regional security (e.g. proliferation of weapons of mass-destruction) and to domestic politics. Indeed, political dialogue is geared towards the establishment of democratic systems of government, based upon the rule of law and the respect of human rights¹⁷. As noted by George Joffé, there is a tendency in Europe to conceive democratic systems of government in strict European terms and to encourage the simple reproduction in North Africa of the European

Algeria, Egypt, France, Italy, Greece, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, and Turkey.

¹³ "Association agreements", dealing with trade (preferential access for certain products in the EEC market), were signed in 1969 with Morocco and Tunisia. Within the framework of the 1972 European "Global Mediterranean policy", these accords were transformed into "Co-operation agreements" in 1976. In addition to trade issues, these agreements dealt with economic, technical, and financial co-operation. Algeria, as other Mediterranean states (Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Syria, Turkey and Yugoslavia) signed such agreements with the EEC. The "Global Mediterranean policy" was transformed into the "Redirected Mediterranean policy" whose financial protocol covers the period 1992-96 (for details see B. Khader (1992), pp. 13-29). In April 1992, the Commission made a proposal for the adoption of a "policy of partnership" with the Maghreb and, in October 1994, it put forward the proposal for a "Euro-Mediterranean economic area" which basically seeks to extend the partnership policy to the other associated Mediterranean countries. This proposal should be discussed during the EU-Mediterranean conference planned for November 1995 in Barcelona.

¹⁴ *Le Monde*, 14 avril 1995.

¹⁵ See B. Callies de Salies (1994), pp. 135-7 and *Le Monde*, 30 août 1995.

¹⁶ *Europe Daily Bulletin* (6257), June 23, 1994.

¹⁷ D. Engelis (1994).

political model¹⁸. Until today, however, talks between the EU and its Maghrebi partners have essentially focused on the establishment of free-market areas. The contentious issue of political dialogue has, for the time being, been reduced to "defining the areas of mutual interests that could be included in the dialogue"¹⁹. If the EU has been willing to relegate political dialogue in the background, it is because its priority is to integrate the Maghreb and the Mediterranean as quickly as possible into the European context partly as a means to struggle against the rise of radical Islamism.

In addition to the Mediterranean Fora and the EU Mediterranean policy as regional instruments to undermine the development of radical Islamism, it is worth mentioning the January 1995 meeting of the interior ministers of the four Latin European states and of Algeria and Tunisia who set forth to co-ordinate actions to struggle against "terrorism, fundamentalism, extremism and fanaticism" and who intend to meet every year²⁰.

France's involvement in this series of regional frameworks which are more or less directly meant to contain the rise of radical Islamism (the borderline as to when Islamism becomes "radical" being still relatively obscure in official discourse) has partly stemmed from its concerns as to bandwagoning and the subsequent multiplication of the problems that could arise from a FIS victory. The foreseen impacts on France of a FIS coming to power are reviewed in the three following sections dealing with immigration, national security and economic relations.

¹⁸ G. Joffé (1994b).

¹⁹ D. Engelis (1994).

²⁰ Morocco did not participate in this Tunis meeting arguing that its subject was of no interest to Morocco (*Le Monde*, 24 janvier 1995).

2. Immigration issues

One central explanatory factor for France's opposition to a FIS takeover and, then, to an inclusion of the FIS in the political process in Algeria, relates to the immigration issues raised by such prospects. There were two major kinds of concern. One was linked to the potential immigration to France of Algeria's Western-oriented elite as a consequence of a coming to power of the FIS. It was feared that an immigration wave from Algeria would exacerbate social and political tensions in France. At the same time, an inflow of refugees could possibly hinder relations with a new regime encompassing the FIS, since it would represent a pool of potential political opponents to Algiers. The other main concern raised by the potential coming of the FIS into office dealt with the Algerian community and, more generally, the Muslim community living in France. In relation to this issue, there were two major worries. First, that the pro- or anti-FIS attitude of the Algerian (and Muslim) community be a constraint on French foreign policy and, second, that the FIS attempt to control the Muslim community at large by encouraging a process of re-Islamisation.

All these concerns were reinforced by the prospect of potential bandwagoning notably in Morocco and Tunisia. They explain, in part, why the French supported the Algerian regime so resolutely until September 1994. It must be noted, however, that the French government and, particularly, the Balladur one took measures to limit the impact of a potential FIS arrival in power, notably by restricting immigration from Algeria and by showing tough on the issue of re-Islamisation.

2.1. Politically-driven immigration from Algeria : concerns and restriction

French opposition to the FIS was partly motivated by the fear that its coming to power would spark off an immigration wave of Algeria's Westernised elite. A massive influx of refugees from Algeria and, eventually, from the Maghreb (through the domino effect) was problematic for the French government for two main reasons.

First, although these Europeanised, middle/upper class, new immigrants would have a different profile from that of traditional Maghrebi immigrants (blue-collar workers joined by their families), it was feared that an immigration wave would exacerbate existing anti-Arab/Muslim feelings in France and, thus, favour social and political tensions. Second, these new immigrants could represent a potential political opposition to the new regime in Algiers. Their presence in France could, thus, prove a hindrance in the political relations with the new regime -- relations which the French government would like as little strained as possible, whatever it may think of the ideologico-political orientation of the new regime.

Partly to avert an immigration wave from Algeria, the Bérégovoy and Balladur governments chose to support the Algerian regime. At the same time, especially under Balladur, a policy restricting immigration inflows stemming from political violence in Algeria was adopted. By keeping entries from Algeria within tight bounds, the government sought to hamper permanent settlement in France, should the FIS be accepted back into the political game.

2.1.1. An immigration wave : governmental hypotheses and concerns

Governmental hypotheses

In the Quai d'Orsay's view, a sudden immigration wave from Algeria could have resulted from a FIS takeover as well as a political settlement between the Algerian government and the FIS. In September 1994, Juppé, indeed, argued that a political compromise would lead to an Islamisation process that not all Algerians would accept²¹. Logically, this meant that, despite a lull, some would still be candidates for emigration. However, it was not very clear whether the French government had a sound estimate of the proportion such a movement could take on. Government members gave significantly different projections. In April 1994, whereas

²¹ Press communiqué of Juppé's address to the Senate, September 15, 1994 in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 102. The point that a political settlement with the FIS would not solve the problem of potential immigration was also raised by Christophe Bigot, interview on April 21, 1994.

Juppé advanced a high hypothesis of hundreds of thousands of people, Pasqua “bet” on tens of thousands²². In addition, the Quai d'Orsay made an about-face in October 1994 : Juppé, who had hitherto argued that there was a real risk of seeing an immigration wave to France²³, then minimised the risk, claiming that to expect a massive exodus was part of a “psychosis” and “catastrophism” which he did not share²⁴.

Whether or not the Balladur government had a precise idea as to how many Algerians might effectively have been candidates for immigration if a political compromise was struck with the FIS²⁵, it was vocal in claiming that France would not adopt a lax policy. Pasqua, indeed, stated :

“We would not be able to host several tens of thousands of persons. (...). We would evidently accept those who have the French nationality. Bi-nationals will have to justify of their quality [as bi-nationals]. For the rest, we have absolutely no obligation (...). Besides, this issue, if it were to be raised, should be examined not within the framework of our own country, but within that of the Mediterranean countries, at the level of the European Union. (...). We cannot be the natural receptacle of all the oppressed, all the persecuted, all those who are in opposition.”²⁶

What were the French government's concerns explaining its refusal to open at large its border ?

Governmental concerns

The French political establishment put forward three main reasons explaining why it considered a mass influx of Algerian refugees as a major trouble. First, there

²² See the interviews of Juppé and Pasqua, respectively in *Le Point* (1126), 16 avril 1994 and *Le Figaro*, 18 avril 1994.

²³ See his interview in *Le Point* (1126), 16 avril 1994 and in *Jeune Afrique* in MAE (mai-juin 1994), pp. 314-5.

²⁴ See his speeches to parliament in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 207 and (novembre-décembre 1994), p. 16

²⁵ By arguing that a precise evaluation of the Algerian migratory risk was still needed, high civil servants suggested that the French government did not know exactly what to expect (see Notes de la fondation Saint-Simon (1995), p. 25).

²⁶ Interview with *Le Figaro*, 18 avril 1994. Juppé said the same thing in his interview with *Le Point* (1126), 16 avril 1994. The number of persons having dual citizenship and living in Algeria is evaluated between 25 000 and 50 000 (*Le Monde*, 5 août 1994).

were practical problems to cope with welcoming a significant number of Algerians, if only in terms of lodging, schooling for children, employment and diploma recognition²⁷. Second, especially when it was criticised for its restrictive Algeria immigration policy, the French political establishment emphasised that "Algerian democrats" needed to stay in their country if they wanted their political ideas to triumph there. Pasqua went somewhat out of his way when recalling that he did not "clear off" when the Nazis invaded France²⁸. But a civil servant expressed the government's concern by asking : "Is it in our interest to empty Algeria of its modernist substance ? A million and half Iranians left after the Revolution ; the sole result was to reinforce the power of the ayatollahs."²⁹ Third, it was argued that an immigration wave would cause "domestic politics complications" and would upset the "social equilibrium"³⁰.

Without denying that the first two problems were important, it seems that the government's overriding concern related to these "domestic politics complications" and, notably, to the fear that anti-Arab/Muslim sentiment may be boosted by a sudden immigration wave. I shall, thus, focus on this concern rather than on the others. I shall also put forward the argument that French policy-makers were preoccupied by the impact that sheltering Algerian would-be political opponents might have on France's future relations with a government encompassing the FIS. Although never publicly mentioned, this concern about the future of Franco-Algerian relations was most certainly in the policy-makers' minds.

Answering the expectations of French public opinion

The protest actions undertaken by the French intellectual community in order

²⁷ Interview with Christophe Bigot, April 21, 1994. In Autumn 1994, *MEI* reported that senior government representatives (*préfets*) had been asked to draw up a list of sites in which refugees could be installed and that the Red Cross contemplated using the Albertville Winter Olympic facilities (*MEI* (485), October 7, 1994).

²⁸ In *L'Heure de vérité*, France 2, 29 janvier 1995.

²⁹ Quoted in *Libération*, 29 juin 1994.

³⁰ Respectively, Christophe Bigot (interview, April 21, 1994) and Alain Juppé (in *Le Point* (1126), 16 avril 1994).

to denounce the government's policy of "non-assistance to endangered persons" did not have much influence on French public opinion which has expressed a certain anxiety about a massive inflow of new "boat-people" -- a suggestive mediatic idiom. According to a September 1994 opinion poll, only 11% of the French people thought that political refugee status should easily be granted to Algerians if the FIS came to power. 34% argued that entry should be limited to those who have family in France and no less than 29% thought that the frontier should be sealed³¹. Besides the specific Algerian issue, since the 1980s, public opinion has increasingly expressed its anti-foreigner feeling which, it must be stressed, is directed against alien citizens but also French citizens of foreign -- usually non-European -- origin. North Africans and their children are in the line of fire because they constitute the most important non-European community in France. Maghrebis and their French-born children amount to about 3 million persons. According to the 1990 census, the number of Maghrebi nationals amounted to approximately 1.5 million (620 000 Algerians, 585 000 Moroccans and 208 000 Tunisians). Accounting for 17.2% of the total foreign population in France, Algerians were the second largest community after the Portuguese (17.9%). Moroccans (16.2%) were the third largest foreign community³². Children of Maghrebi nationals account for an estimated 1.5 million people³³. Labelled as "second or third generation" or as *Beurs*, they are often entitled to receive the French nationality³⁴.

³¹ *Le Monde*, 13 octobre 1994.

³² A. Lebon (1992), p. 92 and my calculations.

³³ C. Jelen (1991), p. 9. The Algerian community is the most important and counts about 1.5 million people. It is made of three main groups of about half a million each : 1) Algerian nationals, 2) the *Harkis* and their children (the *Harkis* are Algerians who fought on the French side during the War of Liberation and who expatriated to France at Independence) and 3) the generation of *Beurs* (see *infra*) (A. Hargreaves, 1994).

³⁴ Until January 1994, many Algerian *beurs* (as opposed to the Moroccan or Tunisian ones) were entitled to become French citizens automatically. Article 23 of the Nationality Code provided, indeed, that children born in France of parents who were born in Algeria when it was a French department were entitled to the French citizenship at birth. On the other hand, children born in France of foreign parents (e.g. Tunisian or Moroccan) were entitled to the French nationality at 18 if they had been permanently living in France since they were 13 (article 44). The Nationality Code was amended by parliament in June 1993. One of the major effect of this reform was to suppress the automatic acquisition of French nationality. Article 23 was changed to the effect that children of Algerian parents who were born in Algeria before Independence benefit from the so-called double *jus soli* only if their parents have been living in France for five years before the birth of their children. Article 44 now reads that children born in France of foreign parents must willingly ask for the French

Following the French government's mid-1970s decision to cease importing foreign labour, Maghrebi immigrants settled in France and were joined by their families, whereas they used to go to France in order to work mostly as blue-collar workers and then to return to their homelands. This settlement process occurred in a context of deepening economic crisis and of social upheavals, which favoured racist sentiment. The Maghrebi community has thus increasingly come to be seen as either competing for jobs or as draining the Social Security benefits. With the increase in violent protest movements in the suburbs, recurrent since the mid-1980s, the *Beurs* have been perceived as disrupting law and order³⁵. In the eyes of many, they are the "new dangerous class"³⁶. Settlement has also generated a focus on cultural and behavioural differences. The view that Islam is, in itself, a stumbling block to integration to French society gained currency throughout the 1980s. The Gulf War raised fears of a lack of allegiance of the *Beurs* to their own state, i.e. France. Similar national security concerns are being raised by Islamic revival in the Maghreb³⁷. In short, Maghrebi immigrants and their French children are perceived as a threat.

Whether they should be so perceived is right or wrong -- and there is ample literature showing that this threat feeling partakes of a collective fantasy³⁸ -- people behave according to their perceptions. Radicalisation about immigration and "foreignness" has been reflected in the growing success of Jean-Marie le Pen's extreme-right party³⁹ whose electoral platform has revolved around the discriminatory

nationality between the ages of 16 and 21. Criminal records are taken into account. For details, see *Le Monde*, 1 janvier 1994.

³⁵ Because of cheap housing in the suburbs, immigrants and their children are mainly located there. Throughout the 1980s and increasingly in the latter part of the decade and the 1990s, the "suburb issue" has become a major social problem in France as riots, often sparked by bad relations with the police and, eventually, by the death of a young *beur*, became more and more frequent. Stone-throwing against police forces was readily identified as a new form of *intifada* in the French suburbs. For details on the "suburb issue" see e.g. A. Jazouli (1992).

³⁶ J. Cesari (1994b), p. 159.

³⁷ See section 2.2. below.

³⁸ See e.g. C. Withol de Wenden (1992a) and (1992b) on the problem of collective images on Maghrebi immigrants and their French-born children and (1991) on the issue of the *Beurs* and the Gulf War. See also C. Jelen (1991) on the issue of the economic threat and, more generally, on the assimilation of *Beurs*. For references on the issue of religion, see *infra*.

³⁹ In the first round of the 1995 presidential elections, the FN secured 15% of the vote (*Le Monde*, 28 avril 1995), which was in line with previous scores varying between 10% and 15%. In the 1995 local elections, however, the FN was in the run for the second round in over 150 towns. FN mayors now administer the towns of Marignane (37.3% of the vote), Orange (36%) and Toulon (37%). The FN realised this score in many other towns (*Le Monde*, 20 juin 1995).

concept of "national preference" and the idea that the survival of "Frenchness" is threatened by the presence in France of Arab Muslims. Rising anti-Arab/Muslim feelings⁴⁰ and the subsequent success of the extreme-right has led all political parties to advocate tougher immigration policies throughout the 1980s and 1990s in order to minimise social tensions and to thwart the drawing power of the National Front. The French government's concern about an immigration wave from Algeria and, eventually, from Morocco and Tunisia must, therefore, be read within this general context of rising "populist anti-Muslimism"⁴¹. That an immigration wave might have occurred before the French presidential elections was certainly an additional source of concern because of its possible direct impact on the Le Pen vote. Actually, one may be tempted to explain Juppé's baffling change of heart about the reality of a mass exodus (see *supra*) merely as a means to reassure anxious voters. Fundamentally, however, the French government's concern was motivated by the view that, in the long-run, a massive influx of Algerian refugees might provoke intense sociopolitical tensions in France.

Thinking ahead

An immigration wave sparked off by the FIS coming to power would result in France sheltering likely political opponents to the new regime in Algiers. There are few doubts that, once in France, some refugees would seek to structure a political opposition. Such political activism might prove a hindrance to France's relations with the new regime in two ways. First, depending on how good relations between the two states would be, Algiers could quite easily accuse Paris of seeking to destabilise the new Algerian regime by hosting opposition movements. Second, the political

⁴⁰ Anti-Arab/Muslim sentiment is reflected in the results of an opinion poll led by the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (1994 Report) : 65% of those polled admitted to be harbouring some element of racist prejudice ; 62% judged there were too many Arabs in France and 59% too many Muslims (*Le Monde*, 22 mars 1995).

⁴¹ Fred Halliday uses the concept of "anti-Muslimism" to depict Western hostility to the Islamic component of Muslims' identity. He makes a distinction between : 1) "strategic anti-Muslimism" which is articulated around strategic issues (nuclear power, oil, terrorism, etc.) and directed against states and 2) "populist anti-Muslimism" which is directed against Muslim immigrants in the West and which is one component of xenophobia and racism. Fred Halliday (1993).

activism of some opponents to the new regime in Algiers could turn into a threat to territory security in France and, thus, generate tensions between France and Algeria. In exactly the same way as the FLN regime or Iran eliminated major political opponents abroad, so could a regime comprising the FIS. In the current situation where both Islamist and secular Algerians have found refuge in France to escape political violence in Algeria⁴², there have been a few signs indicating that France could become an arena of confrontation between Algerian political movements. It was reported that complaints to the French police had been filed by some Algerians in self-exile in France who had received threatening telephone calls and visits presumably by self-exiled Islamists reproducing in France the GIAs' methods⁴³. The murder of Sheik Abdelbaki Sahraoui in July 1995 in his Paris-based mosque also shows that, whoever committed the murder, France may be turned into a hunting field to political opponents⁴⁴. The killing of political opponents, while in itself affecting national security, can lead to further complications. For instance, in 1980, the attempted murder of Shahpur Baktiar (last prime minister of the Shah regime) in Paris led to the imprisonment of the head of the commando, Anis Naccache. The release of Naccache became one of the claim of pro-Iranian terrorist groups which took French hostages in the Middle East and carried out bomb attacks in France⁴⁵.

⁴² See section 2.1.2. below.

⁴³ *Libération*, 30 juin 1994.

⁴⁴ Sahraoui was shot point-blank on July 11, 1995 (*Le Monde*, 13 juillet 1995). Up to the time of writing, the French police has not solved the Sahraoui case. Sahraoui was a FIS founding-member. As a *salafiyyist*, he was marginalised after the FIS Batna Congress in July 1991 and left for France where he obtained the position of *imam* of the *Khaled-ibn-Walid* mosque thanks to the World Islamic League (Saudi obedience). Sahraoui was an interlocutor of the French authorities : he called for the liberation of the three French consulate agents held hostages in Algeria in late September 1993 as well as for an end to the killing of foreigners in Algeria (*Le Monde*, 5 novembre 1993). In August 1994, following the internment of suspected Islamist activists in Folembay which triggered the AIS's retaliation threat against France, Sahraoui claimed that the AIS "is only opposed to the puppet regime in Algiers and (...) hits only the forces of repression in Algeria", suggesting that the French territory was not a target for terrorist attacks as it was then feared (see *Le Monde*, 11 août 1994). In addition, Sahraoui was opposed to the undertaking of illegal activities by Algerian Islamists on French soil which, in his view, had to be kept as a safe haven for fleeing Islamists (see H. Terrel (1994), p. 362). Because Sahraoui was the living proof that dialogue could be engaged with FIS members and that conciliation could be found, he could have been killed as much by the GIAs as by the Algerian Military Security.

⁴⁵ Baktiar was eventually eliminated in 1991 in Paris. According to some police reports, one of the aim of the November 1993 police raid against the Algerian Brotherhood in France (which led to the Kraouche affair) was to prevent terrorist attacks linked to the trial of the presumed killers of Baktiar. In the mid-1980s, pro-Iranian terrorist groups had "sub-contracted" terrorist attacks which were

The purpose of the hypotheses sketched above is not to dramatise the situation, but to show that, if relations between Paris and Algiers were difficult for a variety of reasons, the very fact that France would be hosting potential political opponents to the new regime in Algiers may prove a hindrance to a normalisation of political relations between the two states. It is very unlikely that this scenario did not strike French policy-makers when they assessed the various consequences of a mass influx of Algerian refugees.

In view of the potential unsettling effects that an immigration wave could have in terms of France's "social equilibrium" and in terms of its future relations with a new Algerian regime including the FIS, the Bérégovoy and Balladur governments backed the High State Council and then the Zeroual regime, hoping to avoid being faced with an exodus from Algeria. In addition, the French government and, in particular, the Balladur government adopted a restrictive immigration policy towards Algeria. By making it harder for Algerians to enter France and to stay there, the French government sought to limit inflows and to hamper the permanent settlement of those who already left Algeria, in case the FIS came to power.

2.1.2. Restricting entries

Immigration to France generated by political violence has already begun. It is, nevertheless, difficult to assess the number of people involved. The latest official data on immigration inflows from Algeria concern 1993 and are, thus, not recent enough to show the full impact of violence on expatriation. In addition, these data do not take into account the (renewable) temporary residence permits delivered for a three-month period, whereas most Algerians having sought protection in France have been granted that particular status. According to press records, 10 000 Algerians would have

performed by Maghrebi radical Islamists. The French authorities would thus have feared the same kind of sub-contracting (See P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), p. 333). To be accurate, it can be pointed out that the trial of Baktiar's presumed killers did not actually open in November 1993 but in November 1994 (*International Herald Tribune*, November 2, 1994). What happened in November 1993 was that the judicial inquiry into the Baktiar Affair was closed because enough evidence against the presumed killers had been gathered for them to be brought to court (*Le Monde*, 4 novembre 1993).

benefited from this "territorial asylum" status between 1992 and 1994⁴⁶. Even though the Interior Ministry's data are underestimates because of the exclusion of that type of visa⁴⁷, they show a trend of immigration from Algeria for political reasons. The number of asylum-seekers has, indeed, increased since 1992 even if the numbers involved remain low : 144 in 1990, 191 in 1991, 618 in 1992, 1 098 in 1993⁴⁸ and 2 385 in 1994⁴⁹.

In the main, Algerians seeking protection abroad belong to the Westernised *intelligentsia*. Many were threatened with death by the Islamist armed groups. Some may also have been threatened by the regime for their conciliatory views. Among the Algerians who left Algeria for France, there are also some Islamists. However, they are far less numerous⁵⁰.

In order to prevent (in case a compromise was reached with the FIS in Algiers) the long-term settlement in France of those who already left Algeria, the Balladur government took three main measures which, besides, have not been reversed under the new Juppé government. To begin with, the Balladur government adopted a restrictive interpretation of the Geneva Convention on political asylum, arguing that asylum status could be granted exclusively to people persecuted by their own government. This implied that persons claiming to be victimised by Islamist armed groups could not benefit from this status⁵¹. This stance on political asylum explains why very few applications were approved : 15 in 1992, 14 in 1993, and 18 in 1994⁵². The French government's refusal to consider as political refugees

⁴⁶ *Le Monde*, 24 décembre 1994.

