

Counterinsurgency in the Battle of the Casbah

A Reassessment for the New Millenium and Its New Wars

By Anton Menning

The Algerian conflict of 1954-1962, memorably termed by Alistair Horne “a savage war of peace,” left a mixed legacy to counterinsurgency (COIN) warfare. On the one hand, the French lost, and their withdrawal from Algeria came amidst bitter recriminations over inhumane methods and tactics that played a substantial role in turning French domestic opinion against the war. Indeed, the film re-enactment of “The Battle of Algiers” has become something of a parable on “how not to” conduct counterinsurgency operations. On the other hand, Algeria—even more than Indochina—crystallized French thinking about counterinsurgency, contributing substantially to theoretical classics that remain important points of departure for the “how to” explicit in contemporary doctrine.¹

Whatever the contradictions inherent in the French counterinsurgency legacy, the Algerian conflict continues to merit attention on several counts. First, new materials illuminate both the excesses and the successes while helping to differentiate between the two.² Second, the sordid side of French methods, including torture and summary executions, has eclipsed an important success story in which other and less controversial measures and techniques played major—if not decisive—roles in choking out a full-blown insurgency. And, third, the Algerian conflict affords valuable insight into a version of counterinsurgency in which the struggle “for hearts and minds,” while important in the longer run, was less immediately salient than population control and unity among military, intelligence, and police efforts.

Without dwelling on the spectacular or denying the negative, the following remarks highlight less controversial aspects of French counterinsurgency strategies and techniques during “The Battle of the Casbah,” probably the most important chapter in the larger Battle of Algiers. Much of the action is seen through the eyes of two key participants, then-Lieutenant Colonel Roger Trinquier and then-Major Paul Aussaresses. These two officers worked closely together, and they symbolize both sides—the theoretical and the excessive—of the French COIN coin. Trinquier’s theoretical classic, *Modern Warfare*, based partially on his experiences in Algeria and published before (1961) the French withdrawal, outlines French counterinsurgency doctrine during the battle of Algiers. Meanwhile, Aussaresses’ recent and controversial memoir, *The Battle of the Casbah*, unrepentantly details the role played by the Action Service of the SDECE (*Service de Documentation Exterieur et de Contre-Espionnage*) in combating the Algerian insurgency. Because Trinquier was an intelligence officer and a liaison between French paratroopers and Aussaresses’ Action Service, whose stock in trade was intelligence, both officers’ accounts stress the overriding significance of intelligence. Aussaresses, meanwhile, shows that excesses tragically had their place. However, their role in larger theoretical and practical perspective likely imparted only momentum and a nasty edge to more prosaic and highly effective counterinsurgency measures. Both Trinquier and Aussaresses, for example, repeatedly emphasize the importance of population control and show that it was attainable without staggering numbers of troops and with *support from the population the military was seeking to control*.

Background

The Algerian War was an insurgency of incredible brutality fought between independence-minded Algerians and French colonials with substantial support from the French government. At the beginning of the conflict, the FLN (*Front Liberation Nationale*) was a fragmented insurgency organization without significant popular support. An intensive FLN campaign of violence aimed at both French colonials and fellow Algerians succeeded in terrorizing the native Muslim population into compliance and tacit support. At the same time, random FLN violence provoked French authorities into a cycle of ever tightening control measures over Muslims, further driving them to the insurgent movement. The *colons*, or French settlers, responded to FLN outrages with violence of their own. By the end of 1956, the country had descended into a state of civil war that permeated even the capital, Algiers.³

At the time, Algiers was a city of just under one million inhabitants, comprised overwhelmingly of *colons*, a rarity in a country dominated by native Algerians. Because Algiers was the economic and administrative center of the entire country, to lose the city meant losing the war. The strategic importance of the city was not lost on the FLN leadership. Its trump card in the dangerous insurgency game was the Casbah, 45 acres of twisting alleyways, cramped quarters, and 80,000 Muslim inhabitants who made it one of the most densely populated areas on earth.⁴ If the insurgents could destabilize and control Algiers from bases inside the Casbah, the rest of the country would be theirs and the movement for independence realized. A terrorist bomb exploded in the middle of Algiers commanded far more attention than any series of insurgent actions in the countryside. Therefore, on 7 January 1957, the French fed elite soldiers from the 10th

paratroop division (DP) under Brigadier General Jacques Massu into the cauldron that was Algiers. Many of these paratroopers and their officers were veterans of Indochina, where they had learned revolutionary war, or what Trinquier calls “modern war,” the hard way. French authorities also committed the SDECE to what grimly became known as “The Battle of Algiers.”

