

*Chaillot Papers*

- 4 -

September 1992

ALGERIA: ADVERSARIES  
IN SEARCH OF  
UNCERTAIN COMPROMISES

————— Rémy Leveau —————

INSTITUT  
D'ETUDES  
DE SECURITE  
UNION DE L'EUROPE OCCIDENTALE



INSTITUTE  
FOR SECURITY  
STUDIES  
WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

## **ALGERIA: ADVERSARIES IN SEARCH OF UNCERTAIN COMPROMISES**

**Rémy Leveau**

**September 1992**

© Institute for Security Studies of WEU 1996. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photo-copying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the Institute for Security Studies of WEU.

ISSN 1017-7566

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Preface**

**Introduction**

**The context of *coup d'état***

**The forces involved in the crisis**

**Questions and scenarios**

**Postscript**

## **PREFACE**

Earlier this year the Institute asked Professor Rémy Leveau to prepare a study on 'Algeria: adversaries in search of uncertain compromises.' This was discussed at a meeting of specialists on North African politics held in the Institute. In view of the continuing importance of developments in Algeria the Institute asked Professor Leveau to prepare this revised version of his paper for wider circulation.

We are very grateful to Professor Leveau for having prepared this stimulating and enlightening analysis of developments which are also of importance to Algeria's European neighbours. We are also grateful to those who took part in the discussion of earlier drafts of this paper.

John Roper  
Paris, September 1992

- v -

Algeria: adversaries

in search of

uncertain compromises

Rémy Leveau

# INTRODUCTION

The perception of Islamic movements has been marked in Europe since 1979 by images of the Iranian revolution: hostages in the American Embassy, support for international terrorism, incidents at the mosque in Mecca and the Salman Rushdie affair. The dominant rhetoric of the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) in Algeria, which has since 1989 presented a similar image of rejection of internal state order and of the international system, strengthens the feeling of an identity of aims and of a bloc of hostile attitudes. If such a simplistic analysis were accepted, the need for careful thought on the rhetoric and practice of this radical Islamic movement would of course be unnecessary.<sup>(1)</sup> Such a movement has certainly borrowed from the dominant ideologies a vocabulary of global protest against the order established following independence which will go much further than the questioning by Marxist intellectuals in the 1960s. It will take up against the FLN (National Liberation Front) one of the themes of the Boumedienne era - the fact that independence is as yet unattained - and on the basis of this demand the institution of an Islamic state whose form is vague and uncompromising.

But this total opposition conceals a complex situation. The Islamic protest was for long tolerated, even encouraged, at the highest levels of the ruling power, which wanted to use it as a means to fight leftist tendencies, in the universities at the beginning of the 1980s, and then from 1988-89 as a force to oppose a single party that was not open to the idea of economic reforms. In a context of political change imposed from above the members of this Islamic movement found their legal existence recognised and that they have a place in the institutional game. In return, without abandoning radical Islamic rhetoric they renounced the strategy of terrorist violence such as was practised from 1982 to 1987 by Bouyali's clandestine movement. The harnessing and channelling of the violence of those excluded from society, which they achieved during the riots of October 1988, places them in a progressively legal and institutional framework and paves the way for their minimal integration into the political system of marginalised social groups, something which no organised body has previously been able to achieve. But this strategy of compromise is accompanied by a rhetoric of global protest against the dominant party which has constituted the hallmark of the FIS. In fact these themes worked to the advantage of a head of state who, being unable to control the old political structure of the FLN in its totality, tried to free himself of its weighty constraints. Through a discourse of democratic openness which borrowed from the dominant currents of ideas, particularly after the political transformations in the East, President Chadli wished at one and the same time to reduce the appeal of the FIS, which provided an organised structure for the Islamic movement from March 1989, broke the influence of the FLN, which remained the main obstacle to democratisation and limited the role of the army from which he came. The army seems unevenly committed to the idea of reforms and could, in alliance with the barons of the FLN, rid itself of a head of state without any prestige of his own who governed by preventing his opponents from forming a coherent coalition to overthrow him. This openly precarious situation for long sufficed to ensure his durability.

This context is very far from an Iranian-style revolutionary interplay. An Islam which flaunts its own radical nature actually lends itself to a political game very akin to the

practices of the radical socialism of the Third Republic in France which flourished in colonial Algeria. The opposition between irreconcilable positions accepted social practices in which adversaries avoided confronting each other in destructive combat. This attitude was apparently even more in evidence on the FIS side, which has since its establishment been careful to indicate how far it will go in its actions so that they do not lead to direct confrontation with an army which is a much more formidable adversary than the FLN. When, in September 1989, it officially took its place on the Algerian political scene, the FIS remained ambiguous in nature. It was both a global social movement and a political party. On the one hand it demanded a complete change in the functioning of the system, and this earned it a large part of its support and legitimacy; on the other hand it collaborated in a game of balancing of forces which assured its survival and enabled it to approach the threshold of power through democratic processes. But in the immediate future this tactic also favours the maintenance in office of the president, neutralising a possible alliance of the FLN and the army. This unstable equilibrium, in which each of the players can be thwarted by forces over which it does not have great control and remains therefore at the mercy of the unforeseen, gives a far better picture of the situation in Algeria since 1988 than any abstract reference to the Iranian revolution.

## **THE CONTEXT OF THE *COUP D'ETAT***

The interruption of this process by a legalised military *coup d'état* on 11 January 1992 is doubtless only an interim stage in a process of change that began after the riots in Algiers in October 1988. The uncertain equilibrium could suddenly be upset by excessive gains by one of the parties and by the risk of elimination of the military who indirectly assured the stability of the whole.