⁴⁷ Between 1991 and 1992, Algerian immigration was stable (16 860 persons in 1991). Between 1992 and 1993, the number of immigrants rose by a mere 8.7%, passing from 16 714 to 18 175. A. Lebon (1992), pp. 83-5 ; (1993), pp. 85-8 and (1994), pp. 87-90.

⁴⁸ A. Lebon (1994), p. 26.

⁴⁹ *Le Monde*, 23-24 avril 1995.

⁵⁰ Only 1% of the Algerian asylum-seekers are Islamists (*Le Monde*, 6 décembre 1994). This does not imply, however, that only 1% of the persons who came to France as a result of the slaying in Algeria are Islamists.

⁵¹ In July 1994, the French Appeal Commission for Refugees granted asylum status to a young Algerian woman because the Algerian local authorities did not fulfil their duty of protecting her while they knew of the persecutions she had been subjected to by Islamist activists. The Commission stressed that the approval was based on these sole circumstances and underlined that this decision did not imply that Algerian women were considered as a persecuted group. See *Le Monde*, 23 and 24-25 juillet 1994.

⁵² *Le Monde*, 6 décembre 1994 and 30 mars 1995.

individuals persecuted by Islamists was a gesture of political support to the Algerian regime : it implied that the regime was capable of protecting its citizens and that it was in control of the security situation. But the French government's refusal was fundamentally motivated by its unwillingness to create a precedent and to ease the long-run settlement of these new immigrants. By merely providing momentary shelter through a renewable three-months "territorial asylum", the French government attempted to punctually answer protection needs while at the same time avoiding permanent settlement.

The government also made it harder for Algerians to come to France. A policy of tourist visa restriction was adopted under the socialists as early as 1990. However, between 1993 and 1994, issued visas dropped from 300 000 to 100 000 (less than 20% of the demand)⁵³. It is highly likely that if Algeria was now living in peace, issued visas would be maintained at their early 1990s level, that is about 400 000 per year. In December 1994, an immigration agreement was signed with the Algerian authorities. It abolished the preferential treatment hitherto granted to Algerians in matters of visa issuance. This accord has had two effects. First of all, it has toughened entry conditions : Algerian tourists must hold a letter confirming that they will be hosted in France. This letter must be signed by the host and the French mayor of the host's town. In the second place, since March 1995, this accord has contributed to restricting the possibility of changing status once in France : Algerians can no longer go to France with a tourist visa and then ask for either a lengthening of stay or a change in status. The authorities maintain that "endangered persons" may be granted a derogation to the rule, but such a derogation is not regulated by law⁵⁴. This December 1994 agreement was in negotiation for about two years and brought Algeria in line with Tunisia and Morocco which signed similar accords with France respectively in 1992 and 1993. Nevertheless, the fact that the French government pushed for its conclusion in the particular context of violence in Algeria showed a deliberate will to restrict inflows from Algeria as much as possible.

⁵³ *Le Monde*, 3 février 1995.

⁵⁴ *Le Monde*, 24 décembre 1994.

Lastly, in Summer 1994, the Balladur government reached a secret agreement with the Algerian authorities over the expulsion of clandestine immigrants. This agreement provided that the Algerian authorities had to accept back all the persons who are held to be Algerian citizens by the French government and who are to be deported. Before this agreement was reached, the Algerian authorities had to recognise the persons concerned as their citizens before they could be expelled to Algeria⁵⁵. This agreement obviously seeks to countercheck the clandestine migrants' tactic of destroying their identity papers, and thus to guard against a wave of immigrants.

2.2. The FIS and the Muslim community in France

Such events as the Rushdie affair or the Gulf War raised the issue of the impact that conflicts within the Arab/Muslim world and conflicts between the West and the Arab/Muslim world may have on the Arab/Muslim communities established in Europe. The attitudes of Arab/Muslim communities towards such conflicts are deemed essential because they may prove a constraint on foreign policy. In the case of the Algerian conflict and of a possible FIS victory, the French government was (and continues to be) concerned about this issue. If the Algerian (and Muslim) community in France proved anti-FIS, its attitude and eventual mobilisation could be problematic if the French government sought to maintain good relations with the new regime. On the other hand, if this community proved to be pro-FIS and if relations between Paris and Algiers turned out to be sour, its attitude could also impinge on foreign policy. In fact, such questions, while not completely irrelevant today, have lost most of their significance : in the main, the Algerian community and the Muslim community at large have shown no interest in getting actively involved in the Algerian political game. In addition, while there have been particular anxieties about a possible FIS support, these communities have expressed no special attraction for the FIS.

⁵⁵ *Le Monde*, 22 octobre 1994. However, Algeria is reported not to respect this secret agreement (*Le Monde*, 24 août 1995).

The French political establishment has actually shown more anxiety about re-Islamisation, understood as a focus on the Muslim dimension of identity. It has been dreaded that, once in power by force or compromise, the FIS may encourage the process of re-Islamisation which appeared in France in the early 1990s, particularly among young French Muslims. The FIS's primary objective may not be re-Islamisation for its own sake but for political control of the Algerian (and Muslim) community living in France. However, by encouraging re-Islamisation to that end, it may contribute to transform what are, for the time being, only re-Islamisation signs into a trend. Re-Islamisation has been a source of concern for the French government primarily because it has been seen as threatening national cohesion and as undermining allegiance to the French state. Opposition to a FIS takeover partook of the French government's willingness to limit the effects of re-Islamisation, even though keeping the FIS from power would not ensure that re-Islamisation could not progress in France. The French government found its own responses to the foreseen threats engendered by re-Islamisation through the 1993 reform of the Citizenship Code and the government's 1994 tough decision on the wearing of headveils in public schools.

2.2.1. Attitudes towards the FIS

The Algerian conflict has generated concerns about its possible impact on the Algerian community and, more generally, on the Muslim population (about 4 million people⁵⁶) living in France. It was feared that these communities might become involved in the conflict and mobilise against the French government's own policy. There were particular anxieties about a support for the FIS. In three years' time, however, these concerns have rapidly been undermined because there have been no sign of massive militant involvement in the Algerian conflict in the immigrant milieu,

⁵⁶ As a result of the 1978 Information and Freedom Law which prohibits the listing of religious denomination, there are no official data on the number of Muslims in France. Estimates vary between 3 and 4 million people. Maghrebis and their children, by far the most numerous, account for about 3 million. Others come primarily from Black Africa. Islam is France's second religion after Catholicism. See J. Cesari (1994b), pp. 21-22 and Haut conseil à l'intégration (1992), p. 40.

despite Algerian political parties' attempts to mobilise the Algerian community. In addition, attitudes towards the FIS have proved to be rather negative, thus lessening fears about FIS support.

When Algeria got on the path of democratisation, the Algerian community in France became an electoral stake for Algerian political parties which attempted to arouse interest in their political ideas. The Algerian Brotherhood in France (FAF), while not having any organic link with the FIS, was created in February 1991 in France with the specific aim of inciting Algerian immigrants to vote for the FIS in the parliamentary elections. Similarly, all Algerian political parties or movements created an immigration branch in France and tried to mobilise their voters. On January 5, 1992, responding to Aït Ahmed's call, 2 500 - 3 000 FFS supporters in France demonstrated in Paris in echo of the January 2, 1992 "demonstration for democracy" in Algiers which was meant to incite people to vote in the second round and, thus, to limit the FIS's success⁵⁷. In some Parisian newsagents, Saïd Sadi's electoral platform, which had been prepared for the second round of the parliamentary elections, was on sale even well after the elections were cancelled⁵⁸.

After the coup, all Algerian political parties have continued to seek the support of the Algerian community in France. Associations having direct links with Algerian political movements were created in France. The association The Friends of Alger Républicain in France is, as its name indicates, a relay of *Alger Républicain* -- a communist, eradicator newspaper. This association publishes an information bulletin which accounts for the "victims of terrorism" in Algeria and denounces dialogue with the Islamists⁵⁹. In May 1994, the association Algeria in our Hearts (*L'Algérie au cœur*) was created in the Parisian northern outskirts of Saint-Denis. It shows all the signs of being a direct expression of the MRP. One of its meetings (organised with other associations in Saint-Denis) actually took place the very day the MRP was demonstrating in Algiers : June 29, 1994. In its first publication, *L'Algérie au cœur*

⁵⁷ *Le Monde*, 7 janvier 1992.

⁵⁸ As late as Winter 1992/93, I found by chance a copy of Sadi's *Plate-forme pour l'Algérie républicaine. Réinventer novembre* (dated December 11, 1992) displayed with daylies.

⁵⁹ Les Amis d'Alger Républicain en France, *Bulletin n°2*.

legitimised the 1992 coup, recognised the Algerian Army as an institution acquired to democracy, denounced dialogue with the Islamists and enjoined the Algerian community to mobilise in solidarity with the Algerians who struggle for "a republican, modern, democratic and progressive Algeria"⁶⁰. The FAF which has directed its militancy towards the Muslim community at large organised support for the outlawed party and its cause, essentially through propaganda. It set up information meetings across France and distributed a news bulletin at the entrance of mosques in major French cities. This -- by now outlawed -- bulletin brought news of the "jihad in Algeria", denounced the Algerian regime and foreign support to the "junta"⁶¹.

This militant activism which is aimed at mobilising the Algerian (and Muslim) community in France and which has several objectives (housing networks for self-exiled Algerians, financial support, "informing" French public opinion, etc.) does not seem to have had much success⁶². There have been some "information meetings" organised by associations supporting democracy and denouncing the risks involved in Islamism. Mention can be made, for instance, of the meeting set up by the Young Arabs of Lyon and its Suburb (*Jeunes arabes de Lyon et sa banlieue*, JALB) in April 1994. This association, which has no direct connection with Algeria, directly concerns the *Beurs*. It has played a militant role for the integration of *Beurs* to French society along a secular path. JALB's advertising statement for its meeting read: "We have the duty and the responsibility to understand and to manifest an active and concrete solidarity for peace and democracy in Algeria."⁶³ However, there has been no massive participation in public demonstrations. In April 1994, the Federation of Algerian Associations (*Collectif des associations algériennes*) called for demonstrations throughout Europe in order to "denounce violence in Algeria"⁶⁴. But

⁶⁰ L'Algérie au cœur (1994).

⁶¹ On the FAF, see N. Beau (1995), pp. 280-7 and G. Kepel (1994b), pp. 291-7. The FAF's twin in Britain is the Algerian Community in Britain (ACB) which controls two other organisations, the Algerian Brothers in Britain and the Algerian Community Association. Their activities revolve around propaganda. Leaflets distributed, for instance, by the Algerian Brothers in Britain at the lecture of Dr. M. Bedayoun (a FIS-member, visiting lecturer in Leeds University) on "The Revival of Islam in Algeria" (November 4, 1993, SOAS, London) are similar to those of the FAF.

⁶² My conclusion is akin to L. Belaid's (1995, pp. 191-200).

⁶³ Advertising statement reproduced in *Algérie Actualité* (1487), 12-18 avril 1994.

⁶⁴ *Algérie Actualité* (1485), 1-7 avril 1994.

Le Monde did not report any demonstration on April 9, 1994, suggesting that it was either cancelled or that it did not attract much crowd. The December 1994 demonstration of "solidarity with the people and the democrats of Algeria" was organised by French political parties, trade unions and associations, even though the immigration branches of Algerian political parties participated. It brought together only 10 000 people in Paris⁶⁵. In Nantes (where the visa service for Algeria has been transferred since the August 1994 attack on French consulate agents in Algeria), the March 1995 demonstration which was intended to protest against France's restrictive immigration policy towards Algerians gathered only 3 000 people⁶⁶.

As regards the FAF, it has had to curb down its militant activities as it has been under police surveillance since the November 1993 police raid. Its president, Djaffar el Houari, was actually expelled to Burkino Faso in August 1994 and its spokesman, Moussa Kraouche, has been under judicial surveillance since November 1993. The discovery of FIS and GIAs networks in France organising a concrete support for the armed struggle in Algeria, the involvement in such networks of Muslims who have been living in France for a long time and especially of young *beurs*⁶⁷ has contributed to the view that the FAF and, more generally, Algerian Islamists have woven an influence network within the Muslim community in France. In fact, cases of direct involvement in the armed struggle can be counted on the fingers of few hands and, most importantly, the FAF and other Islamist networks

⁶⁵ *Le Monde*, 6 décembre 1994.

⁶⁶ *Le Monde*, 28 mars 1995.

⁶⁷ Three young French *beurs* of a Maghrebi origin were involved in a gun attack killing two Spanish tourists in a Marrakech hotel in late August 1994. Two were condemned to death by the Moroccan judiciary. A fourth *beur* was condemned to life imprisonment for having fired at the Moroccan police in a car pursuit (*Le Monde*, 29-30 janvier 1995). The police operation that followed in France against Algerians and Moroccans related to the *beurs* concerned led to evidences of a link with Islamist networks supporting armed struggle (See *Le Monde*, 3, 6 and 7 septembre 1994). Another *beur* was arrested in November 1994 for participating in a network, which under the cover of the Educative Association of the Muslims of France, transferred arms to Algeria. This association was headed by two brothers benefiting from the dual French and Algerian citizenship (*Le Monde*, 10 novembre 1994). In addition, two cases of French nationals of an Algerian origin involved in supporting the armed struggle in Algeria were reported in the press. One was arrested for illegal possession of arms and fake Algerian IDs to be provided to the Algerian armed groups and another was arrested with his Algerian father for illegal possession of arms and ammunitions (see arrest recapitulation in *Libération*, 8 août 1994). At the time of writing, no other case was signalled. A greater number of persons may be involved inasmuch as the press does not systematically report nationality. However, the involvement of *beurs* or of Algerian nationals having lived in France for a long time remains a minority phenomenon.

have not managed to convey a positive image of the FIS within the Muslim community in France. Indeed, a September 1994 poll showed that there was no major support for the FIS among Muslims living in France, although many (on average 22%) showed a certain prudence by declining to express their views on the various questions about the FIS. The results of this survey indicated that only 9% of the Muslims living in France had a "very good or a quite good opinion of the FIS", whereas 69% had a "rather bad or very bad opinion of the FIS" (with 50% opting for the "very bad"). Among the youngest (16 to 24 years of age), 72% had a "rather bad or very bad opinion of the FIS". 70% in the whole Muslim population said they disagreed with the proposition that "the FIS represents the values of Islam as I see them" (8% agreed) ; 62% agreed with the idea that "the FIS threatens democracy" (15% disagreed) and 57% agreed with the proposition that "the FIS signifies regression" (21% disagreed). Lastly, whereas 9% in the whole Muslim population said to "personally wish the coming to power of the FIS in Algeria", 68% said they did not wish so. However, 48% thought that negotiations with the FIS were required while 28% disagreed with the principle of negotiations⁶⁸. These results were similar to those of a December 1993 survey which polled *beurs* aged 18 to 30. 63% showed a negative attitude towards "Islamic fundamentalism" (*intégrisme musulman*) ; 20% an indifferent attitude and 14% a positive attitude⁶⁹.

Generally speaking, there is thus a hard core of about 10 to 15% Muslims in France supporting the religio-political ideas advocated by the FIS. Whether they all bring an effective support to the FIS is questionable. What can be said with some certainty is that this relatively low support for the FIS cannot translate into a powerful constraint for French foreign policy. The French political establishment has, nevertheless, remained concerned by the fact that, once in power, the FIS could seek to extend its influence among the Muslim community in France and encourage, to that

⁶⁸ Size of the sample : 535. See *Le Monde*, 13 octobre 1994.

⁶⁹ The exact result of this survey (500 persons polled) were : "I take part in Islamic fundamentalism" : 5% ; "I approve ..." : 9% ; "I am indifferent to ..." : 20% ; "I am worried about ..." : 37% ; "I am hostile to ..." : 26% and "I have no opinion" : 3%. See *Le Nouvel Observateur* (1517), 2-8 décembre 1993.

effect, a re-Islamisation process.

2.2.2. *The FIS and re-Islamisation*

Before turning to the issue of the concerns generated by re-Islamisation, a word must be said on re-Islamisation itself and on the objectives that the FIS may be seeking in encouraging re-Islamisation.

Re-Islamisation

Numerous surveys on the Muslim community in France conducted in the mid-1980s and early 1990s showed that, for the majority of young French so-called "sociological" Muslims, Islam does not play a significant role in their process of identity construction. The majority does not endorse nor does it reject Islam, which is seen primarily as a cultural and family heritage and, eventually, as an ethical code of behaviour⁷⁰. Nevertheless, since the early 1990s, there are emerging signs of an identity assertion along an Islamic line -- re-Islamisation -- among the 16 to 24 years of age, even though re-Islamised young French Muslims remain a minority within their own age-class. Re-Islamisation is reflected in a more assiduous religious practice compared to their elders⁷¹. Re-Islamisation also appears through a greater will to have Islam allotted a wider place in the public space : according to a 1994 survey, 34% of young Muslims in the 16-24 age-class were favourable to the call to the prayer by means of a loud-speaker, as opposed to 23% for the 25-34 age-class and 28% for the national average (Muslim population). Similarly, whereas 56% of young Muslims in the 16-24 age-class stood for minarets as visible as bell towers, percentages were

⁷⁰ For details on the role of Islam for primary-migrants and their children see J. Cesari (1994b) ; P. Balta (1991) ; A. Hargreaves & T. Stenhouse (1991) ; G. Kepel (1991) ; A. Krieger-Krynicky (1988) and R. Leveau (1988).

⁷¹ In the main, religious practice by Muslims in France is low and declining. Only 27% declare themselves "practising Muslims" against 37% in 1989. Daily prayer is performed by 31% (41% in 1989) and only 16% follow the Friday prayer. The Ramadan is respected by a majority (60%). Alcohol consumption (39%) is relatively high. The pilgrimage to Mecca was done only by 4% but 55% (and 65% among the youngest) intend to go to Mecca at one stage or the other. See *Le Monde*, 13 octobre 1994.

lower for the 25-34 age-class (37%) and the national average (45%). In addition, although the demand for a distinct Muslim status regulating civil life remained low among the youngest (21%), it was higher than among the 25-34 years of age (12%) and higher than the national average (17%)⁷². Re-Islamisation has also transpired through the headveil-at-school issue which has periodically turned up at the forefront of France's social debates since 1989.

Re-Islamisation is a phenomenon that has its root in the conjunction of several factors : reaction to "anti-Muslimism" ; socioeconomic marginalisation ; a decline in the popularity of secular, anti-racist and "assimilationist" associations such as *SOS-Racisme* and *France-Plus* which have failed to deliver the goods for the many and which have subsequently been supplanted, notably, by Islamic associations. The Islamic associational fabric has developed in France since the 1980s as a result of both the settlement process of primary-migrants and a looser legislation on foreigners' associations. Through their social work structured around the neighbourhood mosque/prayer room, local Islamic associations have mainly been concerned with rebuilding communitarian bonds defined in religious terms⁷³.

Re-islamisation : the FIS's objectives

It is doubtful that, once in power, the FIS would seek, as an end in itself, the re-Islamisation of the Algerian community or, indeed, of the Muslim community settled in France. Its primary goal is to build an Islamic state in Algeria, not elsewhere. However, re-Islamisation may be a by-product of other aims. Charles Pellegrini has thus argued that the enrolment of *beurs* by FIS networks in France would correspond to the long-run objective of creating pressure groups with the ultimate aim of constraining the French government's international and domestic policy. With a population under its influence, it is argued, the FIS in Algiers could remotely control the suburbs of French major cities from a state of social peace to one

⁷² See *Le Monde*, 13 octobre 1994.

⁷³ J. Cesari (1994/95), pp. 184-6 and G. Kepel (1994b), pp. 210-1.

of unrest and try to influence the course of France's policy through this means⁷⁴.

Perhaps more realistically, in attempting to control the Algerian (and Muslim) community in France by encouraging the process towards "Islamic assertion", the FIS could just be reproducing the FLN regime's past strategy⁷⁵. In order to protect the Algerian community in France from unwanted political influences, the FLN regime, indeed, sought to "officer" this community through secular networks (*Amicale des algériens en Europe*) and religious ones (Paris Mosque⁷⁶). Particularly if FIS opponents were to find refuge in France, it is likely that a FIS regime would strive to prevent competing political formations from holding sway over the Algerian and Muslim community. In order to curb their influence, the FIS may encourage re-Islamisation and bring its support to Islamic associations operating in immigrant circles in France.

Re-Islamisation : French concerns

The prospect of re-Islamisation has been a source of concerns for the French government essentially because it has been perceived as a threat to national cohesion and to allegiance to the French state. These concerns have been articulated around two issues : the foreign influence that may be exercised on "born again Muslims" and the demand for a minority status possibly deriving from re-Islamisation.

Regarding the first issue, it has been feared that once brought back on the path of God, young French Muslims may be permeable to Islamism whereas the latter asserts itself against Western political culture. That some French citizens may not

⁷⁴ C. Pellegrini (1992), pp. 105-6.

⁷⁵ This was a concern expressed by Georges Morin, interview, June 29, 1994.

⁷⁶ The Paris Mosque was founded in 1926 under the sponsorship of the French Third Republic. Stemming from an Algerian association, the Paris Mosque has always had an unclear status. In 1982, the effective control of the Mosque shifted from Paris to Algiers. The Paris Mosque has since then become an "ancillary embassy" to channel official religious policy to Algerian immigrants. This became overt with the appointment of the Mosque's rector, Tijani Haddam, to the HSC in 1992. Haddam was eventually forced to resign. Since the early the 1980s, the Paris Mosque has sought to be recognised by the Algerian immigrants and the *Harkis* as their natural religious representative in France. Since the mid-1980s, it has also attempted to impose its authority over various federations of Islamic associations in order to be recognised as the sole representative of the Muslim community in France. Since the Right came into office, the French authorities have lent their support to the Paris Mosque's federating initiatives. On the Paris Mosque see e.g. A. Boyer (1992).

abide by the ideologico-political substratum of French society is viewed as threatening national cohesion as well as national security : "born again Muslims" may feel they primarily belong to the Islamic community rather than to the French one. Such a sense of belonging could raise questions about their allegiance to the French state. In this regard, the 1993 reform of the Nationality Code restricting the automatic acquisition of the French nationality for foreigners born in France is not innocent. By requiring foreigners who were born in France and who have been living there all their lives to explicitly request French citizenship, the state is implicitly asking an oath of loyalty and allegiance.

Second, it has been feared that re-Islamisation may be accompanied by demands for the recognition of Muslims in France as a minority which should be granted specific rights⁷⁷. As opposed to Britain where immigration has been structured in terms of community-based relations, the French "republican model" of immigrant absorption (inspired by the very process through which the French Nation was built after the Revolution) has traditionally been based on the negation of minorities. Instead, it has promoted individual citizenship as a means of integration to French society⁷⁸. The assertion of a collective identity, eventually leading to claims for the recognition of a minority status, thus challenges the very system through which national integration has always been performed. It naturally partakes of the debate on the "crisis of national identity" and on the "crisis of the republican model" which has taken place in France in the last few years⁷⁹. Public confidence in the capacity of the republican model to culturally integrate foreigners and their children and, thus, to maintain social cohesion is declining. As a result, many French people (84%) think that "cohabitation" between the French of "old stock" and foreigners (and their French children) will be tensed in the future⁸⁰ -- which is another reason for the government to be wary of re-Islamisation.

⁷⁷ G. Kepel (1994b, p. 272) thus maintains that the ultimate goal of the federating Union of Islamic Organisations of France is to obtain a minority status for Muslims in France.

⁷⁸ On the French and British models of integration see P. Weil & J. Crowley (1994).

⁷⁹ For details, see J. Cesari (1994b), pp. 257-65 and D. Schnapper (1994), pp. 132-5.

⁸⁰ 1994 Report of the Consultative Commission for Human Rights, reported in *Le Monde*, 22 mars 1995.