Opposing Force Structures

FLN leadership consisted of a five-member *Comite de coordination et d’execution* (CCE.) When the CCE elected to target Algiers, it created the Autonomous Zone of Algiers, or ZAA, for action within the capital city. Four figures dominated the ZAA council: a politico-military leader, a political assistant, a military assistant, and an assistant for external liaison and intelligence. They divided Algiers into three regions, with each region further subdivided into 10 zones. In turn, each zone consisted of 34 districts. A political organization within each district bore responsibility for political indoctrination and the collection of taxes, supplies, and intelligence. Trinquier was to observe that:

The structure was based on the demi-cell of three men, then the cell, the demi-group, the group, and the sub-district. Normally numbering 127 men, all were under the control of the district leader⁵.

With nearly 1,500 active members, the FLN/ZAA terrorist network in Algiers relied on classic terrorist cell organization. The military branch consisted of perhaps a hundred gunmen. The bombers comprised a separate group, answering only to the ZAA council through a series of letter boxes. This group was rigidly compartmentalized among bomb-builders, explosive suppliers, and bomb throwers. FLN sympathizers in Algiers

numbered between 4,500 and 5,000. They were important intelligence assets, with the ability to penetrate nearly every segment of Algiers society.⁶

French COIN elements in Algiers wore three faces: local police, paratroopers, and SDECE personnel. The local police numbered almost 1,000. They were overworked and overtaxed in the maintenance of law and order, and their ranks were riddled with FLN sympathizers and intelligence agents. Indeed, French authorities only grudgingly considered the police an operational asset in conducting counterinsurgency operations.⁷ Military assets included four undermanned regiments of paratroopers numbering in all about 3,200 soldiers, little more than one-half their authorized strength.⁸ The number of SDECE personnel remains uncertain, but they included penetration agents, a battalion of commandos in reserve, and experienced leaders like Aussaresses.

Modern War Defined

On the basis of what occurred in Indochina and what he recently experienced in Algeria, Trinquier defined the nature of modern revolutionary warfare. He wrote:

Warfare is now an interlocking system of actions—political, economic, psychological, military—that aims at the overthrow of the established authority in a country and its replacement by another regime. To achieve this end, the aggressor tries to exploit the internal tensions of the country attacked—ideological, social, religious, economic—any conflict liable to have a profound influence on the population to be conquered.⁹

He argued that enemy forces were structured according to a non-traditional format as “an armed clandestine organization whose essential role is to impose its will upon the population.” For Trinquier, victory in counterinsurgency came “only through the complete destruction of that organization.”¹⁰ In today’s parlance, he probably would have defined the insurgency’s politico-military leadership as the enemy center of gravity.

Within the struggle for politico-military ascendancy, terrorism became the method or tactic of choice for enemy combatants in Trinquier's version of modern war. "The goal of modern war is the control of the population...terrorism is a particularly appropriate weapon, since it aims directly at the inhabitant," he asserted.¹¹ According to Trinquier's logic, when police forces fail to contain terrorism, the population loses confidence in the state and is inexorably drawn towards the terrorists, for they alone can protect the population.¹² Furthermore, Trinquier held that:

the terrorist should not be considered an ordinary criminal. Actually he fights within the framework of his organization, without personal interest, for a cause he considers noble and for a respectable ideal, the same as soldiers in the armies confronting him.¹³

From this assertion flow several important intelligence-related considerations. First, it is important to understand the mindset, rationale, and organization behind the actions of the terrorist. Second, it is futile to expect too much from the interrogations of individual members of terrorist organizations. Because terrorist cells are rigidly compartmentalized, financiers know little or nothing about bomb-makers. However, what remains significant is that processors of information about the individual terrorist retain the ability "to place him precisely within the diagram of the organization to which he belongs."¹⁴