### **Pluralism and economic reforms**

It is essential briefly to put into perspective the change that has taken place since 1988 in order to understand the immediate context of the *coup d'état*. President Chadli was the central player during that period because he had institutional powers which the crisis of 1988 had strengthened. He was also to be at the origin of a process of overall change in Algerian society, which he has tried since 1986 to change from a state-controlled system to a market economy, in particular reducing the cost of a state apparatus which oil revenues could no longer sustain once the price per barrel fell from \$40 to \$18. In November 1990 the number of people out of work exceeded 1.5 million, and included 40% of young people coming onto the labour market. The population has tripled since independence and will further increase over the next ten or so years at about 3% per annum. If petrol revenues measured in dollars are falling (-14% in 1991), when expressed in dinars they are increasing because of the strong depreciation of that currency. In 1991 this situation led to a fall in imports of 19% which had a much greater effect on investments than on consumer goods. The national debt could amount to \$28 billion, with a strong increase of the short-term debt and servicing of the debt, which exceeds 70% of exports. In these conditions a rapid improvement in Algeria's economic situation seems very unlikely, even though the country has resources which can be exploited that are very much greater than those of neighbouring countries. Algeria spends more than it earns, and to avoid the humiliation of an appearance before the IMF its leaders are going to great lengths to subject the country to stringent treatment in the hope of rebuilding an open economy on a healthy basis. But it will be necessary to reduce the state's inordinate running costs and those of a generalised system of assistance to the population in the indiscriminate cover of its needs in basic foodstuffs, housing, employment and health care. The demographic growth, the development of education and the constant comparison that the Algerian population makes with the outside world through émigrés and television further create a situation of constant frustration in which imaginary needs are added to real ones. Dissatisfaction and discontent with the government form one of the basic factors of the political system but they had little chance of leading to real changes, other than through brief outbursts of revolt, so long as the government was portrayed both as authoritarian and egalitarian but not prepared to use universal suffrage to allow such dissent to become manifest.

### **The break with the FLN**

The constitutional changes which occurred in November 1988 and February 1989 were significant stages in a process that was to pass almost unnoticed. They were to lead directly by referendum, without any debate in the Assembly, to the modification of the constitution of 1976 on the points where it specifically precluded any



modification: the choice of socialism as a system and the political monopoly of the FLN. Certainly, the president dissociated himself from the FLN, but got himself re-elected as the only candidate by using controversial methods more indicative of continuity than of change. His political rhetoric proclaimed democratic openness at a time when the single party system was receiving no support within the country or outside. The continuity of power was in 1988 still personified in the Prime Minister Kasdi Merbah, who appeared in many respects to be the strong man of the government.

In abandoning the single party system, a presidential regime was instituted which was all the more easily accepted since the political class saw Chadli as a transitional president who would not really exercise the powers which he held. The text of 1976 and the reforms of 1989 do in fact bring together under the control of the president the essential elements of sovereignty, in particular defence and foreign relations. The government is responsible both to the Assembly and to the president but the latter has the right to dissolve the Assembly and the right to put to the people a referendum on modifications of the constitution. The constitution also gives exceptional powers to the president, concerning a state of siege or state of emergency, which permits government by decree. The Algerian political class had without noticing it accepted this legal concentration of power, thinking that the political reality already went far beyond the constitutional model. But the equilibrium of the whole depended on the checks and pressures which a civil and military oligarchy could bring to bear on the president. The FLN's congress of December 1989 had surrounded him with a political office where the former leaders of the Boumedienne period, Bouteflika and Yahyaoui, who had been his rivals at the time of the 1979 succession, played a dominant role. Rather than pursue a struggle within the party whose outcome was uncertain, the president was to make use of institutions to break the FLN's political monopoly and find himself a new role as arbitrator. To do that he had to give real content to the pluralism instituted by the constitution, since in 1989 every one still believed in the inevitable success of the FLN in the coming elections, along the lines of that of the RCD (Democratic Constitutional Rally) in Tunisia in April 1989.

### **The legal establishment of the FIS**

The legalisation of the FIS in September 1989 thus appeared to the Merbah government, then the Hamrouche government the following month, as the only possible way of avoiding both the FLN winning over half of the seats in the local elections in June 1990 and new attempts being made at openness. The FFS (Socialist Forces Front) of Ait Ahmed and the Algerian RCD (essentially Berber) did not then appear as parties which had gained sufficient ground. Uncertain of their influence and unhappy with their relationship with the government they advocated abstention at the local elections. This was also true for Ben Bella, who remained in exile, wishing to present himself as the unifier of the various currents opposing the president. The latter had no other choice but to support independent candidates discreetly and indirectly to be conciliatory towards the FIS, which rapidly built up its leadership and its local positions by exploiting the sympathy of some of the FLN's leaders and by making use of the network of 8,000 mosques it claimed to control. On the other hand the government presided over by Kasdi Merbah at the end of October 1988 had preferred another path, managing pluralism by being careful to favour the FLN in the allocation of the organs of the press and a considerable amount of real estate. Political

diversification was in fact only envisaged by it in favour of the Algerian RCD, which could present a liberal side of the official ideology. The government was only won over to the idea of legalising the FIS as a result of pressure from the President.

A paradoxical situation arose during the local elections of 12 June 1990. The FLN, the former dominant party was demoralised and did not rally to the government. It nevertheless believed in its victory, hoping to benefit from a reflex of loyalty and a fear of the unknown. It also hoped to have the traditional administrative support. Yet the army had left the political bureau and the central committee of the FLN from the moment a pluralist context was instituted. The FLN had also lost a large part of the administration's support, and financial difficulties were threatening its apparatus, weakened by the departure of the military when it opposed the presidency. This was in striking contrast with Tunisia, where Ben Ali had reassumed the leadership of the RCD in a pluralist context by getting rid of the old leadership but on the other hand keeping for the party a dominant place in the running of the institutions.

In June 1990 a state of complete confusion set in. Although only recently organised, the FIS had managed to bring together in a relatively structured party the areas of influence of the numerous informal groups that claimed to be based on Islam. By using not only the network of mosques, but also teachers from various levels and disciplines, it had very rapidly built up an opposition force that could readily be stirred into action. Its electoral results reflected and added to the disarray in the camps of its opponents. Associated with the idea that it was the only party to voice an absolute opposition to an old order which had no defenders, its success was met with amazement and disbelief. In the eyes of the political class it was branded with a kind of illegitimacy. There was talk of a manipulation of the voting offices and the massive abstention of 34% of which the FIS was to boast was cited to put into perspective the fact that it had obtained 54% of the votes cast and 65% of the seats. The secondary place of local government in the institutional structure was also stressed. The FIS for its part claimed 6 million members or followers but numbered only 4,331,472 electors in June 1990. These figures were none the less roughly double those obtained by the FLN.