The view that re-Islamisation is a threat to national cohesion both because it may engender obedience to a foreign ideology and question the national integration model was particularly apparent in the *hijeb* affair. The wearing of headveils at school by some Muslim girls⁸¹ was understood as an assault on the secular character of the French state, organised by foreign Islamists waging an "insidious jihad"⁸² against France. Philosopher André Glucksmann thus depicted the headscarf as a "terrorist sign by itself"⁸³. As concerns about the establishment of FIS networks in France grew, François Bayrou, Balladur's education minister, made an about-face. In October 1993, Bayrou supported the 1989 ruling of the Constitutional Council which, in the wake of the first *hijeb* affair, had allowed the wearing of headveils in public schools on the ground that the wearing of religious signs by individuals was not in contradiction with state secularism. A year later, Bayrou recommended the exclusion of veiled pupils from public schools on two main grounds. First, because the headveil was an "ostentatious religious sign", implying that, in Bayrou's view, there is something wrong in publicly showing that one is a Muslim. This stand can be understood only if the assertion of one's "Muslimness" is equated with support to a religio-political ideology. And, indeed, Bayrou maintained that "One has to be blind not to see the fundamentalist movements behind the young girls who wear [the headveil]"⁸⁴. Second, Bayrou justified banning headveils in schools on the ground that "the choice of the Republic is not to let France evolve into separate communities"⁸⁵. He thus cut short the debate on whether the republican model, by denying the social reality of minorities, proved obsolete⁸⁶.

As a concluding note, it may be worth recalling that the eventuality of a FIS takeover (by force or compromise) in Algeria was perceived as generating significant problems for France. In particular, it was thought that a FIS regime would encourage

⁸¹ According to the Education Ministry, 2 000 girls were concerned at the beginning of the 1994 school year (*Le Monde*, 26 novembre 1994).

⁸² Some MPs portrayed the wearing of headscarves in these terms, in *Le Monde*, 28 octobre 1993.

⁸³ In *Le Point* (1163), 30 décembre 1994.

⁸⁴ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 22 novembre 1994.

⁸⁵ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 11-12 septembre 1994.

⁸⁶ See Bayrou's October 1993 circular (in *Le Monde*, 28 octobre 1993) and September 1994 circular (in *Le Monde*, 21 septembre 1994).

re-Islamisation within the Muslim community living in France whereas re-Islamisation raised issues about existing societal arrangements. That the re-Islamisation process might be encouraged from outside the national realm was also thought to be wholly unacceptable because of the allegiance issue to which it gave rise. The prospect of a massive influx of Algerian refugees sparked off by a FIS takeover was deemed to endanger France's "social and political equilibrium" while at the same time possibly undermining political relations with the new regime in Algiers. In addition, the presence in France of political opponents to a FIS regime raised concerns about national security. In the following section, I shall focus on such concerns although from a different angle.

3. National security : the terrorist issue

One of the issues raised by the Algerian conflict and the potential arrival to power of the FIS dealt with terrorism. As suggested in section 2.1.1. above, although the French political establishment expressed no overt concern about it, it seems quite plausible that it was worried about the potential hunt for political opponents that a FIS regime might undertake on French soil. Such state-terrorism would be a blow to French national security inasmuch as the French state is supposed to ensure physical protection to the persons residing within its borders. In this section, I shall deal with another type of threat to national security : the undertaking of terrorist acts against the French state.

It is not wholly certain that, in opposing a FIS takeover and then a compromise with the FIS, the Balladur government was primarily motivated by the fear that, once in power, the FIS may resort to terrorism against France. To seriously advance such a claim, one would need to know what kind of policies the French government thought it would implement if the FIS came to power. Indeed, it is very unlikely that a FIS regime would undertake terrorist actions against the French state without any ground for retaliation. Nevertheless, it can quite logically be argued that

the ambiguous attitude of FIS leaders in exile, notably as regards the killings of French nationals in Algeria, and the AIS's threats against France (in addition to the GIAs'), reinforced the negative perceptions that the French political establishment had about the FIS. In a context where the government feared terrorist attacks in France by Algerian Islamist armed groups, the fact that the FIS was understood to back violence against France logically led to the view that France would be better off without Islamists in government in Algiers.

3.1. Threats against France

The support lent by the Balladur government to the Algerian regime quite rapidly backfired partly because the strategy of the Algerian Islamist armed groups (particularly of the GIAs) had shifted in Spring 1993 from aiming at the security forces to also aiming at civilians who were suspected of active or passive collaboration with the Algerian authorities. French nationals (and, more generally, foreigners) thus became the target of murderous attacks in Algeria as of September 1993 on the ground that they were "Christian crusaders" or that they brought a support to the regime by working for state companies⁸⁷. France's rounding-up of Islamist activists in France, as well as the killing of the four hijackers of the *Air France* Airbus -- the hijack being itself a terrorist act -- by the French *gendarmérie* elite unit triggered threats of retaliation on the part of the GIAs, but also of the AIS, the FIS's armed-wing. Thus, after the August 1994 round-up of twenty-six Islamist militants in France who were held in Folembay and expelled to Burkina Faso or put under house arrest, the AIS and the GIAs issued menacing communiqués. Demanding freedom for the "internees of Folembay", the AIS declared that "The French government must renounce its aggressive policy or it will endorse the responsibility of what the mujahidins of the Islamic Salvation Army will inflict on it."⁸⁸ The national

⁸⁷ From September 1993 to (early) September 1995, 93 foreigners (out of whom 32 were French) were killed in Algeria (*Le Monde*, 5 septembre 1995).

⁸⁸ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 9 août 1994.

structure of the GIAs also threatened to "violently hit French interests in Algeria"⁸⁹. After the December 1994 hijack, the AIS stated that "war against France [was] legal" and that it would "return a hit for a hit" in order to "revenge the Faithful"⁹⁰. As to the national structure of the GIAs, it was reported to have sent ultimatums to the French, German, British and American governments enjoining them to evacuate their nationals and to break off diplomatic relations with Algiers⁹¹.

None of these communiqués clearly mentioned the extension of terrorist actions against France to its own territory or, when they did, they were later denied. Indeed, after the AIS's threat of retaliation about the Folembray affair, Abdelbaki Sahraoui maintained that terrorist attacks on French soil were not part of the AIS's objectives⁹². Similarly, after the hijack, while a group claiming to belong to the AIS warned that "The AIS's mujahidins [were] able to hit France in its own house"⁹³, the AIS as well as the FIS denied that *jihād* was to be extended to the French territory and denounced this communiqué as counter-propaganda⁹⁴. The Balladur government was, nevertheless, extremely worried about the very possibility that violent acts might be carried out on French soil.

3.2. From fearing terrorist attacks in France ...

The Balladur government's fear that the French territory might become a target for terrorism was perceptible when it crackdowned on the Islamist nebula in France. In chapter two, I argued that such crackdowns were part and parcel of the Balladur government's political support to Algiers⁹⁵. They allowed the government to curb the FAF's political militancy as well as to break up networks which organised concrete support for the AIS and the GIAs in Algeria. But they also aimed at minimising the risk of terrorist attacks in France : once a network has been built, its original aim can,

⁸⁹ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 13 août 1994.

⁹⁰ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 1-2 janvier 1995.

⁹¹ See *Le Monde*, 5 and 6 janvier 1995.

⁹² See footnote 44.

⁹³ Quoted in *France-Soir*, 31 décembre 1994.

⁹⁴ *Le Monde*, 4 and 7 janvier 1995.

⁹⁵ See chapter two, section 2.1.3.

in principle, always been altered. Pasqua was perfectly clear on this point when he said :

"I do not believe that there is a risk of a wave of attacks in France, but one can never exclude it." "One day or the other, terrorism can perfectly be carried out in our country. What do I have to do : to wait for bombs to blow up in our country and for people to be assassinated here, or to intervene before in order to dismantle networks ? That [the second option] is what I am doing."⁹⁶

In practice, none of the police raids supervised by Pasqua brought evidence of planned terrorist actions in France (or they were not revealed to the public). From press reports, the results of the round-ups and the various arrests tended to demonstrate two things. First, that the FAF has never really been involved in anything else than political militancy. Its propaganda has certainly revealed itself strongly anti-French, but, to all appearances, it has not been implicated in concretely supporting the armed struggle in Algeria. Following Sahraoui's stance, Kraouche condemned the undertaking of illegal actions in France and claimed that the FAF was "against the killing of innocents and foreigners in Algeria."⁹⁷ That the FAF has not been a support network for guerrilla action in Algeria seems to be confirmed by the fact that, in the wake of Sahraoui's murder, Kraouche was offered police protection by the French authorities⁹⁸. Second, the various police operations showed that, as Algerian Islamist activists fled their country for France, they built support networks to help guerrilla action in Algeria. The activities of such support networks have revolved around legal or illegal fund-raising, arms, explosives and equipment transfers to Algeria, provision of fake ID papers to the guerrillas, and infiltration/exfiltration of "*mujahidins*". Some of these networks operate under the cover of Islamic associations or of firms⁹⁹. They may co-ordinate action. However, there does not appear to be a centralising unit

⁹⁶ Respectively quoted in *Le Monde*, 13 août 1993 and 2 septembre 1994.

⁹⁷ Interview in *Le Figaro*, 12 avril 1994.

⁹⁸ *Le Monde*, 13-14 août 1995.

⁹⁹ All these activities can be judged from press reports on the round-up of November 8, 1994 which led to the imprisonment of 77 Islamists. See *Le Monde*, 9,10 and 15 novembre 1994. The other sweeps of Islamist activists led under Balladur occurred on November 9, 1993 ; August 6-18, 1994 and September 1, 1994.

controlling the activities of these various networks.

Even though none of the police raids indicated that the objective of such networks had shifted from organising support to the armed struggle in Algeria to carrying out terrorist attacks in France in order to bring Paris to revise its co-operation policy with Algiers, the Balladur government was worried about this possibility. In fact, under the Chirac Administration, terrorist attacks occurred. I shall return to this issue in the conclusion to this thesis. Let us just say that these Summer 1995 attacks seem to have an Algerian link but that, at this stage, it is still dubious whether they were performed by "sleeper" terrorist networks operating for the account of extremist Islamists or by the Algerian Military Security or, indeed, by both.

3.3. ... to opposing the FIS

As underlined in the introduction to this section, it is not sure that in opposing a FIS takeover the French government was motivated by the vision that, once in power, the FIS might resort to state-sponsored terrorism against France, thus turning Algeria into a threatening "terrorist state". Actually, despite a strong concern about "Islamic terrorism", the idea that a FIS regime may turn to terrorism as a means to bring pressure to bear on its external environment never transpired in public interviews nor in my discussions with members of the political establishment or of the Administration. Of course, this silence does not mean that such a possibility never crossed policy-makers' minds. It rather shows that the hypothesis, while perhaps in the background, was not given prime importance. This may be explained by the fact that, as of the Summer of 1993, Paris believed that if the FIS came into office this would be by compromise, not by toppling the regime.

Nevertheless, the opposition of the Balladur government to a FIS takeover and to a compromise with the FIS can be explained by the fact that the FIS's ambiguous relationship with violence added to the French political establishment's negative perceptions of this religio-political party. As mentioned in chapter two¹⁰⁰, FIS leaders

¹⁰⁰ See below, section 1.1.2., "All roads, it is said, lead to Rome".

in exile had an equivocal attitude towards the violent course of action adopted by the armed groups (partly as a means to maintain a certain control over violence). Until the February 1994 FIS declaration which made a distinction between the "armed struggle" and "terrorism", not all FIS leaders in exile did systematically and clearly condemn violence, notably when it was perpetrated against foreigners. Even after this declaration, while some terrorist attacks were strongly condemned, others were condemned but at the same time justified. For instance, reacting to the killing of the five French consulate agents in early August 1994, Kebir condemned the act but added that "he who sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind"¹⁰¹. These justifications were understood in Paris as a clear FIS support to violence against France. The reprisal threats of the FIS's military wing reinforced this view. Inasmuch as there were strong concerns about the potential transformation of AIS and GIAs support networks into cells undertaking terrorist action, no longer from, but against France, the view that the FIS was backing violent acts against France (even though it was not necessarily involved in them) was certainly a contributing factor to the Balladur government's opposition to the FIS, at least until September 1994.

4. Economic relations : limited risks

In general, members of the French political establishment expressed no anxiety about the eventuality of a questioning of the Franco-Algerian economic relationship by a FIS regime. As of Summer 1993, it was thought that only compromise could lead the FIS to power and that, as part of a coalition government, the FIS would not bring Algeria's economic relationship with France under review. As a result, economic concerns cannot explain the French government's opposition to a re-integration of the FIS into the political process. To a certain extent, it was also believed that, even if the FIS seized power by force, it would not fundamentally question economic relations because, Algeria being more dependent on France than

¹⁰¹ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 6 août 1994.

France on Algeria, doing so would cause more damage to the Algerian economy than to the French one. In the hypothesis where a FIS revolutionary regime would despise economic realities, a questioning of the economic relationship would not bring about a collapse of the French economy -- France having much less important economic interests in Algeria than is usually thought. However, a diversification of trade away from France, a questioning of French investments and perhaps a non-reimbursement of the debt owed to France would have a cost. This would all the more be true if radical Islamist regimes emerged in Morocco or Tunisia and endeavoured to do the same. It may thus be argued that, up to the point it was feared that the FIS might take office through warfare, the impossibility to predict exactly how a FIS revolutionary regime might behave and the fear of cascading dominoes contributed to the French government's opposition to the FIS in the sense that, in face of a potential risk, it was concluded that the status quo would be better than the FIS.

To demonstrate that economic concerns did not play a crucial role in the French government's opposition to the FIS -- or only as a contributing factor -- I examine, first of all, the arguments brought forward by members of the French political establishment for believing that a FIS regime would not question economic relations with France. I then give credence to their viewpoint by proceeding to an analysis of the Franco-Algerian economic relationship. Three aspects of this relationship are reviewed : trade, investments and finance.

4.1. No foreseen questioning of the economic relationship

Members of the French political establishment have argued that it was unrealistic to think that the FIS would resort to a ceasing of its economic relationship with France. Their argument was based on two main considerations. Firstly, at the very beginning of the 1990s, FIS leaders gave assurances that France's economic interests in Algeria would not stand to suffer from a coming of the FIS to government¹⁰². Later, spokesmen for the FIS warned that, once in power, the FIS

¹⁰² Interview with Georges Morin, June 29, 1994.

would review international agreements signed since 1992, such as import contracts, oil exploration deals and the IMF agreement¹⁰³. Yet, at the same time, they argued that an Islamist government would be attached to good-neighbourliness and open to foreign co-operation. Anwar Haddam also maintained that "Whether one wants it or not, the French and Algerian people will continue to have relations in the future (...)." ¹⁰⁴ These contradictory statements were part of the FIS's carrot and stick strategy, aimed at bringing the international community to cease its support to the Algerian regime. The French political establishment was apparently quite aware of that. It remained convinced that a FIS regime would not implement drastic measures in the realm of its economic relations with France because -- and this is the second consideration -- Algeria's economy is more dependent on that of France than *vice-versa*.

Trade relations are significantly asymmetric and Algeria needs foreign capital in the form of both foreign direct investments and economic aid. Consequently, whichever way the FIS came to power, it was very unlikely that it would resort to "punitive" acts which would cause damage to the Algerian economy more than to the French. It was reckoned that the FIS was more likely to take measures in the symbolic field of cultural relations¹⁰⁵ (total Arabisation, removal from the political vocabulary of Western political wording, etc...) since one of its central claims is to replace Western political culture by the indigenous Muslim one in order to organise society, economy and political power.

By examining trade relations, investments and the debt, it appears that, indeed, it would not be in the interest of a FIS regime to question economic relations with France. In addition, the French economy would not be greatly disturbed by such an event.

¹⁰³ See Anwar Haddam's interview with *Libération*, 6 mai 1994 and Rabah Kébir's with *The Financial Times*, August 20-21, 1994.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with *Al Hayat* reproduced in *Le Courrier international* (198), 18-24 août 1994.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Jean Audibert, June 7, 1995.

4.1. Trade relations

The analysis of trade flows between France and Algeria shows that, in the main, Algeria is more dependent on its exports to France than France is on its exports to Algeria. It also shows that, as regards its consumption, France is not dependent on Algerian supplies, even in the sensitive case of natural gas. As a result, the Algerian economy would stand to suffer most from a deterioration of trade.

4.1.1. Asymmetry and decline

On top of being consistently asymmetrical since Independence, as shown in table 4, the Franco-Algerian trade relationship also shows another striking feature : it has lost much of its importance since 1962, although only relatively. Indeed, although France's share in Algeria's trade activities has decreased, it remains significant. With a market share of 24.2% in 1992, France was Algeria's prime supplier before Italy (14.4%) and the USA (11.5%). France has lost its rank of prime client to the benefit of Italy since 1989. But it still bought 18.3% of Algeria's exports in 1992, thus ranking second behind Italy (21.7%) and before the USA (13.9%)¹⁰⁶. In parallel, although Algeria has been accounting for merely about 1% of France's trade since the latter part of the 1980s, it was France's prime trade partner in the developing world for many years. Today, it remains France's first client in the developing world. It has, however, lost its prime supplier rank since 1992. Morocco took on the title, confirming the long-run trend of redistribution of France's trade within the Maghreb to the benefit of Morocco and Tunisia (see table 5).

¹⁰⁶ UN (1994), volume I, p. 8.

Table 4 : Algeria's share in France's world imports and exports and France's share in Algeria's world imports and exports, 1960-92

	<i>in %</i>				
	1960	1970	1980	1990	1992
France					
Imports from Algeria	8.0	3.4	1.3	0.8	0.8
Exports to Algeria	16.0	2.9	2.4	1.3	1.0
Algeria					
Imports from France	83.0	42.0	23.2	23.1	24.2
Exports to France	92.0	53.5	13.4	17.3	18.3

Source : I. Brandell (1981), p. 168 and UN, *International trade Statistics Yearbook*.

French exports to and imports from Algeria must be reviewed in greater details in order to demonstrate that if a FIS regime attempted to divert its trade flows away from France this would certainly incur a cost but not cause great damage to the French economy.

4.1.2. French exports to Algeria

Nation-wide, French exports to Algeria, although not negligible, are not particularly important (table 5). They have been cut by half since the 1986 oil countershock and since Algeria went into financial troubles. The downwards trend was reversed in 1993 and, particularly in 1994, as a result of France's continued granting of tied commercial credits to Algeria. Yet, current levels do not compare with that of the mid-1980s.

Table 5: French trade with the Maghreb, 1980-94

in millions of FF

	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
French imports							
World	570 778	962 730	1 266 789	1 297 042	1 263 964	1 094 831	1 214 600
Maghreb	12 361	30 553	26 136	28 411	26 382	24 739	26 825
in % of world	2.2	3.2	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.2
Algeria	7 431	20 754	10 556	11 996	9 933	7 782	8 285
in % of Maghreb	60.1	67.9	40.4	42.2	37.7	31.5	30.9
Morocco	3 252	6 053	10 319	10 848	10 547	10 860	11 862
in % of Maghreb	26.3	19.8	39.5	38.2	40.0	43.9	44.2
Tunisia	1 677	3 746	5 260	5 567	5 902	6 097	6 678
in % of Maghreb	13.6	12.3	20.1	19.6	22.3	24.6	24.9
French exports							
World	469 694	870 873	1 142 183	1 200 923	1 228 241	1 185 183	1 302 371
Maghreb	20 017	37 431	33 937	31 474	32 112	32 404	35 236
in % of world	4.3	4.3	3.0	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7
Algeria	11 078	21 798	14 770	12 271	11 780	11 901	13 355
in % of Maghreb	55.4	58.2	43.5	39.0	36.7	36.7	37.9
Morocco	5 011	9 178	10 655	10 962	11 276	11 393	12 035
in % of Maghreb	25.0	24.5	31.4	34.8	35.1	35.2	34.2
Tunisia	3 928	6 455	8 512	8 242	9 056	9 110	9 846
in % of Maghreb	19.6	17.3	25.1	26.2	28.2	28.1	27.9

Source: Ministère du Budget, *Statistiques du commerce extérieur de la France*. Percentages: my calculations

Despite its relatively low imports from France, Algeria remains an interesting export market for numerous French service companies, constructors, manufacturers and, increasingly, agribusinesses¹⁰⁷. Small and medium enterprises located in Southern France and for which Algeria is a significant outlet, would be quite seriously hit by a diverting of Algeria's import flows. Nevertheless, and however troublesome it would be, a cut in Algerian imports from France or a diversification of suppliers would not generate a catastrophe for the French economy as a whole.

While a FIS regime could question the place of France as prime supplier, it could not abruptly put an end to some of its imports from France. It is the case, notably, of spare parts for "ready for use" imported factories or French vehicles which prevail on the Algerian market. In addition, by challenging France's prime supplier status, Algeria would come in for retaliation : France could decide to buy less. Indeed, as shown below, France is not dependent on its imports from Algeria for its consumption -- natural gas being a sensitive case but not one of complete dependence.

4.1.3. French imports from Algeria

France imports almost exclusively hydrocarbons. In 1994, hydrocarbons accounted for 96.1% of French imports from Algeria. France primarily buys natural gas (56.3% of French imports of Algerian hydrocarbons). Refined petroleum products come second (26.2%) and oil last (17.5%)¹⁰⁸. Hydrocarbon exports are central to the Algerian economy : they provide 95% of foreign exchange revenues, with gas exports accounting for about a third, and crude oil and refined products for less than a quarter each (the balance being made of condensates and liquefied

¹⁰⁷ In 1992, 2 745 French firms exported to Algeria (Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Paris (1993), p. 68). French exports of agricultural products (mainly cereals and dairy products) have increased significantly since the latter part of the 1980s as a consequence of Algeria's growing food-dependency. Whereas in the early 1980s French exports of agricultural products accounted for less than a tenth of French total exports to Algeria, they now represent almost a quarter. The remaining three quarters consist almost entirely of finished manufactured products (capital goods, vehicles, spare parts and consumer goods). See DREE (1995), p. 163.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

petroleum gas exports)¹⁰⁹.

Oil trade

Oil trade used to constitute the crux of the Franco-Algerian relationship back in the 1960s. The 1971 nationalisation of the French oil companies operating in Algeria led to a clear disengagement from the Algerian market throughout the 1970s. In the 1980s and 1990s, oil imports from Algeria have continued to decrease (see table 6). Two reasons for this decrease can be put forward. One is related to France's energy policy which has sought to substitute oil by nuclear energy, leading to reduced world oil imports¹¹⁰. The other is directly related to Algeria whose potential as a crude oil exporter is limited¹¹¹. Algeria has relatively limited reserves of oil (9.2 billion barrels¹¹²). As domestic consumption of oil rises, oil exports represent a declining share of output¹¹³ and, at the beginning of the next century, Algeria is expected to use most of its oil for domestic purposes¹¹⁴.

French imports of Algerian crude oil concern very little quantities. In 1993, they amounted to 746 000 metric tons (table 6), which was less than France's domestic production¹¹⁵. Imports of Algerian crude oil represent a low share of France's world crude oil imports : 1% in 1993, placing Algeria as fourteenth supplier (table 6). France imports more than 95% of its total supply of crude oil¹¹⁶. As a consequence, the fact that imports from Algeria represent a low share of French total imports implies that the Algerian crude oil covers a low share of French consumption. France is, thus, not dependent on Algeria for its supplies of crude oil.

¹⁰⁹ Maison Lazard et Compagnie *et. al.* (1993), p. 22.

¹¹⁰ Whereas the share of oil in total primary energy supply decreased from 61.8% to 39.3% between 1979 and 1992, that of nuclear power rose from 5.5% to 38.1% (IEA (1994a), p. 239).

¹¹¹ This point was emphasised by J.P. Brevost (Total), interview on December 9, 1993.