Important Preconditions for Successful Counterinsurgency Operations

Trinquier held that a legal basis for counterinsurgency operations must be established before initiating action. An important consideration inherent in modern asymmetrical struggle is the understanding that insurgents are likely to use cherished democratic freedoms against their more liberal-minded adversaries. In other words, terrorists hide behind—indeed, draw much of their strength from—freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of movement. The legal rights characteristic of most

western societies—due process, innocence until proven guilty, burden of proof resting with the prosecution—all work in the terrorists’ favor, making apprehension and conviction difficult. This difficulty was not lost on Trinquier:

The fact that modern warfare is not officially declared, that a state of war is not generally proclaimed, permits the adversary to continue to take advantage of peacetime legislation, to pursue his activities both openly and secretly. He will strive by every means to preserve the fiction of peace, which is so essential to his design.¹⁵

From this understanding flows the necessity before counterinsurgency operations to declare a state of war or its equivalent. Wartime exigency provides a legal basis for the imposition of military tribunals, martial law, and population control measures. Before what became the Battle of Algiers, Paul Aussaresses met with Paul Teitgen, the General Secretary of the Prefecture, to obtain his signature for an order that would establish a curfew and place all detainees for questioning under house arrest. Teitgen’s acquiescence, in the words of Aussaresses, “legitimized our initiatives.”¹⁶ Trinquier then quotes an FLN member’s lament, “we are no longer protected by legality,” along with the supplication, “we ask all of our friends to do the impossible to have legality re-established; otherwise we are lost.”¹⁷

Paradoxically for the counterinsurgency cause, a declaration of war carries grave political, economic and social implications. Politicians naturally avoid declarations of war and states of emergency. However, an entrenched insurgency is a direct threat to the very existence of legitimate authority. If the will to oppose an insurgency is not embraced at the highest levels, then counterinsurgency forces cannot effectively pursue their legitimate politico-military objectives with any predictable degree of success.

A second—and perhaps regrettable—requirement for the successful pursuit of counterinsurgency operations is the necessity for large detention centers. At least initially, various population control measures, including I.D. cards, curfews and casual interrogations, promise to yield an inordinately large number of detainees. In healthy contrast with Aussaresses, Trinquier specifies that detention measures and facilities must correspond with requirements of the Geneva Conventions regarding treatment of enemy combatants. Otherwise, enemy propaganda will exploit any inhumane treatment of detainees to undermine the forces of law and order. Even before the battle of Algiers, the SDECE established a prison facility in the suburbs for the processing and interrogation of detainees. If they were deemed innocent, they were set free; if they were found guilty of assisting the FLN, they were shipped to other detention camps in the south of Algeria. Unfortunately for the larger French cause, the methods and results of interrogations often did not accord with the Geneva Conventions, a fact that probably explains Trinquier's after-the-fact emphasis.

A third precondition for successful counterinsurgency operations is absolute unity of effort. Once General Massu received orders for the 10th DP to counter terrorists in Algiers, he set up an intelligence unit with two deputies. Aussaresses was in charge of action implementation, while Trinquier was responsible for intelligence. Under orders from Massu, Aussaresses fashioned a counterinsurgency team of approximately 20 members, comprised of SDECE Action Service personnel and paratroop officers. A company of paratroops provided a mobile strike force strong enough to deal with most unforeseen contingencies. Both Aussaresses and Trinquier stress the need for what they termed an Intelligence-Action Service. Intelligence and action had an almost seamless

relationship. Working as a team, the Action Service quickly exploited information gathered by the Intelligence Service. Moreover, Aussaresses notes that he and Trinquier were “both staunch non-conformists and displayed a lot of independent thinking.” Creativity and open-mindedness were important characteristics of the SDECE Intelligence-Action Service, although the historian might argue they were carried too far in important instances. In more positive perspective, one of Aussaresses’ team members was a former *fellagha*, or FLN fighter, who had changed sides. His linguistic skills and knowledge of terrorist tactics proved immensely valuable throughout the campaign. From the beginning of the counterinsurgency effort, Aussaresses specified that his team was to operate on a 24-hour basis, with the majority of raids and sweeps occurring during the night, when a curfew was in effect to minimize unwarranted population movements.¹⁸