### **The chadli-FIS complementarity**

Far from driving the leaders of the FIS into strategies actively aimed at taking power these results, which were better than hoped for, encouraged them to adopt a determined prudence. They were to be wary of demanding the departure of a president who was for them in fact a hidden ally. The attacks on France which have since independence always served as a basis for political credibility gave them an outlet. On his side the president remained silent and tried to turn the situation to his advantage while letting it be known that he was ready to go once the political transition had been accomplished. He let the FIS occupy the ground and install itself at the head of the towns. In the meantime, the discreet contacts which had been kept up for some months with Ben Bella to organise his return to Algeria were to yield results at the end of July. The former FLN leader presented the advantage of competing on the territory of the FIS and also constituted a rival for Ait Ahmed, the leader of the FFS. The victory of the FIS had reduced his demands regarding the government in place, but on his return it was seen that he had totally lost the attention of the younger generation without managing, while he was in exile, to maintain the support of the

older generations. He did not therefore represent the trump card that the government expected and the president had to resign himself to a far clearer personal involvement in the political interplay by supporting the Prime Minister, Mouloud Hamrouche, installed in September 1989 as a replacement for Kasdi Merbah, in a programme of accelerated economic reforms.

To have the field free, the government had to commit itself to a political timetable. Initially the FIS wanted legislative elections to be held following the local elections but the Gulf crisis had just pushed the internal political debate to the sidelines. It even had the effect initially of creating a certain amount of disarray in the ranks of the FIS and its supporters. However, the rallying to the movement of a public that was widely supportive of Saddam Hussein was to bring it back to the centre of the political debate.

Having exploited to the full the time it had gained, the Hamrouche government then embarked upon a complex and risky operation. It wished at one and the same time to rob the FIS of its attraction and regain control of the FLN by offering government support for the party during the elections. Incidentally the president also wished to limit the ability of the military to intervene by using them as a counterweight to the Islamic movement. During this difficult period of transition the approaching war was to reinforce the weight of the Islamic movement. Moreover, other currents within the FLN centred on Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi were drawing closer to that movement. Faced with an Assembly which brought together all the tendencies of the FLN in a conservative, corporatist reaction and used its powers of control to hinder the government's reforms, the president was not too inclined to resist the calls from the FIS for early elections. In many respects the relations of Chadli and the FLN resembled those of Gorbachev and the CPSU. To carry through his reforms he would have to weaken the party, but could not do so beyond certain limits without bringing into question his own power. When the FIS embarked on this strategy of attempting to maintain an unstable equilibrium, it was already too powerful to assume the role of a secondary force. After the riots of October 1988, having lost its legitimacy the apparatus of state was prevented from openly maintaining the restrictions and malpractices of the past. The press had acquired a liking for freedom and the international spotlight turned on Algeria prevented it from following the same path as Ben Ali's Tunisia.

### **The enthusiasm engendered by the Gulf crisis**

Had it not been for the Gulf crisis, President Chadli's chances of success would perhaps have been greater, but the enthusiasm of the public was to increase the feeling that the state was fragile. In this particular instance the FIS abandoned its tactics of reserve and prudence and found itself facing the army. Did some of its leaders really think that they could then mobilise the popular feeling of hostility towards the West and channel it against a hesitant and timorous state? There was at this time certainly not any FIS strategy of gaining power by force. But the determination to weaken the state and to defy the army was evident when on 18 January 1991 the Imam Belhadj, dressed in combat uniform, wanted to lead a demonstration of volunteers for Iraq outside the Ministry of Defence. He denounced 'the regimes which buy arms to wage war and use them against the people.' He also demanded the opening of camps to volunteers and the distribution of weapons to those who wished to take part in the

*jihad*. Indirectly the FIS expressed its doubts on the ability of the Algerian army to retaliate to a Western aggression and demanded that militias be formed. The army was bound to see these statements as a provocation and an attempt to destabilise the régime. The headline of the FIS's press on 20 January was: 'The Algerian army during the Gulf war: a lion when it is fighting us, an ostrich in wartime.' At that moment a number of the leaders of the FIS believed for a brief instant that they could divide the army and neutralise its political role.

The demonstrations, speeches and newspaper articles of the FIS during the active phase of the Gulf crisis had hardened in tone. They proclaimed the illegitimacy of the government and attacked the army. Iraq was merely a pretext, the leaders of the FIS having no sympathy for Saddam Hussein. But for the first time since 1988 it appeared that they were abandoning their strategy of prudence and resorting to personal attacks on the country's leadership. Did they hope to turn their karate clubs into the nuclei of a militia which would train young people with nothing to do who wanted to fight for Iraq? Conscious of the risks they were running, their leaders declared that the army would not fire on the people, and that the FIS had sympathisers at all levels within the army. At the same time they continued to show restraint and not to give way to the temptation of responding with violence to the restrictions imposed on them and the provocations which accompanied all of their demonstrations. In addition to the claims linked to the (Gulf) crisis, they continued to use a political language, asking for both legislative elections and the departure of Chadli, in other words early presidential elections.

### **The army's response**

The response of the authorities was ambiguous. The army remained silent, increased the number of checks and mobilised troops around Algiers in numbers which showed its determination to maintain its unity and not to allow itself to be overawed by the crowds assembled by the Islamic movement. The president turned to the Assembly and responded to the FIS's aggressive rhetoric with a plea for reason, aligning himself with the FLN and announcing the holding of legislative elections within six months. True to form he gave some ground but regained the initiative, reckoning on the one hand to appease the FIS by setting a date for elections, and on the other to ensure the return of the FLN, which would be based on the Hamrouche government. In preparation for the election the latter made a particularly bold distribution of electoral constituencies which favoured independent candidates and incurred the hostility of the FIS. It also carried out a sort of putsch within the FLN in order to nominate candidates.

The army waited for the end of the Gulf war before making known its position, in April, in an anonymous editorial in its publication *Al Jaich*. The lessons it drew from the crisis were not the same as those of the Islamic movement. The text seemed to reply, with a calculated delay, to the arguments put forward by the Imam Belhadj in his speech at the end of January in front of the Ministry of Defence. It was also a firm warning to those who interpreted the army's earlier silence as fear on its part. For the army the Gulf war contained risks of Western hegemony which the Islamic movement was consciously or unconsciously helping. The argument was taken up again shortly after, on the theme of the threat from the north, by Sid Ahmed Ghozali, the Foreign Minister at the time. The military considered that Algeria could one day be the object

of an aggression like that experienced by Iraq. They were worried by the links which could develop, through the intermediary of the oil monarchies, between the Islamic movement and the Americans. They thought that the FIS would be seen by the Americans as a more acceptable partner than an Arab nationalist, modernising government that was hostile to Israel. An Iranian-style revolution would imperil Algeria's place in the international system. The army wished to remain the master of its own organisation and objectives and continue to make rational choices, including choices in the scientific domain, without having to accept the linguistic constraints imposed on the national education system.

