Algeria, Decolonisation, and the British Popular Press, 1954-1962.

Francis van Berkel

Student Number: 6369545

MA Thesis, Cultural History of Modern Europe, Utrecht University

Supervisor: Dr. Britta Schilling

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Abstract

Scholarship on decolonisation in Britain is still dominated by top-down approaches, with an emphasis on the 'official mind' of the British state and it's 'imperial endgame'. There are of course notable exceptions, but we still know little about what decolonisation meant, and was understood to be, to ordinary people. This thesis will argue that coverage of the Algerian War in Britain's popular press confirmed to readers the inevitability of decolonisation and demonstrated that the British model of decolonisation was the way forward. Algeria, notorious even then for its brutality, ran parallel to colonial insurgencies in the British world, most notably Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus. At a time of increasing international coverage, news and commentary about Algeria would have been read alongside reporting on Britain's own colonial trouble-spots. Narratives of British decolonisation in the press and beyond can therefore be compared to how Algeria was written about, allowing us to understand how the conflict shaped British perceptions of imperial decline.

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Contents

Introduction

The Algerian War of Independence has always been held up as the archetype of colonial savagery. Frantz Fanon's, *The Wretched of the Earth,* a founding document for postcolonial studies in which he describes the dehumanising effects of colonialism and necessary violence to be free from it, was directly inspired by his personal experiences of the conflict.[1] Moreover, not only did the war lead to the fall of France's Fourth Republic, but has also been identified by scholars, such as Robert Young, to have been the catalyst for the post-structuralist questionings of Enlightenment values by French philosophers in the 1960s and 70s.[2] To be sure, it is difficult to deny the conflict's exceptional savagery, as well as the traumatic impact it had on both metropolitan France and Algeria. The extensive and open use of torture, spread of violence to both sides of the Mediterranean, large and politicised settler population, and Algeria's status as an integral part of 'France', made it more devastating and divisive than any other colonial conflict faced by the European powers.[3]

In its scale, violence, and impact, therefore, the Algerian War can certainly be considered unique. In contrast, Britain's own decolonisation process has been traditionally seen as ordered, gradualist, and the final stage of a successful civilising mission.[4] How, then, did these two narratives interact with each other? How aware were the British public of the French retreat from empire and did this hold any meaning? This thesis will argue that coverage of the Algerian War in Britain's popular press confirmed to readers the inevitability of decolonisation and demonstrated that the British model of decolonisation was the way forward. This builds on research by scholars

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[1] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961; reprint, London: Penguin Books, 2001).
[2] Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the Meme* (London: Routledge, 1990), 1.
[3] Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 32; Martin Thomas, *The French North African Crisis: Colonial Breakdown and Anglo-French Relations, 1945–62* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000), 213; Martin Thomas, *Fight or Flight: Britain, France, and Their Roads from Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 18; Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 31; Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 1.
[4] For the most famous rebuttals to the myth of orderly withdrawal see: Caroline Elkins, *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (London: Jonathon Cape, 2005); David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (London: W. W. Norton, 2005).

such as Joanna Lewis and Rosalind Coffey, who argue that press coverage of British decolonisation cushioned the domestic impact of decline.[5] However, this thesis' focus on the Algerian War is also a new way to understand how decolonisation was reckoned with in British popular culture. Like the majority of historians looking at the relationship between the press and decolonisation, Lewis and Coffey's focus largely on events in the British Empire.[6] Algeria, notorious even then for its brutality, ran parallel to colonial insurgencies in the British world, most notably Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus. At a time of increasing international coverage, news and commentary about Algeria would have been read alongside reporting on Britain's own colonial trouble-spots. Indeed, reporting on Algeria would often quite literally appear alongside articles on Kenya or Cyprus. The small, but growing, body of work on narratives of British decolonisation in the press and beyond can therefore be compared to how Algeria was written about, allowing us to understand how the conflict shaped British perceptions of imperial decline.

Historians have paid relatively little attention to decolonisation compared to the diverse research done on nineteenth and early twentieth-century imperialism.[7] Whilst this has been slowly changing, scholarship is still dominated by top-down approaches, with an emphasis on the 'official mind' of the British state and its 'imperial endgame'. There are of course exceptions to this. Valuable contributions from scholars such as Stuart Ward, Wendy Webster, and Elizabeth Buettner are referred to throughout this thesis, and there have been some intriguing investigations into the role the press played, which is discussed in more detail below.[8] Nevertheless, there has been a tendency in most scholarship to focus on the high politics of decolonisation, often resulting in a rather one-sided analysis. For example, two recent contributions by Bruno Cardoso Reis and

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[5] Rosalind Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia': The British Press, British Public Opinion, and the End of Empire in Africa, 1957-60," PhD diss., (The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2015), 22-24; Joanna Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau': The British Popular Press and the Demoralisation of Empire", in *Mau Mau & Nationhood: Arms, Authority & Narration* ed. E. S. Atieno Odhiambo and John Lonsdale. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2003), 246-247.
[6] Admittedly, the last chapter of Coffey's PhD is on events in the Belgian Congo: Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 230-265.
[7] Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 9; For a good overview of some of this see: Richard Price, "One Big Thing: Britain, Its Empire, and Their Imperial Culture," *Journal of British Studies* 45 (2006).
[8] Stuart Ward (ed.), *British Culture and the End of Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Wendy Webster, *Englishness and Empire 1939–1965* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Buettner, *Europe after Empire.*