Why did Massu choose Aussaresses and Trinquier as his principal deputies? Trinquier had commanded a force of 20,000 *maquis* fighters during the Indochina war. Their tactics were largely successful, fighting the Vietminh through indigenous organization and leadership, but Trinquier’s force was left to wither on the vine after the French left Indochina. Massu described Trinquier as having “a complicated and sometimes unfathomable turn of mind, a tortuous craftiness well attuned to the job at hand.”¹⁹ Massu and Trinquier enjoyed an excellent personal relationship, while Trinquier had extensive experience in special operations. Aussaresses writes, “he [Trinquier] was a smart soldier with a lot of curiosity and imagination in all his initiatives.”²⁰

Aussaresses was chosen because of his counterinsurgency experience. He had arrived in Algeria in early 1955 to serve as an intelligence officer with military units stationed in Philippeville, some 350 kilometers east of Algiers. In August, he

successfully uncovered and opposed an FLN attack designed to take Philippeville and massacre its citizens. Thanks to Aussaresses' intelligence skills, the attack was repulsed, with 134 FLN killed and several hundred wounded.²¹ When Massu learned of this success, he submitted a by-name request for Aussaresses to serve in Algiers.²²

Population Control Measures

Because control of the population is the ultimate goal of modern insurgency-style warfare, security of the population is of primary importance in counterinsurgency operations. Trinquier holds that the population must have the means to protect itself from insurgents, but the same time he stresses control. In his words, "control of masses through a tight organization, often through several parallel organizations is the master weapon of modern war."²³ Trinquier proposes establishment of a homegrown, grassroots organization that allows the population to organize, protect itself, and aid parallel organizations in the counterinsurgency fight. Aussaresses' Action-Service was one of the "parallel organizations" in Algiers. The local police—whatever their adequacy and competence—were another "parallel organization" vital to counterinsurgency operations. The police often possessed files on known insurgents. One of the Aussaresses' first actions was to meet with police department heads, secure their cooperation, and obtain their intelligence files. The Action Service, with intelligence provided by indigenous organizations and with the help of police files, acquired many of the tools required to crush the FLN insurgency in Algiers.

Possession of these tools went hand-in-hand with measures to fashion an indigenous organization to influence and control the population. Trinquier offers a blueprint for building such an indigenous organization:

First we designate an energetic and intelligent man in each city who will, with one or more reliable assistants, build the projected organization with a minimum of help from the authorities. The principal is very simple. The designated leader divides the city into districts, at the head of which he places a chief and two or three assistants. These, in turn, divide the district into sub-districts and designate a chief and several assistants for each of them. Finally, each building or group of houses receives a chief and two or three assistants who will be in direct contact with the populace.²⁴

When insurgents are already strongly entrenched and the population fears for its safety, Trinquier specifies construction of the organization from the ground up, with the help of loyal policemen who are in daily contact with the people.

Implementation of a census was an integral part of Trinquier's formula for building an indigenous organization. On the basis of the Algerian experience, he outlined the process:

First, they conduct a careful census of the entire population. The basic leader of the organization structure will be the head of the family. He is made responsible for all inhabitants of his apartment or house, and for keeping up to date the list established at the time of the census. During the taking of the census, we designate at the next echelon a chief of a group of houses, who will be responsible for a certain number of heads of family, four or five at most. Finally, when the census is completed and a close relationship established with the population, chiefs of sub-districts will be designated.²⁵

In the Algerian case, the sub-district leaders had strong ties to the community, ties which made leaving the community undesirable. Also, there was no district head above the sub-district leaders, as "his role is too important for him to be easily commanded, and he will be too vulnerable a target for the enemy."²⁶

The census card issued to Algerians bore the resident's photograph, a house group number (3), a letter designating the sub-district (B), the number of the district (2), and letter designating the city (A). Thus, the resident's census number would be A.2.B.3.²⁷

The system for numbering houses and buildings owed its origins to Napoleon, with

Trinquier, a student of military history, adapting it to Algiers. Census cards became the basis for a card catalogue with information pertaining to each resident listed. Two separate persons had to vouch for an individual before he received an identity card. The census thus became a means to establish a record of residents, their ties to the community, and their actions and affiliations. The resulting record could be updated and searched at any time.