# THE FORCES INVOLVED IN THE CRISIS

It can be considered that, after the Gulf crisis, the positions of the main actors

- the FIS, the army and the president - did not change. In the long term the FIS continued to be marked by the strategy of prudence and operating within the legal framework which characterised it from the first contacts of its future leaders with the government, long before its official recognition in September 1989. In the exceptional circumstances, it could however have been tempted to take advantage of the collapse of the state, or even to bring it about. But it was not unaware of the fact that it was easier to follow an aggressive line of rhetoric against the president, the FLN, the state and the government than against the army. When the crisis occurred, some may have been tempted to use language and act in a way which would divide the army and remove its legitimacy, knowing that it was the only remaining credible force in the entire political apparatus. The president said nothing, gained time and created for himself a margin of autonomy by playing on the antagonism of opponents who could not reach agreement on replacing him.

The army estimated that the FIS was more dangerous than ever, an enemy within and the theoretically potential ally of an American hegemonic enterprise which could get at Algeria by depriving it of advanced technology, in particular in the nuclear field. As a result of the crisis the army developed a sort of prudent nationalism, arguing internally in terms of national unity and the control of resources, and suspicious regarding the West and a Europe where the counterweight represented by the Soviet Union had disappeared. On his side the president continued to negotiate discreetly with the FIS and showed himself open to 'cohabitation', which would ensure his fourth mandate, if necessary at the cost of a compromise arranged at the expense of the military. The outcome was a legalised *coup d'état* that was disastrous regarding governmental legitimacy and whose effects on Algerian society could in the long term be as ineffective as the taking in hand of Poland by General Jaruzelski in December 1981 in the face of the Solidarity movement.

## **The strategy of the FIS - aggressive rhetoric and restraint of the rank and file**

The FIS has certainly lost part of its electorate since the local elections of 1990, but this disadvantage has been largely compensated by an electoral system which the government had failed to see would work very much to the advantage of the FIS.

Since June 1990 the FIS has been the central actor and any talk of its loss of influence has merely served to blind its adversaries and to make them commit errors. More than a party, the FIS was originally a global social movement which intended to make the entire nation conform to the observance of a religious practice that was particularly restrictive for the young and for women. The reference to a holy text which is supposed by its nature to provide a solution to all problems does not exempt the FIS from gradually constructing the elements of a programme and strategies laying down its relationship with the government in place.

The contradictions within the FIS stem in particular from the fact that it has also, since September 1989,<sup>(2)</sup> become a recognised political party working within the

framework of the institutions and taking advantage of a democratic structure which it declines to accept. It progresses in a constant state of ambiguity which prevents it from adhering to the principles of the change programmed by the president and thereby legitimising it, but for three years it has been able prudently to manage a relationship with the government which has led it to keep the majority of its actions in this framework. Its behaviour can be seen as both a renunciation of the romantic guerilla tactics which from 1982 to 1986 characterised Bouyali's `maquis' and a decision to restrict its collective action which in fact passed largely unnoticed since it was accompanied by a rhetoric of global and straightforward protest against the government. Its partisans and opponents alike will recall only this uncompromising rhetoric which is largely the basis of its credibility in comparison with the FLN, the president and the state.

The supporters of the FIS are known and their similarity to those of other Islamic movements can create the illusion that they are a known quantity. The majority are young town dwellers, between 18 and 35 years old and victims of unemployment and the frustrations created both by the failure of the government's policies and by what they perceive as the aggression of the outside world. There is no point in spending too long on these basic factors; greater attention could be given to the myths which have inspired its militants.

### **A militant rhetoric: the delegitimization of the government**

Foremost among these myths is to be found that of the ideal Islamic society of the time of the Prophet and his first companions, which is used to argue for the rejection of contemporary Algerian society. The beard and the *kamis* type of shirt are the symbols which these militants use to erect a barrier between themselves and a society which they want to reform, firstly by persuasion, but if necessary by corrective violence. The myth of the *intifada* is also used by them in the management of their increasingly violent relationship with the Algerian state and the forces of law and order. Television has brought them images of young people who manage to revolt using stones to oppose rifles, control their local area and punish collaborators. These images will become part of daily life and be used to delegitimise the opponents of the FIS, who are described as `Jews' or `infidels'.

Another myth which has been readapted, that of the FLN in the colonial struggle and of the clandestine organisation, is also used as a response to the theme of the war of liberation which forms the essence of the ideology of the government and the army. Here the comparison of the army to Massu's paratroops, and of the middle class which demonstrates for its liberties to `new *pieds noirs*', serves to define their own side and consign their opponents to a world with which it is not possible to come to terms. Certainly the Algerian Islamic militants can also represent a deep spiritual movement but the ideological exploitation of these sentiments by the movement's political élite constitutes another level of reality where the mobilising of the masses works in accordance with a model which divides Algerian society into two strongly antagonistic camps. Talk of bringing the masses onto the streets runs in opposition to the practice of restraint mentioned earlier.

## **Massive, ambiguous election results**

The elections of December 1991 also made this ability to mobilise support quantifiable and analysable. The figures are certainly not yet very detailed and a thorough local analysis would certainly be required to bring out the significance of what still appears to be more a social movement than a political party. With 3,260,222 votes at the first round of the legislative elections the FIS represented 24.9% of registered electors and 47.27% of the votes cast. It is indisputably the leading political party in Algeria, with over twice as many votes as those cast for the FLN. The FIS lost more than a million votes compared with the number gained in the local elections of June 1990 and could at the second round have seen this drop increased or reduced by the contribution of votes from the small Islamic parties or electors who had voted for independent candidates. The breakdown of the votes showed that this was above all an urban phenomenon in which Algiers and Constantine provided greater support to the Islamic movement than did Oran. The Kabylia region, the regions bordering the Sahara and the M'zab area gave results well below the average. The social structures and the local organisation of Islam there seemed to have resisted better the pressure of the FIS. On the other hand the FIS found in the area of Constantine support which had already been established in the movement in the 1930s of the *ulama* religious leaders. Regions disrupted to a great extent by colonisation and the rural areas largely depopulated by an exodus to the suburbs of Algiers (with the exception of Kabylia) gave more marked support to the FIS. The party undoubtedly has a very strong following, distributed unevenly over the country.