¹¹² OPEC (1994), p. 10.

¹¹³ Whereas in 1973 90.5% of crude oil was exported, this share dropped to 41.2% in 1993 (My calculations from *ibid.*, p. 14 and 24).

¹¹⁴ A. Hirèche (1989), p. 109.

¹¹⁵ IEA (1994b), p. 270.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

Table 6: French crude oil imports by selected countries of origin, 1980-93

in 1000 metric tons

	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993
World	109 495	67 043	69 566	72 964	71 003	75 370
<i>of which</i>						
Algeria	4 218	1 994	1 850	2 612	1 735	746
in % of World	3.9	3.0	2.6	3.6	2.4	1.0
Rank	6	13	14	9	10	14
Saudi Arabia	38 277	5 232	14 878	20 469	20 145	22 068
%	35.0	7.8	21.4	28.1	28.4	29.3
Iran	1 212	4 076	8 949	8 355	7 263	11 879
%	1.1	6.1	12.9	11.5	10.2	15.8
Norway	1 793	4 171	5 755	5 724	6 349	8 165
%	1.6	6.2	8.3	7.8	8.9	10.8
(former) USSR	6 296	2 970	4 997	1 893	5 721	6 136
%	5.8	4.4	7.2	2.6	8.1	8.1
UK	2 694	14 897	5 755	5 724	6 349	8 165
%	2.5	22.2	6.7	6.2	5.6	8.0
Nigeria	11 065	8 083	3 111	4 210	4 491	5 586
%	10.1	12.1	4.5	5.8	6.3	7.4

Source: IEA, *Annual Oil and Gas Statistics* and IEA, *Oil and Gas Information*.
Calculated percentages.

As regards Algeria, a ceasing in its crude oil exports to France may not have dramatic consequences on its foreign exchange receipts considering the small volume involved. Algeria could easily find alternative clients on the now generalised spot market. Yet, inasmuch as an end to exports to France would not provoke problems for the French economy, one does not see why an Algerian government would take the trouble of shifting its crude oil exports away from France.

Refined petroleum products

Just as for oil, France is not dependent on its Algerian supplies of refined petroleum products. In the 1970s, French imports of Algerian refined products were low both because of Algeria's low offer and because France had its own refining industry. The late 1970s deregulation, and notably the waiving of the obligation for French oil companies to refine oil in a proportion of 50% in France, led to increased imports throughout the world. In 1980 French world imports of refined products were twice as high as in 1970¹¹⁷. In 1993 they were about double their 1980 level, covering a quarter of French consumption (see tables 7 and 8).

Algeria has not wholly benefited from this growth. After significantly increasing in the early 1980s, French imports of Algerian refined products stabilised thereafter, varying between 1.2 millions of metric tons (Mmt) and 2.4 Mmt. As France's world imports have grown faster than Algerian supplies, Algeria has lost its rank of second supplier since 1983 (with the exception of 1992), and has been relegated to the fourth, fifth or sixth place. Since 1986 (except 1992), France's imports from Algeria have accounted for less than 7% of its world refined products imports. Ever since 1980, they have never covered more than 3% of France's consumption of refined products.

¹¹⁷ IEA (1987), volume I, p. 397.

Table 7 : French imports of petroleum refined products by selected countries of origin, 1980-93
in 1000 metric tons

	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993
World	12 678	16 703	24 466	26 826	24 865	21 888
of which						
Algeria	382	1 391	1 206	1 654	2 320	1 415
in % of World	3.0	8.3	4.9	6.2	9.3	6.5
Rank		4	9	6	2	5
UK		1 917	2 797	4 919	4 356	4 444
%		11.5	11.4	18.3	17.5	20.3
Germany		884	1 224	1 076	1 523	2 646
%		5.3	5	4	7	12.1
Belgium		872	1 626	2 087	2 138	2 467
%		5.2	6.7	7.8	8.6	11.3
Netherlands		1 910	2 365	2 688	1 887	1 466
%		11.4	9.7	10	7.6	6.7

Source: IEA, *Annual Oil and Gas Statistics* and IEA, *Oil and Gas Information*.
Calculated percentages.

Table 8 : France's dependence on world and Algerian supplies of refined products, 1980-93
in 1000 metric tons

Refined products	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993
Consumption	106 268	81 360	83 356	88 578	88 405	87 269
Dependence on world imports (%)	11.9	20.5	29.3	30.3	28.1	25.1
Dependence on imports from Algeria (%)	0.4	1.7	1.4	1.9	2.6	1.6

Source: IEA, *Oil and Gas Information* and my calculations from table 9.

With imports accounting for 15.3% of Algeria's exports of refined products in 1993, France was Algeria's fourth client after the USA (25.8%), the Netherlands (18.2%) and Italy (15.7%)¹¹⁸. By ceasing its exports to France, Algeria would thus hurt itself more than it would hurt France.

Natural gas

France has been importing natural gas (only in a liquefied form) from Algeria since the 1960s. Algeria was its first foreign supplier. As other providers, it has benefited from the growth in French demand which has resulted from a rising consumption and a dismal domestic output¹¹⁹. Today, France's imports of Algerian liquefied natural gas (LNG) are regulated by four contracts (table 9) which provide for imports amounting to 10.15 billions of cubic meters (Bcm) per year at least until 2002.

Table 9 : Gaz de France's LNG contracts with Sonatrach

Contracts	Yearly volume Bcm	Validity period	Renewal	Ending date	Total yearly volume Bcm
1	0.50	1962-1987	December 1991	2002	0.50
2	3.50	1971-1987	December 1991	2013	4.00
3	5.15	1982-2002	December 1991	2013	9.15
4	1.00	1991-2002	-	2002	10.15

Source : GDF (1990) and *Le Monde*, 27 décembre 1991.

Although French LNG imports from Algeria have, in effect, been lower than the contracted volumes (table 10), they have been significant in relation to both France's world imports and its consumption of natural gas. Since 1982, imports of Algerian gas have accounted for about 30% of France's total imports, placing Algeria

¹¹⁸ My calculations from OPEC (1994), p. 88.

¹¹⁹ France's natural gas consumption tripled between the early 1970s and the early 1990s (IEA (1994b), p. 91). France's domestic output accounts for only 10% of its total natural gas supplies (GDF (1994a) p. 14) and the biggest gas field is expected to run dry in the first decade of the next century.

as prime or second furnisher after the Netherlands or Russia. Since then, they have also covered between a quarter and a third of French consumption (table 11). This high rate suggests a certain dependence on Algeria's supplies because of the rigidities inherent in natural gas trade.

Despite an emerging spot market, natural gas trade is mostly regulated by long-term bilateral contracts (10 to 25 years) which allow both parties to plan the particularly heavy investments required to explore, produce, process, transport and store natural gas and to wait until they are paid off. If suppliers can always be switched, this is an experience that any purchaser would like to avoid. New supplies, indeed, cannot be obtained at short notice. Because of the difficulties in storing gas and because of the long-term contracts tying suppliers to their clients, producers do not hold huge reserves of gas immediately available for sale. In addition, diverting import flows may involve new investments in infrastructures. While incurring a loss over former investments, this implies new costs and a time-lag. For the gas producer, diverting its export flows may also prove difficult : new clients must be found and supplying them may require new investments.

Since the early 1990s, the French gas utility's concerns over the security of foreign natural gas supplies have been growing because 60% of its imports come from two specific countries -- Russia and Algeria -- which both represent a risk, although of a different nature. Since the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1991, the issue of the security of Russian supplies is no longer related to the context of the Cold War, but linked to the fact that gas pipelines cross several states before reaching Western Europe. The risk is that gas supplies to Western Europe may be disturbed by, or used as a pressure tool in, a quarrel between two or more neighbouring states. In so far as Algeria is concerned, the issue of the security of supplies is of a wholly different nature since imported LNG arrives by tankers directly to the French gas terminals.

Table 10.: French natural gas imports by selected countries of origin, 1980-93

in million cubic meters

	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993
World	20 700	25 700	28 197	30 038	31 640	29 500
of which						
Algeria.	2 159	8 070	8 712	8 620	8 796	8 400
in % of World	16.9	26.6	30.9	28.7	27.8	28.5
Rank	4	2	2	2	2	2
(Former) USSR	3 492	6 830	9 891	10 639	11 268	10 757
%	16.9	26.6	35.1	35.4	35.6	36.5
Netherlands	11 686	8 250	4 111	5 003	5 506	4 520
%	56.6	32.1	14.6	16.7	17.4	15.3
Norway	2 306	2 510	5 483	5 776	6 070	5 823
%	11.1	9.8	19.4	19.2	19.2	19.7

Source : IEA, *Annual Oil and Gas Statistics* and IEA, *Oil and Gas Information*.
Calculated percentages.

Table 11 : France's dependence on world and Algerian natural gas supplies, 1980-93

in terajoules

Natural gas	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993
Consumption	971 505	1 132 529	1 177 018	1 313 290	1 305 620	3 317 674
World imports	758 456	963 215	1 174 554	1 217 725	1 281 068	1 200 654
Imports from Algeria	85 436	317 611	375 836	371 779	379 361	364 957
Dependence on world imports	78.1	85	97.5	92.7	98.1	89.1
Dependence on imports from Algeria	8.8	28	31.9	28.3	29.1	27.1

Source: IEA, *Annual Oil and Gas Information*. When necessary, teracalories were converted in terajoules according to the following rate: 1 Tcal = 4.1868 Tj. Calculated percentages.

Actually, the late 1950s decision to import gas in a liquefied, rather than in a gasified, form was taken both for technical and security reasons¹²⁰. The option of a submarine pipeline linking France to Algeria was excluded because of the distance and depth of the Mediterranean sea. Two other possible routes had, however, been identified : either a pipeline crossing Tunisia, landing on Sicily *via* the Tunis Canal, and then crossing Italy, or a pipeline crossing Morocco and linked to Spain *via* the Straits of Gibraltar. Both these options were waived not only because of the difficulties in crossing the Alps or the Pyrenees, but also because, at the time, Morocco and Tunisia supported Algeria in its War of Liberation¹²¹.

Today, the potential risks concerning the security of Algerian supplies derive primarily from the uncertainties as to the future political evolution of the country. The context of guerrilla warfare has, apparently, not affected the regularity of LNG supplies. France's imports of Algerian natural gas decreased by 10% in 1994, but this was an expected development resulting from the revamping of the Skikda liquefaction facility¹²² -- a modernising operation to be completed in 1996 and in which GDF is actually taking part¹²³. The major factors linked to the security situation that could have led to irregular supplies did not occur. When the armed rebellion started more than three years ago, it was thought that Islamist armed groups may resort to sabotage operations against hydrocarbon infrastructures in order to strike at the regime's export earnings. There have been reports in the Algerian press of a frustrated venture of this type against the iron and steel complex of Annaba¹²⁴. The GIA also claimed responsibility for the destruction by fire of some equipment of an oil drilling base¹²⁵. Up to the time of writing, however, no sabotage operations against gas infrastructures

¹²⁰ Interview with Sadek Boussena, July 26, 1993.

¹²¹ These two projects have, nevertheless, materialised. The TransMediterranean pipeline, mainly supplying Italy, has been in operation since 1981. By 1996, this revamped pipeline should have a capacity of 24 Bcm and supply Eastern Europe (*Le Monde*, 16 mai 1995). The Euro-Maghreb pipeline is now under construction and should be operative in 1996. For the time being, the Euro-Maghreb pipeline is meant only for Spain (6 Bcm) and Portugal (2.5 Bcm), with Morocco taking 1 Bcm and Algeria 0.6 Bcm. But, in a later stage, the capacity of the pipeline is to be doubled in order to supply other European countries (*Le Monde*, 4 mai 1991).

¹²² *Le Monde*, 9 février 1995.

¹²³ GDF (1994a), p. 14.

¹²⁴ *Liberté*, 14 avril 1994.

¹²⁵ *Le Monde*, 25 octobre 1994.

have taken place. This means either that these infrastructures are so protected that they are beyond reach or that their sabotage is not an essential vector of the Islamist armed groups' strategy. The regularity of LNG supplies could also have been affected by strikes. Algerian oil and gas workers went on strike several times, but not long enough to unsettle export flows¹²⁶. Whereas Algerian workers protested against their government's domestic economic policy, their French counterparts, when striking, did so in relation to the lack of security in Algeria. Thus, after the Airbus hijack in December 1994, the crew of one of GDF's gas tankers refused to take the gas supply in Skikda, arguing that the French government ought to increase protection in Algerian waters and harbours¹²⁷. The strike in itself was not long enough to disturb trade. It was also the only one that occurred.

From the angle of political changes in Algeria, the hypothesis of a complete cut of Algerian LNG supplies to France, in the case of a FIS takeover, is quite improbable. France imports 24.2% of Algeria's natural gas exports and is this country's second client after Italy (37.2%)¹²⁸. Whether or not the Islamists would hold the reins of power on their own or with others, they would neither sacrifice important export revenues, nor take the risk of having to switch clients, just to annoy the French. They could, on the other hand, irregularly deliver the supplies as a means to retaliate against France's specific acts showing hostility to the new regime. If this were to happen, consequences on France would be less important than could be thought at first sight because of the existence of security stocks. According to GDF's official data, storing capacities amount to 9.6 Bcm¹²⁹ and, thus, wholly cover France's annual imports from Algeria. In the event of frequent and significant disturbances or even in the unlikely hypothesis of a complete cut in deliveries, GDF would have at least a year to find another supplier. Despite difficult relations with

¹²⁶ See *The Financial Times*, November 29, 1994.

¹²⁷ *Le Monde*, 31 décembre 1994. After the hijack, the French-managed air and maritime passengers services to Algeria were cut. This did not include commercial transport (*Le Monde*, 28 décembre 1994).

¹²⁸ My calculations from S. Cornot-Gandolphe & M.F. Chabrelle (1995), table 35.

¹²⁹ GDF (1994a), p. 15. In reality, France's security stocks are said to be equivalent to a year's supply of its two major suppliers.

Libya, the Quai d'Orsay considers it as a potential alternative supplier¹³⁰. This is probably best explained by the fact that Libya exports LNG. Consequently, imports from Libya would neither cause a waste of invested capital nor would it require new investments in infrastructures.

The analysis of trade flows between France and Algeria shows that, in the main, Algeria is more dependent on its exports to France than France is on its exports to Algeria. It also shows that, as regards its consumption, France is not dependent on Algerian supplies. As a consequence, the Algerian economy would stand to suffer most from a deterioration of trade. The same conclusion would be reached if one were to think of bandwagoning in Morocco and Tunisia. For the same asymmetrical pattern characterises their trade relationships with France¹³¹. In addition, compared to Algeria, they have the disadvantage of exporting products like clothing, vegetables and manufactured goods (notably electric appliances) which are easily found on the world market¹³².

4.2. French direct investment

Just as for trade, the Maghreb is a marginal partner in France's direct investment activities. In 1992, France's direct investment stock in the Maghreb merely amounted to FF 3.1 billion (about \$ 585 million). This accounted for 0.4% of France's world stock. Unlike trade, however, French direct investments in the developing world are not mostly channelled to the Maghreb. Indeed, France's direct investment stock in the Maghreb accounted for just 5% of its stock in the non-OECD countries in 1992. Within the Maghreb, France's foreign direct investments are mainly located in Morocco (stock of FF 2.3 billion in 1992) and only marginally in

¹³⁰ Interview with Christophe Bigot, April 21, 1994.

¹³¹ In 1993 France accounted respectively for 23% and 33.2% of Morocco's imports and exports (UN (1994), volume 1, p. 632). For its part, Morocco accounted for 1% of both France's world imports and exports (calculated from table 5). As for Tunisia, France represented 26.9% and 30% of its imports and exports (UN (1994), volume 1, p. 970). Tunisia accounted for 0.6% and 0.8% of France's imports and exports (calculated from table 5).

¹³² See DREE (1995), p. 190 and 209.

Tunisia (FF 648 million) and Algeria (FF 196 million)¹³³. In terms of flows, France's direct investments to the Maghreb were multiplied by four between 1990 and 1993, mostly as a result of greater investments to Morocco. Yet, totalling FF 791 million (\$ 139 million) in 1993, they accounted for just 1% of France's world outflows¹³⁴.

From the Maghrebi countries' viewpoint, foreign direct investment (FDI) is being actively sought as a means to save foreign exchange and create employment. Encouragement to FDI is also required by the IBRD's restructuring programmes in force in each of the Maghrebi states. Despite the adoption of flexible investment codes, FDI, which is the most dynamic in Morocco and Tunisia, has not been as high as expected. In these two countries, advantageous legislation did not produce its effects before the early 1990s¹³⁵. Two main factors have played against Morocco and Tunisia. First, cheap labour, which is their main comparative advantage, has been in cut-throat competition on the world labour market. This has made it harder for them to attract production delocalisation. Second, financially solvent demand has been low as a result of the austerity economic policies carried out under the guidance of the Bretton Woods institutions. As a consequence, import substitution FDI has also been constrained¹³⁶. In Morocco, France's contribution as a foreign investor has been growing throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In 1993, French direct investment (\$ 114.7 million) accounted for 22% of world FDI to Morocco. By contrast, French investors did not contribute to the growth of FDI in Tunisia. In 1993, with \$ 14.4 million of investment, they accounted for a mere 6% of Tunisia's total inflows¹³⁷.

Algeria is quite a special case since it was closed to FDI throughout the 1970s as a result of extensive state monopolies and unfavourable legislation. Algeria

¹³³ For all these figures see BDF (1994c), p. 75 and 87.

¹³⁴ My calculation from BDF (1994a), p. 219 and annex, p. 35.

¹³⁵ See IMF (1994), p. 458 and 716.

¹³⁶ L. Tahla (1993), pp. 927 and 932-4 and B. Khader (1992), pp. 99-107.

¹³⁷ My calculations from : IMF (1994), p. 458 and 716 regarding world FDI in Morocco and Tunisia ; bilateral balance of payments between France and these two countries (document obtained from BDF). IMF's exchange rates.

progressively opened its economy to FDI throughout the 1980s (the August 1982 and August 1986 laws). However, the majority shareholding principle was not abrogated before April 1990, and was maintained in the hydrocarbon field. The November 1991 hydrocarbon law, nevertheless, allowed foreign oil companies to participate in oil and gas prospection and exploitation, whereas the August 1986 law had forbidden them to exploit existing oil fields and to engage in the gas sector. In October 1993, an advantageous new investment code was adopted. In accordance with the 1994 structural adjustment programme, privatisation will be opened to foreign investors¹³⁸. Algeria's efforts at attracting FDI have not been crowned with much success. Since 1992-93, this has essentially resulted from the dangerous security context. Guerrilla warfare and the killing of foreigners have made operating in Algeria a difficult task, indeed. Besides this unfavourable security context, FDI has been constrained by three other factors : governmental instability, lack of guarantees for investment protection and vested interests. Since the April 1990 money and credit law which definitively opened Algeria to FDI, governmental turn-over has been high : five governments were appointed. Foreign investors adopt a wait-and-see attitude in front of governmental instability because changes in fiscal, pricing or foreign exchange regulations may significantly alter the profitability of their investment projects. The abrogation of some provisions of the money and credit law under Abdesselam's premiership is a case in point. FDI has also been hampered by the fact that Algeria did not move to reassure investors : it signed the New York Convention on international arbitration only in April 1993 and has not yet ratified international conventions on the protection of foreign investments¹³⁹. As previously mentioned, it was not until 1993 that a bilateral accord for the protection of investments was signed with France. Last but not least, opening the economy to FDI questioned domestic vested interests in production and distribution as well as commissions pocketed on import contracts. FDI projects (concerning tyres, pharmaceuticals or vehicles, for instance, in the case of

¹³⁸ On the 1982 and 1986 laws, see R. Abdoun (1989). On the 1990 money and credit law, see R. Zouaimia (1991). On the 1991 hydrocarbon law, see *Petroleum Economist* (58), December 1991. The October 1993 investment code is reproduced in *Algérie Actualité* (1481), 4-10 mars 1994.

¹³⁹ *Algérie Actualité* (1469), 7-13 décembre 1993.

France) were never carried through because of these problems¹⁴⁰. French direct investment to Algeria concern very low amounts but have been growing since 1991. They amounted to \$ 400 000 in 1990, \$ 4.8 million in 1991, \$ 9.4 million in 1992 and \$ 9.6 million in 1993¹⁴¹. In 1991, French direct investment to Algeria accounted for 40% of total FDI inflows in Algeria (\$ 12 million). The latest IMF data stop in 1991 and it is, thus, impossible to calculate France's share thereafter. Considering the growth of French outflows to Algeria, on the one hand, and Algeria's unattractive environment for FDI, on the other, France may well have remained an important contributor.

As a concluding note, it may be underlined that, in the hypothesis of inimical Islamist regimes taking power in the Central Maghreb, these regimes, like the current ones, could not spare foreign capital in the form of foreign direct investment. If they were to discriminate specifically against French enterprises, this would not generate a profound alteration of France's FDI strategy. In addition, if French subsidiaries operating in the Maghreb were forbidden to continue their activities there, this would not cause much damage to the French economy as a whole.

4.3. Financial relations

If Algeria is marginal in France's world trade and foreign direct investment activities, what about the financial links between the two countries ? As seen in chapters one and two, France's financial transfers to Algeria (together with its drumming up support from the Bretton Woods institutions and the EU) have been a central vector of its political backing to the Algerian regime. Through the financial protocol established in 1989, the French state has also become an active agent in the financial relationship with Algeria. Algeria's official debt is known to be owed in great part to the French state and there may have been concerns in French policy-making circles that a revolutionary FIS regime would decide not to pay back. Before

¹⁴⁰ See Audibert's interview with *Jeune Afrique* (1742), 26 mai - 1 juin 1994.

¹⁴¹ Bilateral balance of payment France-Algeria, obtained from BDF. IMF's exchange rates.

addressing this issue, it must be underlined that it is virtually impossible to know exactly what amounts are due to France and for how much Algeria's debt to France accounts in Algeria's total debt. Is it because the bilateral financial dossier is primarily a political one ? Despite the irksome aspect of getting into financial details, I think it is worth mentioning the main problems encountered, for they suggest that data accessible to the public are, to some extent, unreliable.

4.3.1. No personal audit possible

From published data it is impossible to exactly know how much has been transferred annually to Algeria. It also impossible to make out the precise amount and structure of Algeria's debt due to France.

Regarding yearly financial transfers to Algeria, a follow-up of the contents of the financial packages shows that some credit lines were never consumed by Algeria. As a consequence, the announced, say, FF 5 billion commercial and governmental credits were not effectively transferred to Algeria in a particular year. To establish actual financial transfers, one must refer to the France-Algeria balance of payments. This balance (not published but accessible to the public) does not show short-term capital transfers (one-year loans) of the banking and official sectors. This is a general rule applied by the French Central Bank to all countries. The problem is that many buyer-credits¹⁴² are short-term. So that the sums given in the Central Bank's document (see table 12) do not reflect effective transferred amounts.

Two other puzzling facts in this document are worth mentioning. Firstly, we are being told that gross long-term buyer-credits from France to Algeria -- for which, surprisingly, no sum appears in 1992 -- amounted to a mere FF 21 million in 1993. This appears to be underestimated. The Coface certainly reduced its buyer-credits guarantees since 1992 but to an amount that still reaches about FF 2.5 billion per year. Would all this imply that gross short-term buyer-credits amounted to more than

¹⁴² Buyer-credits are granted by French banks to foreign enterprises which use these credits to pay their French supplier for imports operations. In most cases, buyer-credits are guaranteed by the Coface so that the French banks are insured against non-reimbursement risks.

FF 2.4 billion in 1993 ? Secondly, in 1989 and 1990, the state would have disbursed only FF 916 million, whereas the financial protocol provided for FF 4 billion. Even when considering possible frozen credits, this seems too low an amount.