The census was crucial for reasons other than raw information and the establishment of an indigenous organization. The mere act of conducting a census facilitated counterinsurgency efforts. Details about the population began to emerge. Who lived where, and with what ties to the community? Where did the inhabitants work? Discrepancies soon became apparent and were investigated by various means, including direct interrogation. Investigation of false claims from the head of a household might result in a number of arrests and possible military actions, thus enabling authorities to take the fight to the insurgent and to exercise limited initiative that was impossible before the census. Also, the population began to feel first-hand the imposition of law and order.

Once identity cards were issued, police and soldiers established checkpoints at effective sites throughout the city. Those without identity cards were arrested for questioning. People traveling or residing within an area without good reason were subject to direct interrogation at checkpoints. Those without satisfactory explanation became subjects of more intensive interrogation. Checkpoints also provided an opportunity for use of intelligence agents. AUSAresses staffed checkpoints with former insurgents who had changed their allegiance. With their own identities camouflaged,

they identified insurgents moving through checkpoints. Those identified were arrested and interrogated.

Once an indigenous intelligence organization began to function, it worked closely with army, police and SDECE forces through a “Bureau of the Inhabitants Organization and Control.” This bureau maintained direct liaison with the aforementioned indigenous organizations. In case of an emergency such as a terrorist bombing or gunfight, the indigenous organization had the capacity to provide precise information and intelligence to the police and military.²⁸ In addition, because the indigenous component of the intelligence service was staffed and controlled on a house- by-house, person-by-person basis, the foundations for the so-called “Ilot System” were now in place. Under this system, one person in each family group became responsible for knowing the exact location of all other family members. The family member reported to a floor chief (in the case of an apartment) or a block chief. The block chief reported to the sub-district head and so on. By using this system, the authorities were able to determine the whereabouts of any individual within minutes.²⁹

In addition, interrogation became a powerful instrument in counterinsurgency. Even without torture and other dubious techniques, a substantial percentage of the population denounced insurgents out of fear, patriotism, revenge or retribution. Torture notwithstanding, people often talked without coercion. They even became employable as double-agents, depending on the assessment of intelligence officers. Essentially, a whole series of mutually-reinforcing measures, including imposition of a census, the organization of indigenous intelligence sources and forces, and the establishment of checkpoints, facilitated interrogations to provide intelligence and to focus tactical actions.

Previous experience had taught the French that counterinsurgency efforts were doomed to failure without sound intelligence.

Quadrillage

The 10th DP consisted of four regiments, three of which were stationed in Algiers. The fourth remained in reserve just outside the city limits. A fifth unit, the 1st REP, or *Regiment Etranger de Parachutistes*, deployed with the 10th DP in defense of the city. In addition, the 11th Shock Battalion, a parachute battalion comprised of SDECE commandos, remained in reserve near Algiers to provide emergency support. The city was divided into four districts, with Colonel Marcel Bigeard's 3rd Regiment Colonial Parachutistes (RPC) assigned to deal with the volatile Casbah.³⁰ Bigeard had fought at Dien Bien Phu, and many of his troops were hardened Indochina veterans. It would be no exaggeration to assert that the 10th DP and its supporting units represented the cream of the French Army.

Bigeard quickly took steps to begin pacification of the Casbah. He strung barbed-wire around the entire area and regulated movement in and out with manned checkpoints. At the checkpoints his troops—later in company with informants—examined documents, questioned individuals about their reasons for traveling throughout the city, and looked for suspicious behavior. Aussaresses' curfew received vigorous enforcement, with shootings of those caught outside after nightfall. In addition, Bigeard's regiment patrolled the Casbah by zones on a 24-hour basis. In the words of John Talbot, author of *The War Without a Name*, the army “expected to piece together thousands of bits of information to reveal the structure of the clandestine organization.”³¹ To this end, Bigeard organized his command as an intelligence network. Each company commander

became an interrogator, with assistance from sergeants and platoon leaders. In addition, a liaison was provided to each police precinct, ready to handle denunciations and to interrogate any suspects the police might round up. Each police precinct furnished a detective to the regiment who worked alongside the intelligence officer. The regiment handled routine interrogations. If a suspect was deemed important, he was dispatched to Aussaresses' team for further questioning. Bigeard maintained close communications with Aussaresses at all times. Each morning Aussaresses received a report on the previous night's action.