## **A movement that is organising itself**

An examination of the role of the FIS shows that it is a movement rooted in the past and in Algerian society. To start with, it was known that there existed religious movements, based on mosques and associations, which became more evident from the beginning of the 1980s. The government tolerated them and occasionally used them to oppose the Marxists in the universities. Participating in the debates on the language and on personal status, they wished to take over the widest possible area of society. They enjoyed the moral and financial support of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which doubtless saw in them the means to develop an internal opposition to the Algerian government, whose intervention on the Middle East scene they disliked. In this *milieu* were to be found once more Islamic associations as well as professional clerics like Sheikh Sahnouni or Ali Belhadj, teachers from the central faculties of Algiers like Abassi Madani, the holder of a Ph.D. in education from London University, engineers such as Hachani from the SONATRACH nationalised oil exploitation company, economists and entrepreneurs.

The FIS widened its influence thanks to the charismatic power of Abassi Madani and especially of Ali Belhadj, transmitted by a light structure which the principal leaders did not make public, as much through a preference for secrecy as through a desire to preserve their autonomy of decision. It seemed, however, that the party was organised around a political bureau composed of about a dozen members close to Abassi Madani and a *Majlis ech-Chouara*, a sort of central consultative committee of 35 to 45 members participating in important decisions. But the party evolved, borrowing from the personal power of its leader, a system of vague consensus among his entourage and the historic legitimacy of the founders, who wished to turn the *Majlis*



*ech-Chouarainto* a veritable controlling body. The all too brief and rather turbulent life of the FIS has done nothing to further the development of its institutional structure.

### **Elites tempted by compromise**

Permeated by currents, some of which were in favour of Arab solidarity and others of an Algerian Islamic movement, the FIS experienced increasing internal tension during the Gulf war. Thanks to crises and the ambiguous judgements of Madani, the Algerian tendency seemed to prevail, in particular after the arrest of the principal leaders. The provisional president, Hachani, then convened a conference 'of the faithful' at Batna and changed the composition of the directing bodies, of the *Majlis* and of the committees. Divisions and splits in the FIS then followed. One of the founding members of the *Majlis*, Said Guechi, left the leading group and is today in the government. After these debates the party was still dominated by a group of fairly young intellectuals who have had a modern training and who prefer a firm line of oratory but maintain very great prudence regarding the government, playing the game of institutional participation. Unfortunately for them, the victory of the FIS in the first round of the legislative elections was too sudden to allow them the time to find an accepted place in the system. Before the dissolution of the party the *Majlis* numbered around 85 members. This number was increased to take account of the various tendencies and in particular to ensure an equitable representation of the municipalities and the *wilayas* (prefectures) in the controlling bodies. These new members ensured the continuity of the watchword prudence and explained the sense of an electioneering strategy which contrasted with the leaders' ardent sermons.

### **A vision of external problems which is close to Arab nationalism**

For the FIS the real problems remained social ones. During the Gulf crisis its leaders, without having any particular sympathy for Saddam Hussein, were very quick to adopt an attitude which allowed them to obtain the strongest backing of the public and to put themselves in a position which challenged the government of the day in such a way as to make it lose its legitimacy. With no illusions over their chances of rapidly gaining power, their real objective was to shake the government as much as possible in order to negotiate advantages in terms of participation in decision-making and the control of society. Before the Gulf war, Saudi Arabia corresponded more closely than Iraq to their idea of the ideal régime. They then received considerable aid coming perhaps more from princes who wished for internal reasons to assist the spread of Islamic movements in other countries. A vice-president of the FIS, Abdelbaki Sahraoui, maintained these relationships which were suddenly broken at the time the war broke out when, in order to follow the evolution of Algerian public opinion, the FIS's newspaper sided with Iraq. Today Iran, via London, provides support which does not attain the same level as that which the Saudis provided. In a Maghrebi context they were near to Ghanouchi, the Tunisian leader of the MTI (Islamic Tendency Movement), yet without wishing to put themselves under his control. A success on their part would certainly lead them to seek an extension of their movement within the Maghreb, if only to defend themselves against external influences which would hardly be favourable to them.

Their position regarding Europe is far from clear. Public anti-French rhetoric is part of the style adopted by all parties in Algerian political life and the FIS hardly indulges in it any more than the FLN. Should any credence be given to the theories of the Algerian military and politicians on the role the FIS could play in the introduction of American influence into the Maghreb via the Saudis and the system of Islamic banks? Its leaders are fascinated by modern technology, such as automatic data processing and satellite telephone communications. One can imagine a discourse on their part on English as a privileged instrument for access to technology which would in fact be a discourse designed to undermine the legitimacy of the state and its French-speaking leadership, beginning with the military. But overall the FIS does not (yet) have a culture of power which leads it clearly to set out a programme with a precise economic or political context. Its preoccupations in foreign affairs are even less clarified. It aspires rather to a global social control and perhaps to a function of spokesman and defender of those on the margins of society which it could present as a temporary stage on the path to an Islamic republic. Much will depend on the solidity of the government it is opposing.

### **How can the FLN survive the rout?**

It is not necessary to carry out a similar analysis of the FLN. The party is known and its leaders have been in power since independence, often exercising it with competence and dogmatism. The collapse of their power is far from being as complete as that of the communist parties in the East. With 1,612,947 votes in December 1991 (12.17% of registered electors and 23.38% of votes cast) the FLN is still the second party. Its losses of over 600,000 votes since the local elections are comparable to those of the FIS. It is still firmly established in rural areas, where it has been able to fuse with the traditional social structures. It is absent from the towns and Kabylia. Dominating the National People's Assembly at the end of the Chadli presidency, it has for as long as possible used its bargaining power to negotiate compensation. The decision to declare a state of siege, and then the forced resignation of the president, deprive it of a representative. It can only be a screen for the military power, its leaders having the choice between exile and submission. Some former leaders of the party were tempted by an honourable compromise with the FIS, to which they offered their services. Particular attention must, however, be paid to the National Organisation of Mujaheddin, headed by Ali Kafi, which during the last elections put forward candidates in competition with the FLN. Having come from the FLN and being near to the new government, its leaders are developing the idea that the single party has played a historic role that is now overtaken by events and are offering their services to regain a major part of the nationalist heritage and the FLN's networks in the setting up of an anti-FIS coalition.