Trying to evaluate Algeria's debt due to France and, in particular its structure by types of credits, is also difficult. The Quai d'Orsay states that Algeria's total short to long-term debt due to France amounts to FF 35 billion¹⁴³ (about \$ 7 billion), which implies that France holds about a quarter of Algeria's total debt. The debt due to France is made up of the official and private debts. The official debt comprises debts due to the French state and debts due to the Coface. According to the Quai d'Orsay, the official debt amounts to FF 31 billion (i.e. about 46% of Algeria's total official debt¹⁴⁴). The private debt comprises non-guaranteed debts to the French banking and non-banking sectors. It would amount to FF 4 billion (i.e. about 11% of Algeria's private debt).

Using data published by the French Central bank, one cannot dig much further. There is, indeed, a major problem with the stated amount of outstanding Coface guaranteed credits to Algeria. According to the Central Bank, they amounted to FF 14.6 billion in December 1993¹⁴⁵. From the structure of the Bank's table, this appears to be including the short-term. This sum has two implications. It would mean, on the one hand, that the debt due to the French state would amount to FF 16.4 billion. This is a surprising amount because, prior to 1989, there were no direct governmental credits to Algeria apart from official development aid which was low. The second implication of such low guaranteed credits is that Algeria's non-guaranteed debt to France would be higher than that quoted by the Quai d'Orsay. Indeed, according to the Central Bank, the French banking sector's total outstanding credits to Algeria come to FF 21.5 - 23.9 billion¹⁴⁶. By deducting the amount of guaranteed commercial credits, the banking sector's outstanding (non-guaranteed)

¹⁴³ Interview with Christophe Bigot, April 21, 1994.

¹⁴⁴ Calculated on the basis of table 13. IMF's exchange rate.

¹⁴⁵ BDF (1994b), p. 188.

¹⁴⁶ FF 21.5 billion in the case of the debt due by Algeria to the resident banking sector and FF 23.9 billion in the case of the debt due to the resident banking sector and to the French banks' subsidiaries abroad. *Ibid.*, p. 185 and 188.

Table 12 : Extracts of the France-Algeria Balance of Payments. 1985-93

in millions of FF

	1985	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
CREDIT (-)							
Current transfers							
Official sector	2	10	7	8	2	2	31
Long-term capital							
Commercial credits	2 870	1 776	2 070		802	4 397	451
Loans							
PNBS *		1	1		7	13	9
Banking sector	70	41	490	593	1 679	283	1 579
Official sector	74	158	134	83	68	529	40
Short-term capital							
Loans and assets							
PNBS *	9		111			44	
Total inflows (Algeria -> France)	3 025	1 986	2 813	684	2 558	5 268	2 110
DEBIT (-)							
Current transfers							
Official sector	68	254	282	259	436	264	250
Long-term capital							
Commercial credits	7 873	273	837	2 039	1 156		21
Loans							
PNBS *	4			1	1	154	929
Banking sector	1 024	568	528			729	
Official sector	31	6	42	333	443	686	544
Short-term capital							
Loans and assets							
PNBS *		102		9	43		185
Total outflows (France -> Algeria)	9 000	1 203	1 689	2 641	2 079	1 833	1 929
BALANCE							
Current transfers							
Official sector	- 66	- 244	- 275	- 251	- 434	- 262	- 219
Long-term capital							
Commercial credits	- 5 003	1 503	1 233	- 2 039	- 354	4 397	430
Loans							
PNBS *	- 4	1	1	- 1	6	- 141	- 920
Banking sector	- 954	- 527	- 38	593	1 679	- 446	1 579
Official sector	43	152	92	- 250	- 375	- 157	- 504
Short-term capital							
Loans and assets							
PNBS *	9	- 102	111	- 9	- 43	44	- 185
Total	- 5 975	783	1 124	- 1 957	479	3 435	181

* : Private non-banking sector

Source : Banque de France. document obtained on request.

Table 13 : Structure by type of credits of Algeria's medium and long-term debt, 1987-92

millions of US \$

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Multilateral credits in % of total debt	921 3.8	1 169 4.8	2 064 8.3	2 233 8.4	3 187 12.1	3 124 12.4
Bond issues in % of total debt	995 4.0	1 293 5.3	1 435 5.7	1 465 5.6	1 454 5.6	1 281 5.1
Bilateral credits in % of total debt	12 271	12 033	12 283	14 743	14 776	13 543
<i>Direct government credits</i> in % of total debt	50.0	49.7	49.2	56.0	56.3	53.7
<i>Guaranteed buyer credits</i> in % of total debt	4 900	5 214	5 076	4 656	4 981	5 205
in % of total debt	20.0	21.5	20.3	17.7	19.0	20.6
Financial credits in % of total debt	7 371	6 819	7 207	10 087	9 795	8 338
<i>Syndicated credits and leases</i> <i>Downpayments financings</i> <i>Bank reprofiling operations</i>	30.0	28.2	28.9	38.3	37.3	33.1
in % of total debt	6 670	6 409	5 649	5 265	4 866	5 026
in % of total debt	27.2	26.5	22.6	20.0	18.5	19.9
in % of total debt	6 613	6 304	5 494	5 024	4 680	3 575
in % of total debt	27.5	26.5	22.6	20.0	18.5	19.9
Commercial credits non-guaranteed in % of total debt	3 668	3 309	3 541	2 640	1 975	2 242
in % of total debt	15.0	13.7	14.2	10.0	7.5	8.9
in % of total debt	2 568	1 924	1 915	1 502	1 340	1 768
in % of total debt	10.0	7.5	7.5	6.0	5.1	6.8
in % of total debt	1 100	1 385	1 626	1 138	635	474
in % of total debt	4.5	5.5	6.5	4.5	2.5	1.8
Total medium and long-term debt	24 525	24 213	24 972	26 346	26 258	25 216

Source : Maison Lazard et Compagnie et al. (1993), pp. 70-1 and Addendum pp. 7-8.

credits to Algeria would amount to FF 6.9 - 9.3 billion. To this must be added the French non-banking sector's non-guaranteed credits to Algeria. They amounted to FF 186 million in December 1992¹⁴⁷. Algeria's private debt due to France would, hence, be FF 7.1 - 9.5 billion, as opposed to FF 4 billion.

It may well be that, despite appearances, the sum of FF 14.6 billion in Coface guaranteed credits does not include the short-term. This would be in keeping with the Central Banks's practice of retaining information on short-term capital transfers. The problem generated by this practice is that it makes it impossible for the public to know exactly how much is lent by France to foreign governments each year and how much is exactly owed by these foreign governments. One is, therefore, forced to rely on what the French government is willing to say.

4.3.2. *No paying back ?*

Relying on the French government's data, it appears that the debt due to France is significant : it is, for instance, more than twice as high the 1995 budget of the French Foreign Affairs Ministry. The agent which is the most involved in the financial relationship is the French state, although this situation arises only indirectly *via* its engagement to finance the deficit of the Coface if guaranteed credits are not returned. It is possible that in opposing a FIS takeover, the French government was motivated by a fear that a revolutionary FIS government might not recognise the previous regime's debt and thus might decide not to pay back. Nevertheless, it could not be disregarded in Paris that, by adopting such a course of action, a FIS regime would put itself in a very difficult situation as its access to international finance would most probably be seriously constrained. Again, in face of the unlikelihood of the hypothesis, one is tempted to say that if concerns about the debt played at all a role in the French government's opposition to the FIS this would have had to result from a preference for minimising risks and not from an objective threat. In addition, as of the moment it was realised that a FIS in government would necessarily be a FIS in a

¹⁴⁷ BDF (1993), p. 148. The data for 1993 no longer show the figures for Algeria.

coalition government, there were no grounds to believe that, specifically for political reasons, Algeria's debt to France might not be honoured.

On the whole it, thus, seems that economic issues were not at the heart of the French government's opposition to a FIS takeover or to its integration in the political process in Algeria. Indeed, it was thought that even if the FIS took power violently it would not fundamentally question its economic relationship with France for the simple reason that Algeria is structurally more dependent on French goods, services and capital than *vice-versa*. Of course, if taken in a revolutionary whirl, a FIS regime did review economic links with France, this would have a cost and this cost would be even greater if the Moroccan and Tunisian dominoes fell. In this sense, up to the point when it was no longer feared that the FIS might overthrow the Algerian regime, economic concerns may have played the role of a contributing factor to the French opposition to the FIS merely because the French government wished to avoid risks. But after Summer 1993, when it was assumed that the FIS could come into office only *via* a compromise, there were no reasons to believe that the economic relationship would come under review (although there may today be concerns that Algeria will not be able to pay back its debt because of economic problems, not political ones). Thus, the Balladur government's opposition to conciliation until September 1994 cannot be explained by worries over economic issues.

In justifying its opposition to conciliation with the FIS, the French government not only put forward immigration concerns and fears about the domino effect, but also ideological motives. Particularly under the Right, the religio-political ideology conveyed by the FIS was described as an ideological ill that needed to be combated. The socialists did not insist on ideological views in their public statements and this must be understood in terms of the policy they sought to promote in Algeria until January 1993. In the main, however, the socialists also saw the FIS's political project as regressive although some recognised that secular authoritarianism was not a panacea. The coming section examines this dimension of French hostility to the FIS.

5. The ideological and psychological dimensions

Much has already been written about the ways in which Westerners' images of a threatening, militant and fanatical Islam were formed and reproduced from the time of the Crusades up to today's threats against Taslima Nasreen and terrorist attacks against foreigners in Algeria or elsewhere. I shall therefore not deal with this subject¹⁴⁸.

The point I wish to make here is that the French government's opposition to the FIS, while certainly nourished by pre-determined presumptions against Islamism as a necessarily intolerant force, partly derived from its feeling of repulsion towards a political force that asserts itself against France. The anti-French outlook of the FIS or, for that matter, of all the Islamist movements in Algeria, is not understood in this paper in terms of their (violent or not) protests against the fact that "France made itself a party to the conflict in Algeria by standing by the exclusivist forces [the eradicators]"¹⁴⁹. Rather, it is understood in terms of the challenge that the FIS and, more generally, Islamism represent for the hegemony of Western thought to which the French Revolution brought its contribution -- a challenge which is perceived as anti-Western and anti-French because its potential legitimacy is denied from the start. The French government and, in particular, Juppé's did not hide that, in addition to its concrete worries about immigration, terrorism, economic relations and falling dominoes which led it to oppose the FIS, it also did so on ideological grounds. To a certain extent, the "ideological confrontation logic", into which the French government allowed itself to get in, is representative of the West's general hostility towards political Islam. At the same time, however, it seems to me that such confrontation would not have occurred if the FIS was not an *Algerian* party. In this sense, the ideological element in the French opposition to the FIS would not have taken root if the "psychological" dimension of the Franco-Algerian relationship was

¹⁴⁸ See e.g. E. Said (1991) ; M. Rodinson (1988) ; H. Jaït (1985).

¹⁴⁹ Sheik Abdullah Djaballah (leader of the MNI), comment made during the conference on "The Future of Maghrib" organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre, 6-7 October 1994, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London.

not so peculiar in itself. For, at bottom, if the FIS's religio-political ideology has been felt as an attack against one of France's most cherished values -- secularism --, what was the most badly lived was the FIS vote, that is the fact that part of the Algerian people does not recognise itself in France and in what the French think France represents.

In proceeding in my arguments about the French political establishment's perceptions of Algerian society which have largely been shaped by the Algerian gallicised political and intellectual elite, I shall necessarily make some generalisations which may not apply to every single French politician or high civil servant. The argument runs a bit the risk of being oversimplified but it is not inaccurate and fairly accounts for the general trend. Since I have the privilege of holding the agenda of this paper, I shall start by relativising another simplification : the view according to which the French political establishment completely failed to understand the underlying dynamics of Islamism in Algeria. This is done less in defence of the French political establishment than to give us a chance to briefly review what has been written on the rise of Islamism in Algeria.

5.1. An economicist view ?

The French political establishment has been criticised by a few in France for holding an economicist view of the Algerian crisis and more specifically of the rise of Islamism. It was argued that the French government failed to see the Islamic resurgence otherwise than as a response to economic hardship and that this failure could be inferred from French policy which consisted in believing that, by pouring money into Algeria, the force of political Islam would be held in check¹⁵⁰. It is true that the French political establishment as a whole attached great significance to the socioeconomic determinant in the rise of Islamism. Although the Left also viewed the lack of socioeconomic development in Algeria as a major contributing factor to

¹⁵⁰ F. Burgat (1995), pp. 39-40 who generalises the argument to most "international observers" and J. Cesari (1994/95), pp. 177-9.

political instability and to the rise of Islamism, this was particularly obvious in Juppé's speeches. They, indeed, often emphasised that "underdevelopment [was] a fertile ground where bad ideologies proliferate"¹⁵¹ and that, therefore, Algeria needed foreign help while proceeding with its transition to market economy :

"It is evident that Algeria's political stabilisation will depend on its success in its economic recovery programme, notably in improving the people's plight. (...) When people are housed, when they can decently get supplies and when they have jobs, they do not have the same inclination for political agitation as when misery and underdevelopment are acute."¹⁵²

Despite the centrality of socioeconomic thinking in the French political establishment's view of the success of Islamism in Algeria, it is a simplification to argue that, to its eyes, political Islam came down to a question of bread and butter. The analysis of Islamism put forward by the French political establishment was, indeed, more comprehensive in scope and, in fact, very close to the content of the academic production on that subject. Nevertheless, despite its "theoretical tools", the French political elite was unable to appreciate the extent of the success of the Islamist discourse in Algeria because its contacts with Algerian society were (and remain) restricted to the secular Western-oriented elite. As a result, French perceptions of Algerian society have been truncated : the Algerian society at large has, in some way, been seen as a mirror image of France.

5.1.1. Islamism in Algeria : explanations

The political establishment's view

As indicated above, for all its underlining the socioeconomic dimension of the FIS's success in Algeria, the French political establishment did not hold a completely reductionist/economicist view of political Islam. Juppé, for instance, always argued that Algeria's socioeconomic crisis was an important, but not an exclusive,

¹⁵¹ Speech to parliament, October 11, 1994 in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 204.

¹⁵² Press conference on June 23, 1994 in MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 317.

explanatory factor of the FIS's success. In his October 11, 1994 speech to parliament, he also pointed out "political" and "moral" factors¹⁵³. The administration of the Quai d'Orsay also had a non-reductionist analysis of Algeria's crisis and of Islamic revivalism. Bigot argued that Islamism was not a new phenomenon in Algeria : it had its roots in the anti-colonial struggle against France and, if at Independence the secular nationalists got the upper hand, movements drawing upon the Islamic idiom emerged again particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. Bigot further argued that the FIS's success in the late 1980s was to be explained by the combination of economic, political and sociocultural factors. The socioeconomic crisis allowed the poor strata to jump on the Islamists' bandwagon and thus to swell the ranks of the FIS's sympathisers. Political factors also contributed to the FIS's success. First and foremost among them, was the legitimacy crisis of the Chadli regime which was associated with economic mismanagement and widespread corruption, thus generating a tremendous popular feeling of injustice. Other political factors were also identified by Bigot, notably, the lack of a structured secular opposition. Lastly, it was recognised that the attractiveness of the FIS's discourse resulted from the identity crisis of the Algerian nation¹⁵⁴.

The Quai d'Orsay's analysis of Islamism in Algeria basically incorporated all the ingredients that can be found in the academic literature dealing with this subject or with Islamism more generally.

The academic view

In the main, although academics may disagree about what they see as the overriding factors explaining the existence and success of Islamism in Algeria, there is a general consensus around the following issues. First, that the origin of the contemporary Islamist movement in Algeria must be traced back the *salafiyya* movement incarnated by Sheik Ben Badis's Association of the Reformist Ulema

¹⁵³ In MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 204. See also his press conference of April 14, 1994 in MAE (mars-avril 1994), p. 176.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with the author, April 21, 1994. Claude Cheysson insisted for his part on the lack of socioeconomic development (due, in part, to the legacy of French colonialism) and on the identity crisis of the Algerians (Interview with the author, April 22, 1994).

(1931)¹⁵⁵. Partly as a reaction to French colonialism, the Association of the Reformist Ulema called for an Islamic revival, a reinterpretation of the original text to find answers to the state of subjugation of Algeria. Islamic revivalism, through Arab and Islamic self-assertion, was seen as going hand in hand with liberation from colonial rule. Ben Badis, indeed, argued in 1936 that "(...) this Muslim Algerian nation is not France, (...) it is not possible for her to be France. (...) this is a nation totally removed from France, by her language, her customs, her ethnic origins, and her religion."¹⁵⁶ During the anti-colonial war (1954-62), the Association of the Reformist Ulema (as all the nationalist movements) joined the war-time FLN¹⁵⁷. When the latter transformed itself into a state machine at Independence, the *ulema* were co-opted through the establishment of official Islam and, at the same time, marginalised because their project for building an Islamic state was not part of the secular nationalist elite's agenda. However, this dual process of co-optation/marginalisation generated resentment among some *ulema* who, as early as 1964, founded an independent Islamic organisation : the Association *Al Qiyam* (The Values). *Al Qiyam* developed as a religious "soft-opposition", placing its own religious discourse between "fundamentalism" and "Islamism". It did not restrict its religious activism to the moral sphere of private life. Although careful not to directly challenge the authority of the Ben Bella and Boumediene regimes, it developed themes that contested both the social and political order of Algerian society : it advocated re-Islamisation and the implementation of the *shari'a* ; demanded official support for religious observance ;

¹⁵⁵ See e.g. C. Spencer (1994) ; M. Gilsnan (1992) ; A. Khelladi (1992) ; A. Lamchichi (1992) ; M. Al-Ahnaf *et. al.* (1991) ; L. Anderson (1991) ; F. Jeanson (1991) ; F. Burgat (1988a) ; H. Roberts (1988).

¹⁵⁶ Quoted in P. Djité (1992), pp. 17-8. It was actually on the basis of Ben Badis's trilogy "Arabic is my language, Algeria my country and Islam my religion" that the various pre-nationalist movements came to claim Independence from France.

¹⁵⁷ The FLN was created on November 1, 1954 with the launching of the insurrection against French rule. Its historical figures had all been members of the paramilitary branch of Messali Hadj's Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (MTLD), but had split from it in creating a Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action (CRUA) in March 1954. The CRUA was aimed at reviving the insurrectional activities of the Special Organisation (OS), dismantled by the French in 1950. The FLN then progressively rallied the various nationalist movements in its armed struggle. By 1956, the "centralists" of the MTLD, Ferhat Abbas's party, the Association of the Ulema, and the Communist Party had all been integrated within the FLN. Messali Hadj refused and created his own party, the Algerian National Movement (MNA), whose sympathisers were progressively eliminated by the FLN.

denounced the laxity of morals and reliance on non-Islamic cultural manifestations ; it also criticised imported foreign ideologies (secularism, socialism and communism) for being "un-Islamic". Among the members of *Al Qiyam* who had been befriended with Ben Badis's Association, there were such personalities as Ahmed Sahnoun (1908-) and Abdellatif Soltani (1902-84). Both played a significant role in organising the Islamist movement in Algeria. Abassi Madani (1931-) also joined *Al Qiyam*. Although *Al Qiyam* was banned in 1970, religious currents continued to operate more or less undercover outside the sphere of official Islam, notably through "free mosques" in the student and popular milieu. Throughout the 1970s, new figures emerged and were to re-appear in the 1980s : Abdullah Djaballah (MNI) created and animated the mosque of the University of Constantine and Mahfoud Nahnah (Hamas) protested against the 1976 National Charter's secular and socialist content.

The present day Algerian Islamist movement can thus be seen as the offshoot of the counter-society that grew out of the co-optation of the *ulema* and out of the original rift between the nationalist elites as to their political project for independent Algeria. As it developed, the Algerian Islamist movement became indebted to varied sources of inspiration and became itself more diversified in terms of its approach to politics (greater emphasis on predication or on political activism, greater emphasis on a legalist approach or a violent one to political power) and in terms of what "the Islamic solution" was meant to bring to Algeria (a fundamentalist or modernist Islamic state).

Second, there is a general consensus among academics as to the factors that contributed to the success of the FIS in the 1980s (even if there is sometimes a tendency to take these factors as an explanation of Islamism *per se* whereas they merely explain its success). Basically, there are three agreed hard-core elements of explanation for the success of Islamism in Algeria : socioeconomic marginalisation, political exclusion, and the "crisis of identity". Whether theorised in the concept of "the crisis of the authoritarian rentier state"¹⁵⁸ or not, there is a wide

¹⁵⁸ B. Dillman (1992) ; J. Entelis (1992).

acknowledgement that the faltering economy allied to corruption and nepotism favoured political protest on the part of all those -- that is the majority -- who were economically and politically marginalised, both often working in tandem. In this sense, socioeconomic and political exclusion prepared the ground for dissent¹⁵⁹. It is also recognised that if the FIS managed to capitalise on these "economic and political frustrations", it was not only because it addressed the people's grievances against a failed political establishment, but also because its discourse responded to a "quest for authenticity". The quest for authenticity is generally seen as being ultimately rooted in the "identity crisis" of the Algerian nation which has resulted from contradictory cultural and political dynamics. Whereas emphasis has been put on the Arab-Islamic character of the Algerian nation ever since the anti-colonial struggle, the post-independence state has relied on Western models of socioeconomic and political organisation : secular nationalism, French-designed state-capitalism through the "industrialising industries" model and then economic liberalism. The contradiction between the maintenance of a traditional value system through official Islam and the introduction of a radical modernisation policy involving rapid social change inevitably created tensions in national identification processes and, thus, fuelled a deep sense of bewilderment and alienation¹⁶⁰. The Islamist discourse, by tapping within the reservoir of the norms and categories of what appears to be a lost indigenous culture, resolves the contradiction and is thus appealing to those in search of an identity.

In addition to these hard-core explanatory factors (socioeconomic and political exclusion and crisis of identity/quest for authenticity), some have also argued that if Islamism had been better at mobilising the masses than other opposition forces it was because : 1) it had benefited from a "logistical advantage" over secular forces since "free mosques" and social activities provided an independent political space for opposition that

¹⁵⁹ C. Spencer (1994) ; E. Hermassi & D. Vandewalle (1993) ; J. Tzschaschel (1993) ; A. Lamchichi (1992) ; J. Ruedy (1992) ; R. Mortimer (1991) ; T. Fabre (1990).

¹⁶⁰ C. Spencer (1994) ; A. Lamchichi (1992) ; J. Ruedy (1992) ; T. Fabre (1990). For an account of the failed cultural synthesis in Algeria, see I. Zartman (1985). For an insight into the contradictory effects of Arabisation, see J. Entelis (1981). The themes of discredited regimes and of the crisis of identity are also found in the general literature on Islamism. See e.g. N. Ayubi (1991) ; J. Esposito (1988).

non-religious forces could not enjoy under authoritarian rule¹⁶¹ ; 2) Algeria's secular forces showed complete disorganisation¹⁶² and 3) to come full circle, the discourse of these opposition forces was not appealing because it relied on the same political paradigms as the FLN's¹⁶³.

This rapid literature review thus shows that the French political establishment had about the same analysis of Islamism in Algeria as academics did. In defence of a policy that sought to undermine the success of Islamism by financially backing the Algerian regime, the assistant-deputy to the Maghreb-Mashreq department argued that there was not much France could do otherwise : it could not help towards the lack of legitimacy of the Algerian regime and could not really intervene in matters of identity crisis¹⁶⁴. This reasoning was logical since the French government backed the Algerian regime and was disquieted about the potential coming into power of the FIS. Despite its comprehensive view of the rise of Islamism, the French political elite, nevertheless, failed to properly gauge the success of the FIS's discourse because it wore blinkers when looking at Algeria.