Richard Toye discuss attempts to control narratives of British decolonisation, but chiefly draw their evidence from parliamentary debate, political speeches, and government papers.[9] When newspapers are used, they are largely selected to reinforce an already established point and are usually the self-styled 'papers of record.'[10] This gives us little idea of how ordinary people were confronted with the shrinking of the British world. Whilst valuable, the highly empirical research into government decisions and strategy means we only have limited insight into how such a radical change in Britain's world standing was understood, or came to hold meaning, in its popular culture. Indeed, even the cultural histories on decolonisation have focused more on the impact this had on British identity, rather than the different – though admittedly subtle - question of what the British public understood decolonisation to be. A way of partly remedying this is considering the press as a historical actor in its own right and not merely as a body of supplementary material to be included after a discussion of political manoeuvring in Westminster. Doing so helps us understand the degree to which narratives of decolonisation spread into pubic culture and how.

Whilst historians in the sub-field of 'new imperial history' have diligently taken up the call to study metropole and periphery within a "single analytic field", scholarship has been slower in considering how imperialism was a trans-European experience.[11] Buettner has criticised historians of empire for their "tendency to examine national histories in a state of false isolation", and attempts to go beyond this in *Europe After Empire,* analysing how decolonisation was experienced in Britain, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal.[12] Other scholars have similarly attempted to move beyond the singular national lens, with many works from the *Studies in*

[9] Bruno Cardoso Reis, "Myths of Decolonisation: Britain, France, and Portugal Compared", in *The Ends of European Colonial Empires: Cases and Comparisons* ed. Miguel Bandeira Jeronimo and Antonio Costa Pinto. (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 128-132; Richard Toye, "Arguing about Hola Camp: The Rhetorical Consequences of a Colonial Massacre", in *Rhetorics of Empire: Language of Colonial Conflict after 1900* ed. Martin Thomas and Richard Toye. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 193-203.
[10] Toye, "Arguing about Hola Camp", 198-201.
[11] Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda", in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeoise World* ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 4; Remco Raben, "A New Dutch Imperial History?: Perambulations in a Prospective Field", *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 1 (2013): 23.
[12] Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 14.

Imperialism series now taking a transnational perspective.[13] This thesis has a similar focus. However a problem with many transnational histories of European colonialism (and transnational histories in general) is dealing with the subjects in episodic form. This is especially obvious in Buettner's work as she separates her analysis of countries across chapters, largely dealing with each individually and doing little to bring them all together. This thesis looks to avoid this issue. By analysing how Britain experienced French decolonisation, we can get an idea of how imperial decline was something which cut across national boundaries. This relates to the approach of 'connected history', first conceptualised by Sanjay Subrahmanyan, but keenly promoted by Simon J. Potter and Jonathan Saha as relevant to imperial history.[14] In an article placing Asia in the context of an early-modern world, Subrahmanyan argued that we should not simply compare national histories, but try and transcend such limiting boundaries.[15] To do this, historians should seek out the networks and "fragile threads" that connected parts of the globe.[16] From this, Potter and Saha have called for imperial histories which examine "how comparisons were made and used by contemporary historical actors."[17] For Potter and Saha, "this is not so much comparative history, as the history of comparison."[18] This thesis follows this approach. It considers coverage of the Algerian War to be an exercise in the "politics of comparison" in order to understand how European decolonisation was experienced across national boundaries.[19]

Though it remains a topic in need of further research, there is a small body of literature which looks at how British decolonisation was represented in, and influenced by, the popular press. This investigation is unique in that it looks at how a foreign power's decolonisation was covered

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[13] Ruth Craggs and Claire Wintle (eds.), *Cultures of Decolonisation: Transnational Productions and Practices, 1945–70* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016); Richard Toye and Martin Thomas (eds.), *Rhetorics of Empire: Languages of Colonial Conflict After 1900* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017); Robert Aldrich and Cindy McCreery (eds.), *Royals on Tour: Politics, Pageantry and Colonialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).
[14] Sanjay Subrahmanyan, "Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997); Simon J. Potter and Jonathan Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, no. 1 (2015).
[15] Subrahmanyan, "Connected Histories," 761-762.
[16] Subrahmanyan, "Connected Histories," 761-762.
[17] Potter and Saha, ""Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 7.
[18] Potter and Saha, ""Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 7.
[19] Potter and Saha, ""Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 15.