The FFS, which with 510,661 votes represents only 3.85% of electors and has 7.4% of votes polled - less than a third of the FLN's support and less than a sixth of that of the FIS - could also have a part to play in that project. Concentrated almost exclusively in Kabylia, a mountainous region to the east of Algiers (Tizi-Ouzou) populated in the main by Berbers, and in Algiers, where most of the seats in the second ballot would have been fought for between the FIS and the FFS, it has no national following. However, some observers consider that it would have won the second round in Algiers, which would have added to its political weight. As it decided to abstain from the local elections, changes in support for it cannot be estimated. Its situation logically

leads it to play the role of supporting force in the anti-FIS coalition. The place of the independent and democratic parties has no more than symbolic significance; they could equally be included in any prospective coalition.

### **The army: a nationalist, modernist `refusal front'**

The army has been active in the political debate since Algerian independence. Two heads of state have come directly from its ranks. In June 1991, when it decided to halt the electoral process that was under way by instituting a state of siege, it considered that the warning given in April after the Gulf crisis had not been heeded. It punished both the FIS, which wanted to take over on the streets, and the president who reacted, too weakly for its liking, by dismissing the Hamrouche government. It did not want either an electoral game in which the FIS would make far greater gains than in the local elections of 1990, or undisciplined unrest in which the FIS would dominate the streets of the large towns. But it imposed neither a ban on the Islamic party nor a halt to democratisation. It merely wished that skilful technocrats would not produce for it a result that went against its wishes. The Ghozali government in power since 20 June 1991 was not able to manage the interregnum in the way the army wished. It exhausted itself in quarrels with its predecessor, which had maintained control over the party and the Assembly. It had to negotiate the review of the allocation of constituencies and of the electoral law by taking the worst technical risks. The two-round majority ballot which was finally adopted works to the advantage of the best-placed party. The government believed it was making a concession to the FLN whereas in fact it favoured the FIS in an ill-considered fashion because it was not able to establish the instruments for gauging public opinion which would have allowed it to make a rational choice. Moreover, Ghozali and Hamrouche engaged in a confrontation over a future presidential election, in which both planned to be candidates. Faced with an Islamic party which is following a modest and prudent line, controlling its militants and avoiding any over-excitement in the hope of once again being the only credible force opposing the state, the politicians' response could have been to form a union that was credible in the eyes of the middle class who are anxious, and tempted to leave the country. The politicians' quarrels have undoubtedly deceived the military, who do not want to place themselves at the service of their ambitions and expected of the civilian technocrats a little more political wisdom and rather less pandering to supporters.

Once again the army is the only force that counts against the FIS. It is hardly at ease in a situation in which its intervention occurred in the worst conditions of illegitimacy. It is therefore above all looking for a solution which would allow it to leave the centre stage without having the feeling that its collective interests, or the responsibility of its leaders, could be challenged. It wants to return to a political situation in which the principles it stands for are not threatened and where the government is once again founded on solid bases, both within and outside the country. Each stage in its intervention requires a slow and delicate consensus to be obtained between the officers who matter in the Ministry of Defence, the army headquarters and those at the head of the services or formations in the military regions. Above all the army wants to avoid a situation in which it is divided and risks finding itself engaged in an internal conflict leading to violence. The ideas of the FIS do not seem to have affected this group of responsible officers. The greatest efforts of persuasion were used to obtain the support of those who were charged by Chadli with controlling

the army and the security services. The support of General Belkhir, the Interior Minister, was decisive, but to obtain this it was apparently necessary to wait for the disastrous results of the first round of the elections, which were a defeat for the services for which he was directly responsible. It was then that the decision was made, at the beginning of January, following the meeting of 180 senior officers at which they asked for the president's resignation. Belatedly, the army managed to carry out a defensive unifying action blocking a development which might, after a few months of FIS involvement, have led to risks of confrontation between members of the army. There is still no consensus within the army on accepting or imposing a line of conduct on civilian administrators, particularly regarding the state's role in running the economy.

Even though the Algerian army is a relatively opaque organisation, a number of remarks can be made. Firstly, this conscription-based army remained under the strict control of its hierarchy during the confrontation with the FIS, which was carried out with undoubted professionalism, without violence that is excessive in comparison with neighbouring countries in the Maghreb or the Middle East. The army opened fire on the demonstrators yet without losing credit by inflicting or sustaining heavy casualties.

Neither does the army wish to appear in the front line. Hamrouche, Ghozali and then Boudiaf have served as a screen for it. But their autonomy in relation to the military authorities is without doubt less than that which President Chadli, who was brought to power by his peers, enjoyed.

Those responsible for the services and the army formations are today no longer former *mujaheddin* but technical officers or technocrats, highly qualified professionally, and having a good knowledge of foreign armies. Among them are a relatively large number of DAF (officers who resigned from the French army at the time of the war of independence), first among them General Nezzar. These officers brought about a considerable qualitative change. They need an effective state which has the resources to carry through their plans for modernisation. The Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf crisis have led to strategic thinking among them which strengthens their nationalist reactions and develops their suspicion of the West while at the same time causing them to condemn the adventurist policy of Saddam Hussein. In their eyes the Islamic movement provides dangerous allies of the West to the extent that they weaken the capacity of the state to resist.

But the possibility for compromise between the army and the Islamic movement should not be under-estimated. Areas of overlap can exist between the defence of the nation and the defence of the *Ouma* (Muslim community). The military would certainly like to see the control and the integration of the dissidents assured by others. They realise that in this domain their intervention can only be marginal, and indirect ways of exercising authority are very much to be preferred to confrontation.

## QUESTIONS AND SCENARIOS

This description of the actors and their strategies already gives an idea of the evolution of the system and the compromises arrived at. Several questions still arise and various scenarios can be postulated with differing probabilities that they will actually happen. In the short term one can only record events and analyse the internal or external constraints which affect the system. Reflection on the medium or long term leads to wider possibilities and makes it possible to envisage various combinations.

The interruption of the electoral process in the first instance leaves one unanswered question: *would the FIS have exercised a totalitarian power?* Starting from the hypothesis that one is faced with, on the one hand, a social movement which has an interest in maintaining an absolutist rhetoric in order to keep the widest possible audience, and on the other an emerging political party which has managed to arrive at compromises and keep to its undertakings, the answer is bound to reflect this contradiction. To have a more detailed answer it would be necessary to be able to examine the internal debate, the transformations in the organisation since 1989 and even more from summer 1991 until its prohibition.