5.1.2. French truncated perceptions of Algerian society

The French political establishment failed to understand that the FIS phenomenon was not ephemeral and not just the result of a "sanction vote" against the FLN because it did not realise that in Algeria, as in many other parts of the Muslim world, Islam as an ideational system permeates popular culture as well as social and political life. Islamic categories, values and norms have remained central features of

¹⁶¹ J. Ruedy (1992) ; L. Addi (1990) ; H. Roberts (1988). The view that, in authoritarian regimes, the mosque becomes the privileged channel of political protest is also developed in the literature dealing with Islamism. See e.g. S. Zubaida (1993) or L. Hadar (1993). On the development of "free mosques" in Algeria, see A. Rouadjia (1990).

¹⁶² B. Dillman (1992) ; D. Brumberg (1991).

¹⁶³ B. Dillman (1992) ; F. Burgat also argued that the French media and the political class had contributed to undermine the credibility of the secular opposition forces by openly supporting them before the June 1990 elections (document given by the author, dated June 24, 1994). Because of the past relationship with Algeria, political credibility in Algeria derives from the capacity of a political party to dissociate itself from France (notably by anti-French rhetoric which the FLN also used).

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Christophe Bigot, April 21, 1994. See also Juppé's claim that "The only card we are left with today in order to avoid the destabilisation of that country [Algeria], with the domino effects that could follow from it, is the economic card." (in MAE (mai-juin 1994), p. 199).

culture in Algeria, not because they would derive from a trans-historical transposition of an unchanging Islamic tradition permeating the Muslim psyche¹⁶⁵, but because they were given particular salience historically. The anti-colonial struggle against the French occupier played a crucial role in this process because it was by reaction to colonialism that the definition of the Algerian national identity along an Arab-Islamic line emerged -- somewhat at the expense of history and diversity¹⁶⁶. The way in which the war-time FLN was formed (by co-optation or elimination of competing nationalist movements) and the way in which it survived in the post-Independence era also played a role in the reproduction of Islamic culture because the integration of part of the *salafiyya*-orientated nationalist movement within its fold implied that the *ulema*'s Islamic project had to be accommodated in some way. Since the FLN never split over ideological disagreements¹⁶⁷, it found an accommodating solution in a hybrid system of "Islamic secularism", as coined by Henri Sanson¹⁶⁸. The state has neither been Islamic nor secular : with the exception of personal status¹⁶⁹, state policies have not been governed by Islamic jurisprudence. Yet, Islam has been consecrated as the state religion in all the Constitutions promulgated since 1963, and the state has the duty to encourage religious practice. Islamic principles have, thus, inspired, in part, the organisation of public and private life : definition of the Algerian nationality by reference to religion (1963) ; compulsory religious education at school (1963) ; prohibition of gambling and of the sale of alcohol (1976) ; weekly holy day

¹⁶⁵ For a critique of essentialism, see S. Zubaida (1993).

¹⁶⁶ The European and/or Christian heritage bequeathed by the Carthaginians (1 100 - 147 BC), the Romans (146 BC - 432), the Vandals (432 - 533), the Byzantines (533 - 633), the short Spanish occupation in the late fifteenth century and French colonialism was wholly rejected. The Arab-Islamic dimension of Algeria's history, which began in the late seventh century with the ousting of the Byzantines by Muslim Arabs (755-1516) and which was reinforced in its Islamic aspect by the Ottoman Empire (1516-1830), was the sole to be retained. The berber heritage was also simply negated (the Berbers, who peopled the area before these invasions and who constitute some 20% of the Algerian population today, were Arabised and Islamised in the early eighth century. Nevertheless, they constitute an ethnic group with its own language and customs).

¹⁶⁷ H. Roberts (1993a), pp. 438-9 and 445.

¹⁶⁸ H. Sanson (1983).

¹⁶⁹ Until the promulgation of the 1984 Family Code, largely inspired by Islamic jurisprudence, several projects to regulate the personal status (family law, inheritance law and legal representation) had been proposed successively in 1966, 1973 and 1981. The polemic between the religious current and secular leftists around the issue of family and of women's rights did not allow the adoption of any of these projects. As a consequence, until 1984, this domain was regulated both by a colonial decree of 1959 and Islamic jurisprudence. In most cases, the *fiqh* and customary law were applied. See H. Dennouni (1986).

on Fridays (1976) ; forbidding of pig breeding (1979) and regulation of the personal status according to the *fiqh* (1984). In addition, while controlling the *ulema* by turning them into civil servants, all Algerian regimes have used the vocabulary of Islam to legitimise their polities -- the typical example being the justification of socialism on religious grounds : Algeria's socialism was deemed to be Islamic because it responded to the Islamic tradition of social justice¹⁷⁰. Official Islam, thus, reproduced the centrality of Islamic categories, values and norms and did not allow any effective secularisation of religion.

This was a process of which Westerners and, more particularly, the French were not markedly aware because the FLN regime presented a secular face when addressing the rest of the world. But Boumediene, for instance, could very well defend the Third World in terms of imperialist exploitation in international conferences and, at home, launch a "campaign against the relaxation of morals" (1970)¹⁷¹ or have officials to cultivate the themes of the need for authenticity and castigate the degradation of morals incited by the West in the ministry for religious affairs' *Al-Asâla* review (1971-81)¹⁷². This relative unawareness in France was reinforced by the contacts of the French political elite which, in most cases, were limited to the Algerian gallicised *intelligentsia*. The secular, Western-oriented elites (in power or in opposition) simply projected a replica image of France and, thus, promoted the creation of an incomplete vision of Algerian society in French perceptions of that country. Because of this partial vision of Algerian society, the French political elite could not realise the extent to which a discourse revolving around the simple formula "Islam is the solution" was appealing to so many Algerians. It could not accept it either.

¹⁷⁰ For details on the use of Islam by the state as a legitimising tool, see e.g. M. Tozy (1993) ; A. Rouadjia (1990).

¹⁷¹ A. Rouadjia (1990), pp. 20-3.

¹⁷² LW. Dehevels (1991).

5.2. Ideological and psychological motives

Ideological and psychological motives played their part in the French political establishment's opposition to the FIS. Opposition on ideological grounds has been linked to the fact that the FIS challenges France's political legacy by rejecting the principle of secularism which makes it, to the eyes of the French, an inherently regressive political force. This attitude has been similar to the more general Western reaction in front of a new type of nationalism. However, the ideological dimension would not have found its place in the French public discourse if Franco-Algerian relations had not been tainted with a closeness that hampers France from "letting Algeria go".

5.2.1. Islamism and the challenge to Western ideological and cultural hegemony

If Islamism is a vehicle for political opposition to the regimes in power, it indirectly relates to the West since its chief criticism against ruling regimes is to have adopted Western modes of government and Western modes of socioeconomic development which are perceived as the root of Muslim societies' ills. Islamism may be understood as the product of disillusionment with the ideologies underpinning the models adopted in the post-independence period. However, it is often too rapidly concluded that Islamism rejects all these models at one go. In reality, if there has, indeed, been a disillusionment with models that did not bring about "true" independence, the original goal (independence from Western hegemony) remains alive. "It is [thus] in the soil of the old dynamics of decolonisation that, for the main part, 'Islamism' finds its profound roots."¹⁷³ In this sense, Islamic self-assertion and the re-appropriation of the Islamic idiom can be viewed as a "cultural nationalism" meant to repel Western continued ideological and cultural hegemony. As several scholars have argued, more than a break with nationalism, Islamism is its natural

¹⁷³ F. Burgat (1995), p. 77.

development to the ideological and cultural sphere¹⁷⁴. That Islamism is a "new-wave nationalism"¹⁷⁵ or the "supreme stage of nationalism"¹⁷⁶ is well reflected in the FIS's discourse which accuses the secular FLN regime of betraying the call of November 1, 1954 for "the restoration of the sovereign, democratic and social Algerian state within the framework of Islamic principles"¹⁷⁷. Indeed, Abassi Madani, who received primary education in the *medersa* of the Association of the Reformist Ulema and who joined the FLN's insurrection (and was jailed by the French throughout the Independence War as a result), indicated very clearly that the FIS did not repudiate nationalism as such, but the secular form it took at Independence :

"The Algerian state in 1962 did not correspond whatsoever to the state about which we were dreaming on November 1, 1954 and for which we took up arms : an independent state based upon Islamic principles. The state that saw the light under our eyes was grounded on secular and socialist principles. This was a grave deviation, the opened door to ideological and intellectual misleadings with, as a consequence, their inevitable backlash effects from the political and economic viewpoints. (...) We were entering into the era of despair, failure and disaster."¹⁷⁸

By transposing nationalism onto the ideological and cultural sphere, Islamist movements oppose the inroads of Western culture which, incidentally, has often been referred to as "*world* culture" in the West. The rejection of Western political paradigms for Islamic ones is not comprehensible to the West. There is nothing really odd about this, since the Revolutions that brought about the West's value system were

¹⁷⁴ See, in particular, the seminal work of F. Burgat (1995) and (1988a). N. Ayubi (1991) also sees Islamism as cultural nationalism. S. Zubaida (1993) shows that such international events as the Gulf War brought Islamism to be the voice of nationalism and of opposition to Western (political and military) hegemony. Other authors, without concluding that Islamism is nationalism, nevertheless identify it as a reaction to the Westernising colonial legacy or simply to Westernisation : J. Esposito (1992) and (1988) ; H. Hassan (1990).

¹⁷⁵ This is my own formula to sum up the argument of G. Salamé (1993, pp. 22-6) according to which third-generation Islamists (the new wave of militants) would like to be viewed as the true anti-imperialist force.

¹⁷⁶ B. Stora interviewed by *Jeune Afrique* (1539), 27 juin-3 juillet 1990.

¹⁷⁷ M. Gadant (1982, p. 31) whose book is enlightening about the dynamics between Islam and secularism at the time of the War of Independence.

¹⁷⁸ Madani interviewed by S. Zéghidour (1990), p. 180. The brochure of the Algerian Brothers in Britain, "Jihad in Algeria" (October 29, 1993) also develops the theme of the "hijack of Algerian Independence by the leftists". Several authors have underlined that, at any rate in the Algerian case, Islamism is not the repudiation of populist nationalism but its re-appropriation : H. Roberts (1993a) and (1993b) ; B. Stora (1993) ; R. Leveau (1992) ; R. Mortimer (1991) ; L. Addi (1990).

lived as extremely positive experiences for progress. The Islamists' rejection of the principle of secularism, more than their supposedly anti-democratic agenda¹⁷⁹ -- is at the core of the West's profound unease. Indeed, to Westerners, secularism incarnates the freeing of human reason from a supposed God's will and the guarantee of freedom for individuals and minorities. To reject secularism is, thus, equated with repudiating modernity, subordinating Man to God and enforcing a medieval human-made law seen as the word of God¹⁸⁰. This makes the Islamists' agenda particularly reactionary and retrograde to Westerners' eyes and it is particularly so in France where secularism achieved a purist form as a result of the long battle between republican secularists and (often monarchist) clericalists. It is actually noteworthy that if, traditionally, the French Left has been readier than the French Right to defend secularism, the rise of Islamism on the southern shore of the Mediterranean has led the Right to become the champion of secularism, which indicates a reactive resort to the value system of the Republic.

As argued by Lahouari Addi, the religio-political vocabulary used by the most radical Islamists (in the Algerian case, by Ali Benhadj) generates puzzlement because it does not correspond to the landmarks of modern Western political thought¹⁸¹. It also generates a feeling of repulsion perhaps less because this religio-political language revives negative images created by the conflicts between Christendom and Islam than because it recalls Europe's dark Middle Ages against which modern thought triumphed. The replacement, in radical Islamists' discourse, of the vision of an opulent North exploiting the South by the image of a Christian crusader campaign against Islam is greeted in the West as irrational and, as a result, as threatening. But,

¹⁷⁹ M. Azzam has rightly argued that the argument, according to which an Islamic system of government needed to be resisted because it was unlikely to be democratic, was weak in light of the fact that the vast majority of Arab regimes were undemocratic (1994, p. 92). The issue whether Islamist movements are prone to democratic practices or pathologically anti-democratic has been hotly debated. The view that Islamism and Islamist movements should no longer be treated as a monolith is, however, gaining ground. With it, it is recognised that whereas some movements or some factions within Islamist movements advocate an anti-democratic agenda, others participate to the democratic process and see no incompatibility between Western democratic principles and Islamic principles (*shura*, *ijma*, *mubaya* and institutionalised *ijtihad*). For a discussion over this issue see e.g. B. Korany (1994) ; J. Esposito (1992) ; J. Esposito & J. Piscatori (1991) ; J. Iqbal (1983)..

¹⁸⁰ On the *shari'a-fiqu* distinction, see N. Ayubi (1991), pp. 1-33.

¹⁸¹ L. Addi (1991), pp. 24-5.

at the bottom-line, are not Islamists saying exactly the same thing as their secular nationalist opponents, albeit in another form ?

As the frontal attack on secularism is generally lived in the West as an aggression, it is also seen as something that must be fought back. Juppé made the clear demonstration that, along with all the concrete concerns that the FIS's coming into power would cause, he also opposed the FIS on ideological grounds :

"(...) we have explained that we will show no leniency towards those who struggle against us, against what we represent, against our values, our philosophy of History and Man (...)"¹⁸² and that "(...) we shall combat ideologies that combat us."¹⁸³

It makes few doubts that such responses will be understood in Islamist lands as another proof of the West's "crusader mentality" or of the most pernicious aspect of its neocolonialist scheme : "depersonalisation"¹⁸⁴. That, as a result, such a language is an engine for self-fulfilling fears about confrontations is also quite obvious.

By entering the field of the "ideological war", with its simplifying logic, the French political establishment was led to mistakenly consider Islamism as a threatening monolith. As any other social and political movement, Islamism has its radicals and moderates who differ not only in terms of the means they intend to use to reach their aims but also in terms of their final objectives (e.g. what an Islamic state should be, how the *shari'a* should be understood and implemented, etc.). In this respect, if Islamism will be part of the indigenous political equation of the Muslim world, as all indicators suggest, the question to be addressed is which of the Islamist movements, or which of their factions, will get the upper hand. Also, since Islamism was born in the late 1960s, it has been characterised by an internal evolutionary dynamics to the effect that some Islamist movements do not just seek to return to a

¹⁸² Interview, March 7, 1994 in MAE (mars-avril 1994), p. 24.

¹⁸³ Speech to parliament, October 11, 1994 in MAE (septembre-octobre 1994), p. 204.

¹⁸⁴ One of the Algerian Islamists' favourite themes is the acculturation objective that France would be seeking in Algeria (see M. Al-Ahnaf *et. al.* (1991), pp. 267-88). It will be noted that whereas Islamists denounce such an objective in terms of a crusader mentality, secular nationalists did so in terms of "cultural imperialism" (see e.g. Moroccan B. El Mellouki Riffi's account of French policy towards the Maghreb since Independence, (1989), pp. 62-84, 206-23, 249-60). However, both denounce this cultural neo-colonialism which is seen as a means to maintain Algeria in a state of dependence.

mythical past but wish to make their tradition fit into the framework of modernity. It is this internal flexibility and process of change that now needs to be recognised¹⁸⁵.

I suspect that the French political establishment would not have advanced itself on the mined ground of ideological confrontation if the new "voice of the South"¹⁸⁶ had not come from its ex-colony. The psychological component has, indeed, played a central role in French opposition to the FIS.

5.2.2. The FIS vote : a psychological trauma for France

Relations between France and Algeria have always been complex, passionate, marked by an attraction/repulsion dynamics. The colonial venture and the atrocities of the war of decolonisation have left their stamp on the "mental universe"¹⁸⁷ of the bilateral relationship and locked both countries in a face-to-face from which they have not yet managed to liberate themselves. After the June 1990 elections in Algeria, Benjamin Stora, who fathomed the French collective memory/amnesia regarding Algeria, argued that, through the FIS vote, "Algeria [was] about to become truly independent and to break its attachments with the old colonial power" and that "the French ought to understand that." He concluded that the FIS vote allowed Algeria to become a truly foreign country to France¹⁸⁸. As the events were to show, the French have not really accepted that Algeria, which in the "French psyche" has always remained a part of France, may assert itself against "the only good things" of the colonial legacy.

Generally speaking, the reaction of the French (including the political and intellectual elite) to Islamism in Algeria has worked along three lines. For the partisans of "French Algeria" who never accepted de Gaulle's "treason", the reaction has been

¹⁸⁵ Diversity and internal change are two themes that were particularly developed by F. Burgat (1995) and J. Esposito (1992). Note will be taken that, as of September 1994, Juppé recognised that the Islamist movement in Algeria was divided (see chapter two). Also, it is worth mentioning that, in April 1994, Cheysson argued that it was not possible to talk with the "fundamentalists", but that dialogue could be established with the "Islamists" such as Hamas (interview, April 22, 1994).

¹⁸⁶ F. Burgat (*L'Islamisme au Maghreb. La voix du Sud*, Paris : Karthala, 1988 -- a book whose major chapters are referenced as articles in this paper).

¹⁸⁷ JR. Henry (1992).

¹⁸⁸ B. Stora interviewed by *Jeune Afrique* (1539), 27 juin-3 juillet 1990.

to say in substance : "they wanted independence ; they got it ; they want the FIS ; let them have it ; it is their problem and they should face its consequences". It is the "revanchist reaction", common in extreme-right circles¹⁸⁹. For all those who supported Independence or the socialist adventure of the new independent state, the failure of the FLN regime is felt as a personal one. One sentence that turns up a lot today among leftist Frenchmen belonging to the "Algerian generation" (that is all those who whatever their age were confronted to the "Algerian question" at the time of the war of decolonisation) is : "all this for just that". By saying this, they express their shattered hopes in a Revolution that turned sour and their puzzlement in discovering in Algeria a "new" country that does not correspond to "their" Algeria. Lastly, for others, and notably the *Pieds-noirs*, the FIS vote is simply felt as a personal loss, as a heartbreak. More generally, one could say that, in a diffuse way, the advent of an Islamic state in Algeria would be felt in France as the third and final severing of the umbilical cord between the French metropolis and its former colony. Earlier severings were in sequence : (1) political Independence under de Gaulle in 1962 and (2) so-called "normalisation of bilateral relations" declared by president Pompidou in the wake of Algeria's attempts at achieving economic independence through the highly symbolic oil nationalisation measures in 1971.

In addition to these collective attitudes, it is also worth underlining the crucial role played by the bonds of understanding and, sometimes, of friendship that were woven throughout the years between the French and Algerian political elites. As shown in chapter one, the fact that Dumas was a good friend of Taleb Ibrahimi, who represented the Islamic trend of the FLN party, played a role -- even though it was not the determining one -- in designing a policy that sought to promote a compromise that might have satisfied Islamist challengers without having them in control of the wheels of government. In general, however, bonds of friendship have rather been with the

¹⁸⁹ It is, for instance, the "le Penist" reaction. Le Pen, who fought in Algeria and who was a sympathiser of the OAS's cause, created in 1960 the National Front for French Algeria (Front national pour l'Algérie française). The OAS (Armed Secret Organisation) was a terrorist organisation created in 1961 to rally French settlers in Algeria against Independence. General Salan who took part in the abortive *putsch* against de Gaulle's decolonisation scheme was a member of the OAS.

gallicised Algerian political elite which has been threatened, first politically and now physically, by Islamism and its extremist fringe. In respect to those deep transMediterranean bounds of friendship, Cheysson's comment deserves to be quoted in full. In this interview, Cheysson was not giving an explanation of his reaction to the FIS in particular. However, his memories are precious to the scholar because they provide the keys to understanding much about the French political elite's reaction to the FIS :

"I cannot be objective when it comes to the Maghreb and most particularly to Algeria. I had the pleasing surprise of being asked by General de Gaulle to be in charge of the Sahara at the time of the signature of the Evian accords. [It was a] fascinating co-operation, with a country that just got out of a war against France, on a major subject of economic independence. I am very Algerian in my reactions all the more because, out of the politicians of the last few years in Algeria, more than half had been my collaborators or advisers during that period. So, I am not impartial."¹⁹⁰

Cheysson may represent the case *par excellence* of the "closeness" of the relationship between the Socialist Party and the FLN. Nevertheless, his testimony of the impact that close relations with the Algerian elite have on the French political establishment's view of political developments in Algeria remains valid. Indeed, in its vast majority the French political elite reacted negatively to the FIS because of the reasons I mentioned throughout this chapter but also by solidarity with its peers in Algeria. FIS militants are exaggerating but are not wide of the mark when they say that if the French opposed the FIS it was because "They cannot accept an Islamic government which would not be under the Elysée's orders."¹⁹¹ They are exaggerating in the sense that none of the Algerian governments has ever been "under the Elysée's orders" even if they encapsulated pro-French elements. But they are not far from the mark either because a FIS team in Algiers would certainly imply many changes in the way personal relations have until now operated.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with the author, April 22, 1994. A Franco-Algerian public body was created by the Evian Accords to oversee the exploitation of oil in Algeria and the construction of infrastructures.

¹⁹¹ M. Bedayoun (1993).

To conclude, the main arguments of this chapter may be quickly recalled. I have shown that the French political establishment forecasted that the FIS's coming into power would have direct negative consequences on France because of the immigration, national security and economic impacts it would cause. Out of these three types of concerns, only immigration problems, in fact, satisfactorily explain France's opposition to both a violent FIS takeover and a compromise between the Algerian regime and the FIS. Indeed, an immigration wave consisting of Algeria's "modernist" substance and an encouragement to re-Islamisation within the Muslim community living in France were thought possible whichever way the FIS came into power. It was assessed that these events would create tremendous tensions in France's sociopolitical system. By contrast, apprehensions about a possible questioning of the economic relationship were very low. It was thought unlikely that the FIS would fundamentally review this aspect of the Franco-Algerian relationship, even if it seized power. Nevertheless, economic concerns probably contributed to the French government's opposition to a FIS takeover because, if against all odds the FIS reviewed economic relations, this would have a cost for the French economy (without, however, being catastrophic). But, economic concerns played no role at all in the French government's opposition to conciliation in Algeria inasmuch as, within a coalition government, the FIS would not have the power to question economic relations with France. National security concerns presented, as it were, an intermediate case. Anxiety about the possible resort to state-sponsored terrorism by a FIS regime explained France's opposition to a violent FIS takeover and, to a certain extent as well, to conciliation in the sense that the FIS's ambiguous attitude towards violence probably contributed to the view in Paris that France would be better off without the FIS included in government in Algiers.

A FIS victory (by violence or not) was also opposed by France because of the snowball effect it could have throughout North Africa and, in particular, in France's ex-protectorates : Tunisia and Morocco. It was feared that, by demonstration effect

and "revolution export", the end-result of a FIS victory might be the emergence of radical Islamist regimes on Europe's southern flank after a period of turmoil. If the Tunisian and Moroccan dominoes fell, the foreseen consequences of a FIS takeover on France, it was said, would be multiplied and thus more difficult to face. The domino effect argument, however simple at first sight, must be somewhat understated. For, insofar as the French political establishment recognised that the way in which the FIS came into power had different implications for Franco-Algerian relations, it probably also recognised that the way in which the Maghrebi dominoes might fall also mattered. The domino effect theory, in fact, raised some unanswered questions : would Islamist challengers in the Central Maghreb try to overthrow their governments or would they favour an accommodation strategy ? If they chose the course of violent action, could they in effect topple their regimes ? What kind of strategies would current regimes adopt in face of a more active Islamist challenge ? How radical and anti-French potentially sprouting up Islamist regimes may prove to be ? Did the French government have sound answers to all the questions ? If not, then one cannot truly understand why domino thinking was so central to the French government's opposition to the FIS unless one were to argue that the French government relied on the mere view that it was within the odds that neighbouring Islamist movements might take power violently, thus bringing about potentially radical regimes which would be likely to question the past relationship with France. The realm of the possible may, indeed, be a basis upon which foreign policy is decided. This may all the more be so when ideological motives are involved.