The paratroops conducted frequent surprise sweeps, or *ratissage* operations. At times, the sweeps were based on intelligence gleaned from interrogations, at other times the sweeps were random. When conducting the sweeps, the troops cordoned off apartment buildings and sometimes entire blocks, with soldiers stationed at the perimeters while each building underwent minute search. Due attention fell on census cards, and any person outside his listed residence was interrogated on the spot. If no suitable explanation was forthcoming, the person was detained and sent to headquarters for further interrogation. What we now know as information operations was an essential part of *ratissage* operations. The people whose homes were searched knew exactly why they were subjected to such treatment. Clear explanations helped mitigate some of the damage done by intrusive searches. Additionally, French troops observed local decorum while entering the homes of the indigenous population.

Within the larger picture of which *ratissage* operations were an integral part, the goal of the *Quadrillage* system was security. Constant patrolling, raids and identity checkpoints put teeth into the security program. However, *Quadrillage* served another

purpose. That was to put French troops in direct contact with the Moslem population, attempting to foster relationships between the local populace and the occupying forces. Paratroopers renovated schools, established medical clinics, and built orphanages. In addition, military teams provided housing and employment for refugees crowding into the city.³² These actions contrasted sharply with raids and intense security measures. The object was to show a softer side of the French military presence and to demonstrate to the populace that there were two faces to the counterinsurgency coin. As the British were demonstrating almost simultaneously in Malaya, the winning of hearts and minds remained important to any counterinsurgency campaign. However, the French also realized that security and population control were primary, the *sine qua non* of effective counterinsurgency operations.

Breaking the Back of the Insurgency

In insurgency warfare's "interlocking system of actions" seemingly non-military events often assume unexpected significance. During the Battle of Algiers, the FLN called for a general strike to begin on 28 January 1957, and last for eight days. The strike date coincided with the opening day of United Nations debate on the Algerian question. By showing its internal solidarity and power, the FLN hoped to draw attention to itself and influence the U.N. debate. The FLN leadership used pamphlets to advertise the strike.³³ Countering the proposed strike consumed Aussaresses' attention.

On the eve of the strike, Aussaresses examined the list of suspected FLN sympathizers he had compiled from police records and interrogations. Then he cross-referenced this list with lists of employees of various public utilities—water, gas, electric, postal service, transportation, and so forth. The next morning he dispatched paratroopers

to the utilities to take roll. Because of the census, Aussaresses and the paratroopers knew where absentee employees resided. In his words, the paratroopers “quickly visited the homes of the strikers and dragged them rather roughly to their jobs.”³⁴ Paratroopers also forcibly opened closed shops. If shopkeepers failed to show, their shops were looted. In the case of striking longshoremen, Aussaresses rounded up 200 detainees and escorted them to the docks under a guard of airborne sappers. The detainees unloaded cargoes without delay, and the harbormaster even paid the detainees for their work. Paratroopers escorted children to their schools. In this manner, the strike was broken in less than an hour.³⁵ What the FLN had planned as a show of force and solidarity ended in failure. In addition, intelligence from interrogations, followed by a paratroop intrusion into the Casbah netted substantial French gains. Over 1,000 strikers were interrogated, and the resulting intelligence enabled Bigeard’s forces to begin cracking the terrorist cell structure within the Casbah.³⁶

By the end of February 1957, the Battle of Algiers was over, following the arrest of 23 gunmen, 51 terrorist cell chiefs, and 174 terrorist tax collectors. In just under two months, the 10th DP and the Action Service had smashed the FLN network and driven its survivors into Tunisia.³⁷ In the words of one terrorist, “the organization that we so painfully succeeded in building up has been destroyed.”³⁸ Aussaresses commented, “we knew it because quite simply nothing was happening there anymore. The spectacular attacks had stopped and the arrests were dwindling.”³⁹ Only one para regiment remained in Algiers.