The banning of the party on 4 March 1992 and the arrest of its leaders is bound to leave the field open to the strategy of global social movement with once more its totalitarian rhetoric which will in turn justify the policies of coercion based on a fear of generalised conflagration.

This *scenario of conflagration* can nevertheless be set aside, as can *the complementary hypothesis of a collapse of the repressive system*. First, the FIS showed itself anxious not to go beyond its state of legality officially, hoping to avoid total prohibition for as long as possible. Once it was banned, it neither admitted nor denied responsibility for the attacks on police officers (usually of modest rank). Initially, its leaders also doubtless had in mind the disproportion of the forces involved and did not wish to bring about violent confrontation. The government for its part chose to exercise repression that was calculated in its effects but administered in massive doses, aiming to dismember the FIS through the multiplication of administrative internments of unspecified duration. The method seems to be an effective way of breaking up the leadership. However, it cannot be pursued indefinitely without placing Algeria in a difficult position internationally in terms of human rights. It risks resulting in an evolving *intifada* type of response among young people who are deprived of any moderating influence. The government's strategy can also be questioned; this seems to be designed to push the militants of the FIS into committing offences so as to justify a repression already widely practised, ensure the solidarity of the middle class and the indulgence of other countries. Risks of radicalisation can also result from massive internment (according to the government, 7,000 people are currently detained; independent observers put the figure at more than twice that number and the FIS even suggested a figure of 30,000 in April). Large numbers were released from internment in June 1992 on the occasion of the Aid El Kebir. The number of those detained should not now be more than 5,000, and of these there is a nucleus of a few hundred police and soldiers who are isolated from the other detainees.

A broader militant base will without doubt emerge radicalised from its time in the detention camps in the Sahara. For it only talk of a total rupture is acceptable, in presenting itself as the expression of the aspirations of the whole of the population. But to imagine that this totalitarian type of rhetoric can be transformed into a programme of action that is put into practice is as unrealistic as to expect in the immediate future a theorisation of the practice of compromise. It suffices to recall that the accession by the FIS to unlimited power, and therefore the only way of testing whether or not it is totalitarian in nature, would presuppose the collapse of the state and the Algerian army, the neutralisation of neighbouring Maghrebi countries and an ability to intimidate the international environment.

For the moment the threat of urban guerilla warfare does not seem unbearable. The attacks on barracks and police stations prove that those who are trying to obtain weapons do not have appreciable sources of supply outside the country. The system of repression is not breaking down and can if need be count on the support of neighbouring countries. The army is exhibiting cohesion and effectiveness in controlling the country but it certainly does not want to see this restrictive situation lasting.

If there is neither conflagration nor collapse, it can be imagined that the government will first try *a strategy of coming to terms with spokesmen which it designates itself*. The absorption of the dissidents of the FIS, Said Guelchi being placed in the government and Merrani in the office of the presidency, would seem to be the first signs of such a strategy. Dialogue could be pursued in the country areas, either with the municipal councils in existence or with provisional administrators from backgrounds acceptable to the militants of the FIS. These are no doubt less cut off than is thought, even by the regional and family networks of Algerian governing circles. In the provinces, in particular in the area of Constantine, the two groups can still find a way to influence each other. Logically, the phase of discussions with designated spokesmen should lead to negotiations with more representative partners. But it could last some time and in particular lead to the liberation of detainees at the end of Ramadan. For the government the readmission of the dissidents would mean it did not have to reverse the banning of the FIS. Paradoxically, this attitude ends in treating the FIS as a political party whose followers would be tempted away by passing over its aspect of social movement. It stems from the hypothesis that the FIS will in the ordeal of confrontation have lost part of its influence and its electorate, notably those who had joined it out of opportunism in expectation of the collapse of the army and the state. The repression and ban destroyed the myth of an invincible FIS created by its leaders' rhetoric.

The reintegration of the militants of the FIS by means of associations and new parties allied to independent groups supported by the government seems possible. But this will not happen solely on the terms and on the ground chosen by the government. To embark on this course the government will have itself to accept its responsibility, in the form of concessions to spokesmen designated by it, to meet the claims of the FIS since that party has expressed in large measure the aspirations of Algerian society. The fight against corruption, beginning with trials of former leaders, and the return to an Arab nationalist discourse, which combined with the rhetoric of the FIS on themes close to those which were put forward at the time of the Gulf crisis, and presented in

the form of a resumption of the heritage of 1 November 1954, could form part of this. Of course this will have to be accompanied by the release of the militants and the Islamic leaders if the government feels sufficiently in command once more to involve the country in another election in the next two years.

This hypothesis of coming to terms with the FIS does not take into account the nature of the FIS as a social movement, nor the ability to mobilise the population which its charismatic leaders like Abassi and Belhadj possess, as well as the cohesion, which is on the whole assured, of a young party which had previously been able to remain organised and keep control of its militants in the period of tension which preceded its prohibition. The government cannot, if it wants to, turn Abassi into a new Mandela. It can therefore, so far as the policy of recuperation brings it broadly into line with the FIS, see what would be the price to be paid in order to enjoy the active support of the organisation and retrieve its capacity to control the militants and the urban masses. To regain legitimacy, the government will be obliged to be nationalist and Islamic in its rhetoric and, doubtless, to go further towards *the search for a compromise*.

In this third hypothesis the parties involved could resume the discussion on the process of institutionalisation but end in agreement, before the elections, on their respective roles and the extent and limits of their powers. A different type of ballot and the forming of coalitions would accentuate the effects of the FIS's loss of influence that has been seen in the loss of support between elections so as to make its participation in the institutions acceptable. There the FIS could, at both local and national level, exercise the functions of defender of the marginalised elements of society and the moral controller of society, in exchange for the legitimising of power brought about by its participation in the institutions. Will the FIS obtain the backing necessary to carry out the Herculean task of sweeping out corruption which would be difficult to stop at the doors of the military? A common theme of opposition to the West would bring it closer to the army. The basis for compromise between these two partners could then be achieved by abandoning the control of a large part of civil society to the FIS, which would be responsible for limiting excesses of individual liberty and the temptations of consumer society. The army and the technocrats would be entrusted with the management of the state and of national independence without either of the partners being able to threaten the other.