As demonstrated in section five, ideological hostility to the Islamists' political project played a role in the French political establishment's opposition to a FIS takeover and to conciliation because the FIS's rejection of secularism has made it a necessarily anti-modernist political force to French observers. Beyond the issue as to whether the FIS should be considered as regressive or not, French ideological opposition to the FIS would not have arisen if the relationship between France and Algeria had not been so complex in itself. A century of colonisation and the War of

Liberation have marked collective attitudes on both sides. In France, Algeria has continued to be viewed as a part of France. It was perceived as a French-speaking country (even though it did not take part in the *francophonie* summits, denounced as sheer neocolonialism) whose polity was secular and in line with the times (claim for self-determination in 1960s, for international restructuring in the 1970s and shift to *infatah* economic policies the 1980s). The FIS vote demonstrated that if Algerian elites have the same frame of mind as the French, not all Algerians see France as a near kin. This very fact has been difficult to accept in France. Bonds of understanding and friendship between French and Algerian elites have reinforced French hostility to the FIS both because the French political establishment sought to defend its peers across the Mediterranean and because a "change of staff" in Algiers would question the way in which personal relations have operated until today.

Conclusion

A shifting policy

Starting from the premise that France's long-run foreign policy objective has always been to preserve its position as Algeria's "senior foreign partner", this study sought to determine what policy France implemented in order to achieve its end in a context where regime stability in Algeria has been threatened by the rise of Islamism -- a political force which has come to be the most popular form of opposition to the prevailing authoritarian order. The central finding brought to the fore in this thesis is that France has not followed one constant policy but several successive policies. A summary picture of French policy towards Algeria after the 1992 coup d'état until the May 1995 French presidential elections brings out a sequence of two shifts : the January 1993 shift (from promoting compromise with the Islamist mainstream to throwing France's weight behind the Algerian regime which refused such a compromise) and the September 1994 shift (from buttressing eradication to advocating conciliation).

The shifting character of French policy resulted from the government's continuous reassessment of the evolution of Algeria's conflict on the ground. At first, Cresson's socialist government (which was not, however, united on this issue) believed that force would not resolve the problem of Islamism in Algeria and that, as a result, a certain form of compromise needed to be struck with the Islamists. The Cresson government did not wish the FIS to come into power nor did it wish its formal integration in the government. Cresson's foreign minister hoped that giving a greater weight to the Islamic trend of the state apparatus (and perhaps co-opting some Islamist personalities) would satisfy the Islamist movement. Reaching such a compromise offered a double advantage for Paris. It would avoid a repressive drift in Algeria thus sparing Paris the bad company of a police state and ensure steadiness in Franco-Algerian relations. Algiers refused to consider France's proposal and

embarked upon eradicating its Islamist opponents. Without severing relations with Algeria, the Cresson and Bérégovoy governments maintained minimal contacts until January 1993. At that stage, the Bérégovoy government reviewed its Algeria policy in light of the degradation of Algeria's security situation. The Bérégovoy government now thought that it was within the odds that the FIS might take over through guerrilla warfare. This prospect led it to repair the strained relationship with Algeria's rulers.

A series of factors explains the Bérégovoy government's hostility to a FIS takeover. It was feared in Paris that a FIS victory would generate instability throughout the Mediterranean by domino and "revolution export" effects. The prospect of the advent of an anti-Western Islamic state in Algeria was difficult to accept ideologically and psychologically. In addition, such a prospect was perceived as threatening the stability of Franco-Algerian relations. Even though it was assumed in Paris that a potential FIS regime would probably not overhaul Algeria's economic ties with France, it was also considered that a new regime might broaden its horizons away from France. Paris was also disquieted about the prospect of a radical revolutionary Islamist regime which might be prone to international terrorism. Most importantly, the FIS coming into power was opposed by France because of its foreseen disturbing impact on France's sociopolitical system through the immigration problems it raised.

This series of concerns also led the Balladur government to support the Algerian regime. From April 1993 to September 1994, the French Right fully backed eradication in Algeria. It provided the Algerian regime with economic aid and, in contrast with the socialists, established tight police and intelligence co-operation with Algiers. Some anti-guerrilla military hardware was also sold to the Algerian Army. Finally, France became Algeria's defender on the international scene. However, in September 1994, the Quai d'Orsay came to the conclusion that eradication might not be the best solution. Eradication had failed in its objectives since guerrilla warfare continued unabated, threatening to suck the whole country into an all-out civil war. In addition, as a political project, Islamism had not died. Conciliation was, therefore,

seen as the only means to restore political stability in Algeria. The fact that France was increasingly isolated internationally in its strong support to Algiers was also one factor leading it to switch to conciliation. Nevertheless, the Quai d'Orsay's September 1994 shift did not translate into effective policy measures seeking, if not to force, at least to influence the reaching of a political settlement encompassing the FIS. The Balladur government did not directly intervene to bring pressure to bear on the Algerian regime because it considered that a conciliation imposed from abroad was not a viable long-term solution for stability in Algeria. In addition, an active conciliatory policy would have entailed risks of reprisal actions from Algerian eradicators included in government. Hence, the Quai d'Orsay's call for conciliation which was not accompanied with concrete efforts at promoting a way of weathering the storm in Algeria.

Going backwards under Chirac ?



Serguei in *Le Monde*, 14 septembre 1995

Serguei's cartoon was a reaction to the September 1995 decision by the new Chirac Administration to ban the distribution of a book dealing with state violence in Algeria¹. This *Livre blanc sur la répression en Algérie (1991-1994)*², henceforth referred to as the "White Paper", was written by the "Committee of Free Militants for Human Dignity and of Human Rights"³. This Committee is presumed to be mainly comprised of FIS militants exiled in Switzerland. Reporters Herzberg and de Barrin describe the book as a series of testimonies about state violence in Algeria (arbitrary arrests, torture, death sentences, imprisonment conditions in detention camps, etc.). The subject of violence perpetrated by the Islamist armed groups is said to be wholly excluded from the text. This one-sided book may thus be categorised as a political publication⁴.

The French Ministry for the Interior (at present led by Jean-Louis Debré) justified the ban on this publication essentially on grounds of domestic security although political motives were not wholly absent:

"There is [in this book] an underlying anti-French tone, but there is especially such a violent denunciation of the Algerian regime that it could be understood as an incitement to hatred. From Algeria's home affairs' viewpoint, this is not exactly our problem. But here [in France], this denunciation can lead people who are likely to be responsive to this kind of proselytism to undertake acts leading to a breach of the peace."⁵

The Interior Ministry's worry about a "breach of the peace" is connected to the terrorist attacks that were carried out on French soil during Summer/Autumn 1995. Up to the time of writing, five attacks have occurred : Sheik Sahraoui was murdered on July 11 ; a bomb blew up in the Paris tube at the busy Saint-Michel station on July 25 (7 dead, 85 casualties) ; in a public square near the Champs-Élysées, a bomb placed in a rubbish bin exploded on August 17 (17 wounded) ; another (defective) one went off in a Parisian street market on September 3 (4 wounded). Lastly, a car bomb,

¹ *Le Monde*, 14 septembre 1995.

² Editions Hoggar : Geneva, 1995.

³ In theory, a *livre blanc* is a document published by the government. It is intended to take stock of a controversial question and to formulate policy proposals.

⁴ *Le Monde*, 14 septembre 1995.

⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*

parked close to a Jewish primary school, blew up in a suburb of Lyon on September 7 (14 casualties). There were also several failed terrorist attacks. One of them aimed at the high speed train (the TGV) on the Lyon-Paris line on August 26. A young Algerian national who was brought up in France and who has always lived there is suspected of involvement and is now on the run.

To Serguei, the banning order against the "White Paper" amounted to an exoneration of the Algerian regime. Indeed, his cartoon shows Marianne, the French Republic, laundering books with a bleaching soap that erases all blots. In an echo to advertisements for washing powder, the Algerian military men, stained with blood, show great satisfaction with Marianne's washing powers. Marianne's "spotless clean laundry", in conjunction with highly publicised round-ups of the "expected villains", raises anew the question of France's shifting Algeria policy. As prime minister, is Juppé going back to his pre-September 1994 policy stance of firm support to the Algerian regime ? It is too early to provide sure answers to this question. Nevertheless, several elements indicate that, under Chirac's presidency, France is supporting again the Algerian regime if only by proving tough on the FIS. Today, however, being harsh on the FIS seems to be motivated less by fears of the FIS being integrated in politics than by fear of the Algerian regime itself.

With Jacques Chirac five months into his presidency, official discourse has been as contradictory as ever. On the one hand, Prime Minister Juppé has maintained a conciliatory discourse. He has, thus, argued that "It is through dialogue and free elections that the Algerians will be able to disentangle themselves from the meshes of violence and to come to a reconciliation around a [society] project that they themselves will have chosen for the future of their country."⁶ Juppé has also continued to argue that only "real democratic elections" would make sense in Algeria⁷. Surely, Juppé cannot describe a presidential run in which the signatories of the Rome platform will not take part as true elections⁸. At the same time, however, Juppé has stated that the

⁶ Speech to parliament on the new government's policy orientations (May 23, 1995), quoted in *Le Monde*, 25 mai 1995.

⁷ In *7 sur 7*, TF1, September 7, 1995.

⁸ On August 28, 1995, the signatories of the Rome platform stated they would boycott the

FIS does not yet accept the principle of democracy and that, as such, it does not belong to the "party of democracy" which Paris says it is backing in Algeria⁹. In addition, President Chirac warned that he "would not allow France to become a sanctuary (...) for the fundamentalists and that [the government would] do everything in its power to eliminate them."¹⁰

Despite its contradictions, official discourse under the new French president seems to tilt back to the eradicator stand taken by the socialist Bérégovoy government in early 1993 and by Balladur's right-wing government from April 1993 to September 1994. Censorship of the FIS seems to confirm this trend. Yet, as I suggested above, the motives may no longer be the same. As Balladur's foreign minister, Juppé had come to the conclusion that, despite all the negative consequences that accepting the FIS back in the political game might have on regional stability, on Franco-Algerian relations and on France itself, conciliation was the only way out for Algeria. In Autumn 1994, he was extremely critical of the eradicators in the Algerian government. Juppé, indeed, compared them to the bloodthirsty extremist Islamists operating within the Islamist armed groups. Very soon, however, he stripped his speeches from these harsh words against Algerian eradicators. I argued earlier that if Juppé ceased to use a language that was considered offensive in Algiers and if he did not urge conciliation in Algeria it was, in part, because he feared reprisal actions from the Algerian Military Security. It seems to me that today's tough stand on the FIS can be understood in the same light. The Juppé government blows cold when arguing that genuine presidential elections are needed in Algeria, but it also blows hot when being tough on the FIS. It blows hot because it strives to ward off state-sponsored terrorism.

Since terrorist attacks were carried out against France, the French government has publicly privileged the "Islamist track". However, the media have pointed out that some of the attacks could be as much the work of extremist Islamists linked to the GIAs as that of the Algerian Military Security¹¹. The Saint-Michel underground

presidential elections whose first round is due in November 1995. (*Le Monde*, 30 août 1995).

⁹ In *Géopolis*, France 2, June 25, 1995.

¹⁰ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 14 juillet 1995.

¹¹ See e.g. *Le Monde*, 19 août 1995.

station bombing is a particularly intriguing case. It was "prophesied" by an Algerian newspaper said to be close to the Algerian Military Security, *La Tribune*. This newspaper also forecasted Sahraoui's murder. In relation to its prediction about a wave of terrorist attacks in France, *La Tribune* designated an ideal suspect : an Islamist activist exiled in Sweden and managing the GIA *Al Ansar* bulletin. As things now stand, the suspect seems to have good alibis for not having been in the Paris tube with a bomb in his bag. It is quite obvious that the French government will not accuse the Algerian regime without proofs. Nevertheless, we should note that, while channelling public attention on Islamist networks, the French government has never maintained that the hypothesis of an involvement of the Algerian Military Security (or some of its clans) was far-fetched and thus to be excluded. Several months before Juppé's September 1994 change of heart, I was implicitly told by someone close to the government that the latter feared as much terrorist attacks from the GIAs as from the Algerian regime :

"For a long time, we thought that there would not be any attack against French nationals in Algeria because we thought that radical forces -- whether on the side of the Islamists or on the side of the Military Security -- would not dare stepping over this threshold since this was to risk vigorous reactions on the part of counter-powers. It was done and, as a consequence, one does not see what would hold them from doing the same thing one day (...), elsewhere, in Southern Europe."¹²

Today, the terrorist attacks in France suggest that Marianne is exposed to crossfire. To all appearances, some people in the Algerian regime seek to turn the heat on the French government so that it will, if not bless, at least not denounce the result of the coming Algerian elections. Others, in the Islamist nebula, also seek to bring pressure to bear on the Chirac Administration precisely to force it not to recognise the legitimacy that the elections are supposed to bring to the winner. France may now be paying the price of its shifting Algeria policy. But then again, was it predictable back in January 1992 that the marginalisation of the Islamist current would turn into a

¹² The reader will understand why the identity of the speaker, who is not listed in the acknowledgements and who was not referred to elsewhere in this paper, is not revealed.

fratricidal war and that the FIS might prove much more flexible than its radical political discourse suggested ?

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Interviews with the author

J. Audibert, French Ambassador to Algiers (1989-1992), June 7, 1995, Marignane.

C. Bigot, Assistant-deputy to the head of the Maghreb-Mashreq department of the Quai d'Orsay, April 21, 1994, Paris.

S. Boussena, Algerian Minister for Mines and Industry (1989-91) and President of OPEC (1990-91), January 4, 1993 ; July 26, 1993 ; April 19, 1994, Grenoble.

J.P. Brevost, Total Company, December 9, 1993, Paris.

C. Cheysson, French Minister for Foreign Affairs (1981-1984), April 22, 1994, Paris.

R. Dumas, French Minister for Foreign Affairs (1984-1986 ; 1988-1993), May 16, 1995, Paris.

G. Morin, Head of the Maghreb department of the International Secretariat of the Socialist Party, June 29, 1994, Paris.

L. Schmid, Centre d'analyses et de prévisions, July 18, 1995, Paris.

Speeches

MAE, *La Politique étrangère de la France. Textes et documents*. Paris : La Documentation française.

Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture (1979), *Discours du Président Chadli Bendjedid. Février 1979 - 30 décembre 1979*. Tome I. Algiers.

Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture (1981), *Discours du Président Chadli Bendjedid. 15 janvier - 31 décembre 1980*. Tome II. Algiers.

F. Mitterrand (1981), *Politique 2. 1977-1981*. Paris : Fayard.

F. Mitterrand (1986), *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France. Introduction à vingt-cinq discours (1981-1985)*. Paris : Fayard.

Secondary sources

Statistical series

- BDF (1993), *La Balance des paiements de la France. Rapport annuel 1992*. Paris : BDF.
- BDF (1994a), *La Balance des paiements et la position extérieure de la France 1993*. Paris : BDF.
- BDF (1994b), *Bulletin de la Banque de France. 3^e trimestre 1994. Supplément statistique*. Paris : BDF.
- BDF (1994c), *Bulletin de la Banque de France. 4^e trimestre 1994. Supplément étude*. Paris : BDF.
- DREE (1995), *Les Echanges commerciaux de la France en 1994*. Paris : CFCE.
- GDF (1994a), *Annual Report 1993*. Paris : GDF.
- IBRD (1992), *World Debt Tables 1991-1992*. Washington D.C. : IBRD.
- IBRD (1994), *World Debt Tables 1994-1995*. Washington D.C. : IBRD.
- IEA (1987), *Energy Statistics 1970-1985*. Paris : OECD.
- IEA (1994a), *Energy Policies of IEA Countries. 1993 Review*. Paris : OECD.
- IEA (1994b), *Oil and Gas Information 1993*. Paris : OECD.
- ILO (1986), *Economically Active Population. Estimates and Projections 1950-2025*. Geneva : ILO.
- ILO (1993), *Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1993*. Geneva : ILO.
- IMF (1994), *Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 1994*. Washington D.C. : IMF.
- ONS (1992), *Situation de l'emploi 1990. Collection Statistiques, 36*. Algiers : ONS
- OPEC (1994), *Annual Statistical Bulletin 1993*. Vienna : OPEC.
- UN (1993), *World Population Prospects. The 1992 Revision*. New York : UN.
- UN (1994), *International Trade Statistics Yearbook 1993*. New York : UN.

Books, articles and conference papers

- J. Adda & MC. Smouts (1989), *La France face au Sud : le miroir brisé*. Paris : Karthala.

- B. Abdesselam (1990), *Le Gaz algérien. Stratégies et enjeux*. Alger : Bouchène.
- R. Abdoun (1989), "Le partenariat en Algérie" in *Mondes en développement*, 17 (67), pp. 109-116.
- L. Addi (1990), "Du FLN au FIS" in *Esprit*, 163 (7-8), pp. 127-8.
- L. Addi (1991), "L'opinion publique française et le FIS" in *Modern & Contemporary France*, 45, pp. 22-6.
- M. Akacem (1993), "Algeria : in Search of an Economic and Political Future" in *Middle East Policy*, 2 (2), pp. 50-60.
- M. Al-Ahnaf, B. Botiveau & F. Frégosi (1991), *L'Algérie par ses islamistes*. Paris : Karthala.
- R. Aliboni (1993), "La sécurité militaire en Méditerranée occidentale : le point de vue européen" in A. Vasconcelos (dir.), *Européens et Maghrébins. Une solidarité obligée*. Paris : Karthala.
- B. Allouche (1989), *Small States and International Mediation. The Case of Algeria*. Algiers : OPU.
- L. Anderson (1991), "Obligation and Accountability : Islamic Politics in North Africa" in *Daedalus*, 120 (3), pp. 93-112.
- N. Ayubi (1991), *Political Islam : Religion and Politics in the Arab World*. London : Routledge.
- M. Azzam (1994), "Islam : Political Implications for Europe and the Middle East" in P. Ludlow (ed.), *Europe and the Mediterranean*. London : Brassey's, pp. 89-104.
- PR. Baduel (dir.) (1994), "L'impasse algérienne de la transition démocratique" in PR. Baduel (dir.), *L'Algérie incertaine*. Paris : Edisud, pp. 5-22.
- P. Balta (1986), "French Policy in North Africa" in *The Middle East Journal*, 40 (2), pp. 238-51.
- P. Balta (1991), *L'Islam dans le monde*. Paris : Le Monde Editions.
- P. Balta & C. Rulleau (1973), *La Politique arabe de la France de De Gaulle à Pompidou*. Paris : Sindbad.
- K. Basfao & JR. Henry (dir.) (1992), *Le Maghreb, l'Europe et la France*. Paris : CNRS.
- JF. Bayart (1984), *La Politique africaine de François Mitterrand*. Paris : Karthala.
- N. Beau (1995), *Paris, capitale arabe*. Paris : Le Seuil.
- D. Beauchamp, G. Corm, J. Leca, R. Leveau, O. Mongin, O. Roy & G. Salamé (1987), "La politique française au Proche-Orient ? Hier et aujourd'hui" in *Esprit*, 127 (6), pp. 54-80.
- M. Bedayoun (1993), "The Revival of Islam in Algeria" (lecture organised by the SOAS Islamic Society, November 4, 1993, SOAS, London).

- L. Belaïd (1995), "Les réactions des Algériens vivant en France" in G. Ignasse & E. Wallon (dir.), *Demain l'Algérie*. Paris : Syros.
- M. Benhassine (1988), "La pensée économique du FMI et de la BIRD et les incidences de leur politique d'ajustement sur la politique de développement du 'Tiers-Monde' avec référence à l'Algérie" in *Revue algérienne des sciences juridiques, économiques et politiques*, 26 (2), pp. 463-80.
- M. Bennoune (1988), *The Making of Contemporary Algeria, 1830-1987. Colonial Upheavals and Post-Independence Development*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- L. Blin (1990), *L'Algérie du Sahara au Sahel*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- L. Blin & E. Gobe (1991), "Chronique internationale" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1989*, 28, pp. 469-500. Paris : CNRS.
- M. Bonnefous (1992), "Nouvelle approche en Méditerranée occidentale" in *Défense nationale*, 48 (6), pp. 79-85.
- N. Bouzidi M'Hamsadji (1989), "L'autonomie de l'entreprise publique et le monopole de l'Etat sur le commerce extérieur" in *Revue algérienne des sciences juridiques, économiques et politiques*, 27 (2), pp. 263-81.
- A. Boyer (1992), *L'Institut musulman de la mosquée de Paris*. Paris : CHEAM.
- A. Brahim (1991), *Stratégies de développement pour l'Algérie. Défis et enjeux*. Paris : Economica.
- A. Brahim (1994), "Algeria now : Crisis and Mutations in Gestation" (seminar organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre and the Society for Algerian Studies, June 2, 1994, SOAS, London).
- I. Brandell (1981), *Les Rapports franco-algériens depuis 1962. Du Pétrole et des hommes*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- D. Brumberg (1991), "Islam, Elections, and Reform in Algeria" in *Journal of Democracy*, 2 (1), pp. 58-71.
- F. Burgat (1988a), "Islamisme au Maghreb" in *Les Temps modernes*, 500, pp. 75-118.
- F. Burgat (1988b), "De la difficulté de nommer intégrisme, fondamentalisme, islamisme" in *Les Temps modernes*, 500, pp. 119-39.
- F. Burgat (1994), "Les islamistes au révélateur de la crise" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1992*, 31, pp. 201-13. Paris : CNRS.
- F. Burgat (1995), *L'Islamisme en face*. Paris : La Découverte.
- B. Callies de Salies (1994), "Europe-Maghreb : de la coopération au partenariat", *Défense nationale*, 50 (6), pp. 125-39.
- J. Cesari (1994a), "Chronique algérienne" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1992*, 31, pp. 615-83. Paris : CNRS.
- J. Cesari (1994b), *Etre Musulman en France. Associations, militants et mosquées*. Paris : Karthala-IREMAM.

- J. Cesari (1994/95), "France-Algérie : l'effet 'Airbus'" in *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, 36/37, pp. 175-91.
- Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Paris (1993), *Répartition des exportateurs et importateurs français par secteurs d'activités à partir de firmexport/firmimport*. Paris : Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Paris.
- A. Charef (1994), *Algérie : le grand dérapage*. Paris : Editions de l'Aube.
- R. Cléménçon (1990), *Perceptions and Interests. Developing Countries and the International Economic System. A Comparative Analysis of Statements given to the Plenary Meetings of UNCTAD in 1976, 1983 and 1987*. Bern : P. Lang.
- D. Colard (1978), "La politique méditerranéenne et proche-orientale de Georges Pompidou" in *Politique étrangère*, 48 (2), pp. 283-306.
- Commissariat général du plan (1993), *L'Europe, la France et la Méditerranée : vers de nouveaux partenariats*. Paris : La Documentation Française.
- Conseil économique et social (1983), "Les perspectives de développement des relations économiques entre la France et l'Algérie" in *Journal officiel de la République française*, 23, pp 5-37.
- G. Corm (1993), "La réforme économique algérienne : une réforme mal-aimée ?" in *Monde arabe : Maghreb-Machrek*, 139, pp. 9-27.
- S. Cornot-Gandolphe & M.F. Chabrelle (1995), *Le Gaz naturel dans le monde. Edition 1995*. CEDIGAZ : Paris.
- JP. Cot (1984), *A l'Epreuve du pouvoir. Le tiers-mondisme pour quoi faire ?* Paris : Le Seuil.
- J. Damis (1984), "French Foreign Policy" in A. Al-Marayati (ed.), *International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa*. Cambridge (Mass.) : Schenkman Publishing Company, pp. 175-204.
- J. Damis (1993), "The Maghreb Arab Union and Regional Reconciliation" in G. Joffé (ed.) (1993a), pp. 288-96.
- D. David (1995), "France-Algérie : entre l'innommable et l'indécidable" in JF. Dazugan & R. Girardet (dir.), *La Méditerranée. Nouveaux défis, nouveaux risques*. Paris : Publisud.
- H. Davis (1992), "Taking up Space in Tlemcen. The Islamist Occupation of Urban Algeria. An Interview with Rabia Bekkar" in *Middle East Report*, 179, pp.11-14.
- JF. Daguzan (1993/94), "Les Rapports franco-algériens, 1962-1992. Réconciliation ou conciliation permanente ?" in *Politique étrangère*, 58, pp. 885-96.
- LW. Deheuvels (1991), *Islam et pensée contemporaine en Algérie. La revue al-asâla (1971-1981)*. Paris : CNRS.
- H. Dennouni (1986), "Les dispositions du code algérien de la famille" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1984, 23, pp. 711-26. Paris : CNRS.