In August, Bigeard’s forces arrested Gandriche Hacene, head of the Algiers east sector, code named “Zerrouk.” He was “turned” and continued communicating through

his wife with Yacef Saadi, the overall commander of the ZAA structure. In September, Yacef Saadi was arrested after a female agent followed Zerrouk's wife to his hiding place. Saadi then divulged the hideout of his second in command, Ali la Pointe, in an effort to save his own nephew, who was working as la Pointe's errand boy. When paratroopers detonated charges paced against la Pointe's door, a sympathetic explosion ignited bombs stored in the house.⁴⁰ Double agents, not torture, had provided the intelligence necessary for the capture of two major FLN leaders. Meanwhile, the terrorist network in Algiers had ceased to exist. In the end more than 40 percent of the Casbah's inhabitants underwent interrogation, yielding valuable intelligence to accomplish the task.⁴¹ Numbers alone suggest that the majority of them probably never witnessed torture.

Aftermath

Still, the stench of torture and summary execution that accompanied many interrogations hung like a pall over the Action Service and the French paratroopers. During the Battle of Algiers, over 24,000 people had been arrested, and when this number was tallied with the numbers of those released and those still in detention, 3,024 persons were missing.⁴² The 10th DP and the Action Service had received orders to pacify Algiers by any means necessary. The resulting and frequent application of inhumane techniques created a revulsion that continued to plague the French military and France itself right up to and beyond the time that DeGaulle opted for Algerian self-determination. However, unity of counterinsurgency effort, when coupled with the population control measures advocated by Trinquier and Aussaresses, had been instrumental in smashing the terrorist network. The challenge for future COIN operations

remains how to employ analogous techniques without resort to the kind of inhumanities that aid and abet the attainment of long-term terrorist and insurgency objectives.

Endnotes

¹ The premier examples are David Galula, Counter-insurgency Warfare (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1964), and Roger Trinquier, Modern Warfare (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1964). The linkages between Indochina and Algeria are described in Peter Paret, French Revolutionary Warfare from Indochina to Algeria (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1964).

² Of special note are Paul Aussaresses, The Battle of the Casbah (New York: Enigma, 2002), and Ted Morgan, My Battle of Algiers (New York: Harper Collins, 2005).

³ Alistair Horne, A Savage War of Peace (New York: Viking Press, 1977), pp. 128-146.

⁴ Morgan p. 105.

⁵ Trinquier, p. 11.

⁶ Robert Kee, "Algiers-1957: An Approach to Urban Counterinsurgency," Military Review, LIV, no.4 (1974), pp. 74-75.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Morgan, p. 116.

⁹ Trinquier, p. 6.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 16.

¹² Ibid., p. 17.

¹³ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁶ Aussaresses, p. 84.

¹⁷ Trinquier, p. 47.

¹⁸ Aussaresses, pp. 70-93.

¹⁹ Morgan, p. 137.

²⁰ Aussaresses, p. 70.

²¹ Ibid., p. 41.

²² Ibid., p. 69.

²³ Trinquier, p. 30.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁷ Ibid..

²⁸ Ibid., p. 33.

²⁹ James Price, "Algeria (1954-62)," in D. M. Condit, et al., Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume III, The Experience in Africa and Latin America (Washington, D. C.: American University, 1968), p. 194.

³⁰ Morgan, p. 116.

³¹ John Talbott, The War Without a Name (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.), p. 85.

³² Kee, pp. 80-81.

³³ Aussaresses, pp. 77-78.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 133.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 112-113.

³⁶ Morgan, p. 151.

³⁷ Kee, p. 78.

³⁸ Michael Clark, Algeria in Turmoil (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 159.

³⁹ Aussaresses, p. 148.

⁴⁰ Morgan, pp. 218-233.

⁴¹ Kee, p. 82.

⁴² Aussaresses, p. 163