Their access to power and the repression they have endured have made the leaders of the FIS even more sensitive to internal restraints (the army and the economy) as well as to external ones. But this adjustment implies that the FIS will develop so as to renounce, in time, both its aspect of a social movement with unclear and absolutist objectives and its millenarian rhetoric.

The political dialogue in which its leaders engaged since 1988 had weakened its capacity to mobilise the electorate and multiplied internal rivalries and schisms. But it had also strengthened its organisational structure and drawn up a doctrine which better adapted it to practical problems of government. This evolution from a social movement aimed at a total transformation of society to a party that is limited in its means and objectives could be accompanied by a strategy with a restricted role for the state and use of market forces, tempered by Islamic solidarity. The working of the FIS at the local level, with its linking to the old family networks in the country and its modes of control of the urban areas in which the young are mobilised, but also by its

restraint on any move to violence against the authorities, could once more make this a possibility, depending above all on decisions on new elections.

Can the FIS gain extra support among the abstainers or the very many people who cast blank or invalid voting papers? Even if confrontations with the government weaken its electoral foundation it can be considered that even with a less advantageous method of voting, such as proportional representation, it would have a chance of gaining an overall majority. Only a system of the type where electoral lists are grouped would be likely to limit its success in fair elections. But it can be estimated that if Algeria has once more a free electoral system the first vote will be devoted to electing a president or will combine at least presidential and legislative elections. The problem of finding a presidential candidate who is acceptable both to the army and the FIS will then arise once more. Meanwhile the discussion of the review of texts or of charters of principles to be put to a referendum could serve to keep the system under control while avoiding any drift to violence.

Another form of compromise could emerge in a more authoritarian perspective based on the fact that the pursuit of the policy of economic austerity runs the risk of being accompanied by excesses resulting from any democratic openness. It would suppose a clearer involvement by the military guaranteeing the ground rules and clearly defining the limits of choice during a period of transition. This situation could be accompanied by a certain pluralism in the distribution of power comparable to that practised in Egypt and Morocco. In such a context elections are no longer factors of uncertainty and each party involved knows in advance what its share will be. Representatives of the Islamic movement in Egypt have no right to official recognition but a large degree of tolerance has enabled them to make use of the socialist party in order to gain access to parliament. The illegality of a religious party is thus compensated by the government's tolerance towards those who are able to limit manifestations of their opposition.

**May 1992**



## POSTSCRIPT

The assassination of Muhammad Boudiaf and his replacement at the head of the High State Council by Ali Kafi do not change the basic factors presented in the above attempt to put the political situation in Algeria into perspective, written last March.

Mr Boudiaf can be considered as an actor from outside who tried to achieve a degree of autonomy from the system. He was an inconvenience both to the Islamic extremists by his rejection of compromise and to the civilian and military technocrats by speaking out against corruption, not to mention his pro-Moroccan position in settling the question of the Western Sahara. Rumours in Algiers will not fail to attribute the responsibility for his assassination to some group or other.

A few simple observations can be made. In the first place the balance between the main groups has not been disturbed, and the fact that Boudiaf remained to a large extent outside the running of the political system is a contributory factor. Those who killed him were bent on attacking a symbol. Possibly they wanted at the same time to show that other leaders were not out of reach. In other domains, the functioning of the state institutions would have been disrupted to a greater extent if their target had been General Nezzar or Sid Ahmed Ghazali. There is therefore no reason to fear a collapse of the institutions. The nomination of Ali Kafi may at first reassure the former FLN apparatus. Representing the *Mujaheddin*, who are numerous in the east of the country, he can make use of social networks which have perhaps resisted change better than one might think. Bringing together, as a first step, the forces from the former government apparatus, he should be able to rely on them to support the policy of reform and economic openness undertaken by the prime minister and the governor of the Bank of Algeria. The implementation of this policy equally supposes eventually reaching a compromise with those leaders of the Islamic movement who would accept joining him by giving up the quest for power. Entering into a new electoral process seems at the moment to be risky as long as the economic reforms fail to yield satisfactory results. It will doubtless be necessary to wait several years for that. In the meantime the military will not be inclined to run risks which could put them back at centre stage, with the danger of an increase in the divisions within the army which could lead to violent confrontation.

The assassination of the president, the desertions and the arrests are signs of tensions, but tensions which do not call into question the overall functioning of the system or its ability to prevent the Islamic extremists gaining power. But managing those tensions may necessitate compromises with the most realistic of the government's adversaries so as to isolate and fight the most determined among them. It should be noted that the FIS has not claimed the president's assassination and that it is maintaining a prudent attitude of approving understanding regarding the other attacks which are aimed almost every day at the leaders of the forces of law and order. This support does not extend as far as claiming responsibility and appears to leave room for an initiative in which the movement could once again consider the state as a partner. If the Islamic extremists follow that course today they cannot expect to deal with weakened leaders such as President Chadli was and with whom they hoped to arrive at provisional compromises which would lead them to power. Their situation

bears more similarity to that of the Solidarity movement following the accession to power of General Jaruzelski in December 1981.

The military have for the time being halted a process which assured the Islamic movement a regular progression in the control of the government and society. They do not, however, envisage seizing power, which would put them in the front line in every domain and would risk increasing the divisions within the army. In addition, they are aware that, in order to be credible and so obtain external economic and political support, they need to broaden their base and reach a compromise with the moderate Islamic leaders. The comprehension of the latter is essential in order to get the country back to work, reduce the social cost of running the state and ensure that the Algerian economy joins the international system. There is a risk that these developments lead to unbearable tensions in a context of democratic struggle for power. Can solutions be envisaged which would result in forms of non-democratic representation between partners who agreed to abstain from mutual destruction? This experiment would certainly have a price in terms of the control of a part of the social field conceded to the Islamic movement. But generalised confrontation would certainly erode the hope of obtaining the outside help necessary for pursuing the economic reforms.

**July 1992**

1. The comparisons which will be made in this analysis can only give a condensed and illustrative view of a reality which has been the subject of very little serious empirical analysis apart from the work of Ahmed Rouadjia in his survey of the Islamic movement in Algeria, *Les Frères et la mosquée* (Paris: Karthala, 1990).

2. And for some of its future leaders the premises of this behaviour can be seen in their collaboration with the government to calm the agitation of October 1988.