- P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil (1994), *La Poudrière algérienne. Histoire secrète d'une république sous influence*. Paris : Calmann-Levy.
- B. Dillman (1992), "Transition to Democracy in Algeria" in J. Entelis & P. Naylor (eds.), pp. 31-51.
- A. Djeghloul (1990), "Le multipartisme à l'algérienne" in *Monde arabe : Maghreb-Machrek*, 127, pp. 194-210.
- P. Djité (1992), "The Arabization of Algeria : Linguistic and Sociopolitical Motivations" in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 98, pp. 15-28.
- M. Dunn (1994), "Islamic Activists in the West : a New Issue Produces Backlash" in *Middle East Policy*, 3 (1), pp. 137-45.
- K. Duran (1989), "The Second Battle of Algiers" in *Orbis*, 33 (3), pp. 403-21.
- M. Ecrement (1986), *Indépendance politique et libération économique. Un quart de siècle de développement de l'Algérie (1962-1985)*. Alger/Grenoble : ENAP-OPU/PUG.
- Editorial, "La politique française de coopération vis-à-vis de l'Algérie : un quiproquo tragique" in *Esprit*, 208, janvier 1995, pp. 153-61.
- B. El Mellouki Riffi (1989), *La Politique française de coopération avec les Etats du Maghreb (1955-1987)*. Paris/Casablanca : Publisud/Toubkal.
- D. Engelis (1994), address on the European policy towards the Maghreb given at the conference on "The Future of Maghrib" organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre, 6-7 October 1994, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London.
- J. Entelis (1981), "Elite Political Culture and Socialization in Algeria : Tensions and Discontinuities" in *The Middle East Journal*, 25 (2), pp. 191-208.
- J. Entelis (1986), *Algeria. The Revolution Institutionalized*. Boulder : Westview Press.
- J. Entelis (1992), "The Crisis of Authoritarianism in North Africa : the Case of Algeria" in *Problems of Communism*, XLI (3), pp. 71-81.
- J. Entelis & L. Arone (1992), "Algeria in Turmoil : Islam, Democracy and the State: in *Middle East Policy*, 1 (2), pp. 23-35.
- J. Entelis & P. Naylor (eds.) (1992), *State and Society in Algeria*. Boulder : Westview Press.
- J. Esposito (1988), *Islam. The Straight Path*. New York/Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- J. Esposito (1992), *The Islamic Threat : Myth or Reality ?* New York/Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- J. Esposito & J. Piscatori (1991), "Democratization and Islam" in *The Middle East Journal*, 45 (3), pp. 427-40.

- P. Euzière (1994), "Algérie : autopsie d'un tragédie annoncée" in *Cahiers du communisme*, 70 (9), pp. 68-75.
- P. Eveno (1994), *L'Algérie*. Paris : Le Monde Editions.
- T. Fabre (1990), "L'Algérie. Islam et démocratie" in *Esprit*, 165 (10), pp. 113-22.
- F. Faria (1994), "The Portuguese View of the Maghreb" (address given at the conference "The Future of the Maghrib", organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre, 6-7 October 1994, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London).
- F. Favier & M. Martin-Roland (1990), *La Décennie Mitterrand. Les Ruptures (1981-1984)*. Volume I. Paris : Le Seuil.
- F. Favier & M. Martin-Roland (1991), *La Décennie Mitterrand. Les Epreuves (1984-1988)*. Volume II. Paris : Le Seuil.
- M. Gadant (1982), *Islam et nationalisme en Algérie d'après "El Moudjahid" organe central du FLN de 1956 à 1962*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- GDF (1990), *Technologie et progrès*. Paris : GDF.
- GDF (1994b), *Gaz de France Worldwide*. Paris : GDF.
- T. Gerholm & Y. Lithman (eds.) (1988), *The New Islamic Presence in Western Europe*. London : Mansell.
- M. Gilsnan (1992), *Recognising Islam. Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East*. London : I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.
- P. Golub (1994/95), "Etats-Unis-Algérie: les ambiguïtés d'une politique" in *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, 36/37, pp. 193-203.
- PM. Gorce (de la) (1993), "Paris et Washington face à la crise" in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 473, pp.6-7.
- N. Grimaud (1982), "France-Algérie : accord sur le prix du gaz naturel, 3 février 1982" in *Monde arabe : Maghreb-Machrek*, 97, pp. 87-92.
- N. Grimaud (1983), "France-Algérie : le protocole de coopération économique, 21 juin 1982" in *Monde arabe : Maghreb-Machrek*, 99, pp. 96-103.
- N. Grimaud (1984a), *La Politique extérieure de l'Algérie (1962-1978)*. Paris : Karthala.
- N. Grimaud (1984b), "Nouvelles orientations des relations entre la France et l'Algérie" in *Monde arabe : Maghreb-Machrek*, 103, pp. 96-106.
- N. Grimaud (1986), "Algeria and Socialist France" in *The Middle East Journal*, 40 (2), pp. 252-66.
- N. Grimaud (1991), "Prolongements externes des élections algériennes" in *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, 23, pp. 29-40.
- N. Grimaud (1993), "La diplomatie sous Chadli ou la politique du possible" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1991, 30, pp. 401-35. Paris : CNRS.

- A. Groom & C. Mitchell (1978), *International Relations Theory : a Bibliography*. London : Frances Pinter Ltd.
- A. Guesmi (1991), "Le monopole de l'Etat algérien sur le commerce extérieur et la nouvelle réglementation concernant l'installation des grossistes et des concessionnaires" in *Revue algérienne des sciences juridiques, économiques et politiques*, 29 (4), pp. 791-835.
- L. Hadar (1993), "What Green Peril ?" in *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (2), pp. 27-42.
- Fred Halliday (1993), address on the theme of "L'Islam, l'islamisme et nous" at the conference "Un péril islamiste ?", 4^e Carrefour de la pensée, December 9-10, 1993, Le Mans.
- A. Hargreaves (1994) "The Algerian Community in France" (lecture organised by the Society for Algerian Studies, May 23, 1994, SOAS, London).
- A. Hargreaves & T. Stenhouse (1991), "Islamic Beliefs among Youths of Immigrant Origin in France" in *Modern & Contemporary France*, 45, pp. 27-35.
- H. Hassan (1990), "Islamic Revivalism and its Impact on the Middle East and the Superpowers" in J. Chay (ed.), *Culture and International Relations*. New York/London : Praeger, pp. 207-20.
- Haut conseil à l'intégration (1992), *Conditions juridiques et culturelles de l'intégration*. Paris : La Documentation Française
- JR. Henry (1984), "Chronique internationale" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1982, 21, pp. 459-79.
- JR. Henry (1987), "Chronique internationale" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1985, 24, pp. 535-57.
- JR. Henry (1992), "L'univers mental des rapports franco-algériens", in K. Basfao & JR. Henry (dir.), pp. 369-77
- E. Hermassi & D. Vandewalle (1993), "The Second Stage of State Building" in I. Zartman & D. Habeeb (eds.), pp. 19-41.
- M. Hernando de Larramendi (1993), "Chronique internationale" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1991, 30, pp. 477-548. Paris : CNRS.
- A. Hirèche (1989), *Algérie : l'après-pétrole. Quelles stratégies pour 1995 et 2005 ?*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- J. Iqbal (1983), "Democracy and the Modern Islamic State" in J. Esposito (1983), *Voices of Resurgent Islam*. New York/Oxford : Oxford University Press, pp. 252-60.
- M. Issad (1984), "La loi du 28 août 1982 sur les sociétés d'économie mixte" in *Revue algérienne des sciences juridiques, économiques et politiques*, 21 (2), pp. 263-78.
- H. Jaït (1985), *Europe and Islam*. Berkeley : University of California Press.
- O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.) (1986), *The Third World without Superpowers. The Collected Documents of the Non-Aligned Countries*. Volume VII. New York : Oceana Publications Inc.

- O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.) (1989), *The Third World without Superpowers. The Collected Documents of the Non-Aligned Countries*. Volumes IX and X. New York: Oceana Publications Inc.
- O. Jankowitsch & K. Sauvart (eds.) (1993), *The Third World without Superpowers. The Collected Documents of the Non-Aligned Countries*. Volume XI. New York: Oceana Publications Inc.
- A. Jazouli (1992), *Les Années banlieues*. Paris : Le Seuil.
- F. Jeanson (1991), *Algéries. De Retour en retour*. Paris : Le Seuil.
- C. Jelen (1991), *Ils feront de bons Français. Enquête sur l'assimilation des Maghrébins*. Paris : R. Laffont.
- G. Joffé (ed.) (1993a), *North Africa. State, Nation and Region*. London : Routledge.
- G. Joffé (1993b), "Middle Eastern Views of the Gulf Conflict and its Aftermath" in *Review of International Studies*, 19 (2), pp. 177-99.
- G. Joffé (1993c), "The Development of the UMA and Integration in the Western Arab World" in G. Nonneman (ed.), pp. 203-18.
- G. Joffé (1994a), "Algeria : the Failure of Dialogue" in Europa Publications, *The Middle East and North Africa 1995*. London : Europa Publications Ltd. (41th edition).
- G. Joffé (1994b), "Conditionality and European Aid to the Maghrib" (address given at the conference "The Future of the Maghrib", organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre, 6-7 October 1994, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London).
- A. Kapil (1992), "L'évolution du régime autoritaire en Algérie : le 5 octobre et les réformes politiques de 1988-89" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1990, 29, pp. 417-57. Paris : CNRS.
- G. Kepel (1991), *Les Banlieues de l'Islam. Naissance d'une religion en France*. Paris : Le Seuil (second edition).
- G. Kepel (dir.) (1994a), *Exils et Royaumes. Les appartenances au monde arabo-musulman aujourd'hui*. Paris : FNSP
- G. Kepel (1994b), *A l'Ouest d'Allah*. Paris : Le Seuil.
- B. Khader (1992), *Le grand Maghreb et l'Europe. Enjeux et perspectives*. Paris : Publisud.
- A. Khelladi (1992), *Algérie : les islamistes face au pouvoir*. Alger : Alfa.
- B. Kodmani-Darwish & M. Chartouni-Dubarry (1991), *Golfe et Moyen-Orient. Les conflits*. Paris : IFR/Dunod.
- E. Kolodziej (1974), *French International Policy under De Gaulle and Pompidou : the Politics of Grandeur*. Ithaca : Cornell University Press.
- B. Korany (1991), "From Revolution to Domestication : the Foreign Policy of Algeria" in B. Korany and A. Hillal Dessouki (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of*

- Arab States : the Challenge of Change*. Boulder : Westview Press, pp. 103-55.
- B. Korany (1994), "Arab Democratization : a Poor Cousin ?" in *Political Science & Politics*, 27 (3), pp. 511-3.
- A. Krieger-Krynicky (1988), "The Children of Muslim Immigrants in France" in T. Gerholm & Y. Lithman (eds.), pp. 123-32.
- S. Labat (1994), "Islamismes et islamistes en Algérie. Un nouveau militantisme" in G. Kepel (dir.) (1994a), pp. 41-67
- S. Labat (1995), "Le FIS à l'épreuve de la lutte armée" in R. Leveau (dir.), *L'Algérie dans la guerre*. Bruxelles : Editions Complexe, pp. 87-110.
- L'Algérie au cœur (1994), *L'Algérie au cœur*, 1, mai-juin 1994.
- A. Lamchichi (1991), *L'Algérie en crise. Crise économique et changements politiques*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- A. Lamchichi (1992), *L'Islamisme en Algérie*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- A. Lassassi (1988), *Non-Alignment and Algerian Foreign Policy*. Avebury : Aldershot.
- JJ. Lavenue (1993), *Algérie : la démocratie interdite*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- R. Lawless (1984), "Algeria : the Contradictions of Rapid Industrialisation" in R. Lawless and A. Findlay (eds.), *North Africa : Contemporary Politics and Economic Development*. London : Croom Helm, pp. 153-90.
- A. Lebon (1992), *Aspects de l'immigration et de la présence étrangère en France. 1991-1992*. Paris : La Documentation Française.
- A. Lebon (1993), *Immigration et présence étrangère en France. Le bilan d'une année. 1992-1993*. Paris : La Documentation Française.
- A. Lebon (1994), *Situation de l'immigration et présence étrangère en France, 1993-1994*. Paris : La Documentation Française.
- J. Leca & N. Grimaud (1986), "Le secteur privé en Algérie" in *Monde arabe : Maghreb-Machrek*, 113, pp. 102-119.
- Les Amis d'Alger Républicain en France, *Bulletin n°2*.
- R. Leveau (1988), "The Islamic Presence in France" in T. Gerholm & Y. Lithman (eds.), pp. 107-22.
- R. Leveau (1992), "Algeria : Adversaries in Search of Uncertain Compromises", in *Chaillot Papers*, 4, pp. 1-29.
- D. Levy (1987), "Foreign Policy : Business as Usual ?" in S. Mazey & M. Newman (eds.), *Mitterrand's France*. London : Croom Helm, pp. 166-91.
- Maison Lazard et Compagnie, Lehman Brothers, S.G. Warburg & Co. Ltd. (1993), *Algeria. Economic Information Memorandum*.

- C. Manceron & B. Pingaud (1981), *François Mitterrand : l'homme, les idées, le programme*. Paris : Flammarion.
- C. Moore (1994), "The Islamic Challenge and Contemporary US Policy", (address given at the conference "The Future of the Maghrib", organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre, 6-7 October 1994, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London).
- S. Mouhoubi (1989), *La Politique de coopération algéro-française. Bilan et perspective*. Paris/Alger : Publisud/OPU.
- R. Mortimer (1984a), *The Third World Coalition in International Politics*. Boulder : Westview Press.
- R. Mortimer (1984b), "Global Economy and African Foreign Policy : the Algerian Model" in *The African Studies Review*, 27 (1), pp. 1-22.
- R. Mortimer (1991), "Islam and Multiparty Politics in Algeria" in *The Middle East Journal*, 45 (4), pp. 575-93.
- R. Mortimer (1992), "Algerian Foreign Policy in Transition" in J. Entelis & P. Naylor (eds.), pp. 241-266.
- M. Naudy (1993), *Un Crime d'Etats. L'affaire Mécili*. Paris : Albin Michel
- P. Naylor (1992), "French-Algerian Relations, 1980-1990" in J. Entelis & P. Naylor (eds.), pp.217-40.
- T. Niblock (1993), "Towards a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Middle East (CSCM)" in G. Nonneman (ed.), pp. 251-5.
- G. Nonneman (ed.) (1993), *The Middle East and Europe. The Search for Stability and Integration*. London : Federal Trust for Education and Research (second edition).
- Notes de la fondation Saint-Simon (1995), *Comprendre l'Algérie*, 73. Paris : Saint-Simon.
- M. Ollivier (1987), "L'économie algérienne vingt ans après 1966 : l'indépendance nationale en question" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1985, 24, pp. 417-57. Paris : CNRS.
- M. Ortega (1993), "Structures pour la sécurité et la coopération en Méditerranée occidentale" in *Etudes internationales*, 49 (4), pp. 70-103.
- C. Pellegrini (1992), *Le FIS en France, mythe ou réalité ?* Paris : Edition*1
- R. Pelletreau, D. Pipes & J. Esposito (1994), "Symposium : Resurgent Islam in the Middle East" in *Middle East Policy*, 3 (2), pp. 1-21.
- V. Perthes (1994), "The German View of the Maghreb" (address given at the conference "The Future of the Maghrib", organised by the Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Centre, 6-7 October 1994, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London).
- K. Pfeifer (1992), "Economic Liberalization in the 1980s : Algeria in Comparative Perspective" in J. Entelis & P. Naylor (eds.), pp. 97-116.

- H. Roberts (1988), "Radical Islamism and the Dilemma of Algerian Nationalism : the Embattled Arians of Algiers" in *Third World Quarterly*, 10 (2), pp. 556-89.
- H. Roberts (1993a), "The Algerian State and the Challenge of Democracy" in *Government and Opposition*, 27 (4), pp. 433-54.
- H. Roberts (1993b), "The FLN. French Conceptions, Algerian Realities" in G. Joffé (ed.) (1993a), pp. 111-41.
- H. Roberts (1994a), "Algeria between Eradicators and Conciliators" in *Middle East Report*, 189, pp.24-7.
- H. Roberts (1994b), "Meddling with Algeria Burns" in *Index on Censorship*, 23 (4/5), pp. 154-60.
- M. Rodinson (1988), *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*. London : I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.
- A. Rouadjia (1990), *Les Frères et la mosquée. Enquête sur le mouvement islamiste en Algérie*. Paris : Karthala.
- A. Rouadjia (1995a), "L'armée et les islamistes : le compromis impossible ?" in *Esprit*, 208, pp. 105-18.
- A. Rouadjia (1995b), "Corruption : le pillage légalisé" in *Croissance*, 379, pp. 36-8.
- F. Rouziek (1989), "Chroniques intérieures. Algérie" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1987*, 26, pp. 549-81. Paris : CNRS.
- F. Rouziek (1990), "Chronique algérienne" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1988*, 27, pp. 575-627. Paris : CNRS.
- F. Rouziek (1991), "Chronique algérienne" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1989*, 28, pp. 533-88. Paris : CNRS.
- F. Rouziek (1992), "Chronique algérienne" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1990*, 29, pp. 635-75. Paris : CNRS.
- F. Rouziek (1993), "Chronique algérienne" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1991*, 30, pp. 597-643. Paris : CNRS.
- J. Ruedy (1992), *Modern Algeria. The Origins and Development of a Nation*. Bloomington : Indiana University Press.
- C. Rulleau (1989), "La nouvelle Constitution algérienne : une volte-face complète" in *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, 14, pp. 157-69.
- L. Rummel (1992), "Privatization and Democratization in Algeria" in J. Entelis & P. Naylor (eds.), pp. 53-71.
- R. Saadi (1984), "La restructuration des entreprises d'Etat : essai de présentation analytique" in *Revue algérienne des sciences juridiques, économiques et politiques*, 21 (2), pp. 263-78.
- S. Sadi (1992), *Plate-forme pour l'Algérie républicaine. Réinventer novembre*
- E. Said (1991), *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient*. London : Penguin Books (third edition).

- G. Salamé (1993), "Islam and the West" in *Foreign Policy*, 90, pp. 22-37.
- H. Sanson (1983), *Laïcité islamique en Algérie*. Paris : CNRS.
- D. Schnapper (1994), "The Debate on Immigration and the Crisis of National Identity" in *West European Politics*, 17 (2), pp. 127-39.
- C. Silberzahn (1995), *Au Cœur du secret. 1500 jours aux commandes de la DGSE. 1989-1993*. Paris : Fayard.
- C. Spencer (1993), *The Maghreb in the 1990s. Political and Economic Developments in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia*. (Adelphi Paper, 274). London : IISS/Brassey's
- C. Spencer (1994), "Algeria in Crisis" in *Survival*, 36 (2), pp. 149-63.
- B. Stora (1993), "L'Islamisme algérien" in *Esprit*, 196, pp. 163-7.
- K. Sutton & A. Aghrout (1992), "Agricultural Policy in Algeria in the 1980s : Progress towards Liberalization" in *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 26 (2), pp. 250-73.
- A. Sydnes (1989), *The Franco-Algerian Affair : Love and Hate in Natural Gas Trade*. Lysaker : The Fridtjof Narsen Institute.
- L. Tahla (1993), "Relations Europe-Maghreb. La question des investissements directs" in *Revue Tiers-Monde*, 34 (136), pp. 927-35.
- H. Terrel (1994), "L'enclave islamique de la rue Jean-Pierre Timbaud" in G. Kepel (dir.) (1994a), pp. 347-63
- J. Touscouz (1981), "Le parti socialiste français et la coopération avec le Tiers-Monde" in *Politique étrangère*, 46 (4), pp. 875-89.
- M. Tozy (1993), "Islam and the State" in I. Zartman & W. Habeeb (eds.), pp. 102-22.
- Y. Troquet (le) (1994), "Maghreb. Chronique internationale" in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord 1992*, 31, pp. 475-523. Paris : CNRS.
- J. Tzschaschel (1993), "Algeria Torn between Fundamentalism and Democracy" in *Aussenpolitik*, 44 (1), pp. 23-34
- K. Waltz (1979), *Theory of International Politics*. Reading : Addison-Wesley.
- C. Wauthier (1995), *Quatre Présidents et l'Afrique. De Gaulle, Pompidou, Giscard d'Estaing, Mitterrand*. Paris : Le Seuil, 1995.
- P. Weil & J. Crowley (1994), "Integration in Theory and Practice : A Comparison of France and Britain" in *West European Politics*, 17 (2), pp. 110-26.
- C. Withol de Wenden (1991), "Les beurs et la guerre" in *Esprit*, 172, pp. 102-7.
- C. Withol de Wenden (1992a), "L'immigration maghrébine, entre une représentation figée du passé et une perception fantasmagorique du présent" in K. Basfao & JR. Henry (dir.), pp. 391-400.

- C. Withol de Wenden (1992b), "Immigration et imaginaire" in E. Rude-Antoine (dir.), *L'Immigration face aux lois de la République*. Paris : Karthala, pp. 69-81.
- A. Yefsah (1994), "L'armée et le pouvoir en Algérie de 1962 à 1992" in PR. Baduel (dir.), pp.77-94
- I. Zartman (1985), "Political Dynamics of the Maghrib : the Cultural Dialectic" in H. Barakat (ed.), *Contemporary North Africa. Issues of Development and Integration*. London : Croom Helm, pp. 20-36.
- I. Zartman & A. Bassani (1987), *The Algerian Gas Negotiations*. Washington D.C. : Foreign Policy Institute.
- I. Zartman & D. Habeeb (eds.), *Polity and Society in Contemporary North Africa*. Boulder : Westview Press.
- S. Zéghidour (1990), "Pour un nouvelle légalité islamique. Entretien avec Abbassi Madani" in *Politique internationale*, 49, pp. 177-92.
- A. Zerouali (1994), "The People's Choice" in *Index on Censorship*, 23 (4/5), pp. 163-5.
- R. Zouaimia (1991), "Le régime de l'investissement international en Algérie" in *Revue algérienne des sciences juridiques, économiques et politiques*, 29 (3), pp. 403-32.
- S. Zubaida (1993), *Islam, the People and the State. Essays on Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East*. London : I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. (second edition).

The Press

Algerian press : Press cuts of the Centre Culturel de la République Algérienne, Paris.

French press : Press cuts of the Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Grenoble.

Personal press reviews : *Europe Daily Bulletin*

Le Monde

MEED

MEI

Petroleum Economist