but will utilise this existing research by comparing and contrasting how Britain and France's decolonisation processes were written about. The differing arguments in this sub-field feed into the broader debate on whether decolonisation made a deep impact on British culture. This debate materialised with the 2001 publication of Stuart Ward's edited volume, *British Culture and the End of Empire,* where he contested what he saw as the too-readily-assumed "minimal impact thesis" in historiography so far.[20] Along with scholars such as Bill Schwarz, Ward has worked to challenge these older assumptions and identify the cultural, symbolic, and mental manifestations of imperial decline.[21] Wendy Webster has been a part of this effort. In *Englishness and Empire,* she argues that decolonisation registered as a deep cultural loss and has emphasised how newspaper coverage of colonial wars utilised racial language in their production of stories on the bravery of white settlers and officials.[22] Webster has highlighted the emergence of a siege narrative of settlers trapped in their domestic sanctuary by savage natives, leading to anxieties over national decline as 'trouble spots' revealed the weakening of imperial power.[23] Other scholars lay less emphasis on imperial decline having such a fateful impact. For example, Joanna Lewis has written on popular press coverage of the Mau-Mau Uprising and how it worked to detach the British public from the cause of Empire.[24] Similarly, Rosalind Coffey has argued that a significant impact of press coverage was a mitigation of negative feelings surrounding decolonisation.[25] For Coffey, the press had the "consistent ability to dissect, to debate and to rationalise Britain's colonial role in non-negative terms."[26] Any sense of loss was therefore eased by the press, an argument which stands in opposition to Webster's emphasis on white victimhood and imperial decline. Despite their differences, what unites these arguments is the understanding, explicit or otherwise, that the press was uncritical of the imperial project as a whole. Indeed, although Lewis argues that by the late

[20] Stuart Ward, "Introduction", in *British Culture and the End of Empire* ed. Stuart Ward. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 5.
[21] For Schwarz on this see: Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[22] Webster, *Englishness and Empire,* 3, 120; See also: Wendy Webster, "'There'll Always Be an England': Representations of Colonial Wars and Immigration, 1948-1968," *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001).
[23] Webster, *Englishness and Empire,* 119, 124, 141.
[24] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 246.
[25] Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 22.
[26] Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 24.

1950s, the popular press had divorced itself from the colonial enterprise, she does not argue that this led to a moral reckoning with, or questioning of, the British Empire.[27] The *idea* of imperialism was therefore left untarnished as it was considered, according to Lewis, only now unsuitable due to present-day developments. This thesis builds on this central point running through these various arguments. As will be shown, coverage of the Algerian War confirmed the inevitability of decolonisation whilst also ensuring the British imperial record was left untarnished.

The national dailies, *The Daily Mirror* and *The Daily Mail,* form the primary source base for this thesis. These two publications were some of the most popular British national newspapers in this period and the fact that they were politically opposed makes for interesting comparisons and contrasts.[28] Although television and radio broadcasting became increasingly popular in the post-war era, the circulation and readership figures for these publications show that newspapers were not quite dead yet. The *Mirror* and the *Mail* had paid circulations of around 4.6 million and 2.1 million respectively, with an average of two more readers in addition to the purchaser - constituting a significant proportion of the electorate.[29] The *Mirror* was the most popular publication of its time. *The Mail* was the third most popular newspaper, beaten by *The Daily Express* and its circulation of around 4 million.[30] However, the *Mail* took foreign news more seriously and was a particularly influential paper despite its smaller readership.[31] So as not to deal with an unwieldy source base, therefore, this thesis analyses the *Mail* over the *Express.*

This thesis focuses purely on what was printed in these papers. Some studies on the relationship between the British press and decolonisation, such as Coffey's, have supplemented their arguments with sources which offer windows into editorial decisions, journalists' motivations, or government censorship.[32] This is to achieve a fuller understanding of how and why certain articles were published. However, to broaden focus in this way is beyond the remit of the thesis.

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[27] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 246.
[28] The *Mirror* traditionally supported the Labour Party and the *Mail* supported the Conservative Party.
[29] Tony Shaw, *Eden, Suez, and the Mass Media: Propaganda and Persuasion during the Suez Crisis* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 197; Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 229.
[30] Shaw, *Eden, Suez, and the Mass Media,* 197.
[31] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 228.
[32] Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'." Another example of this is: Erik Linstrum, "Facts about Atrocity: Reporting Colonial Violence in Postwar Britain," *History Workshop Journal* 84 (2017).

More importantly, it would also take away from what is the heart of the issue: what appeared in the reading lives of the British public. The circulation figures discussed above, and the further fact that in 1960 around 90 percent of British adults read a national daily, shows that the popular press enjoyed a mass readership.[33] Moreover as highlighted by Mick Temple, broadcasters would often draw their political stories from newspapers and were prohibited from obviously editorialising their content.[34] The press did not suffer from such regulations, affording it a significant role in forming opinions on issues of the day.[35] The press was therefore agenda-setting and had influence which reached beyond formal circulation. This thesis engages with what appeared in print to this mass readership, and what this can tell us about how British decolonisation was publicly processed.

Although this thesis does not strictly follow its approach, the source analysis here has been inspired by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The most salient influence is CDA's understanding of discourse as "language in use", meaning that language is active, used to mean and do something, and exists in a wider context.[36] CDA takes this linguistic understanding and links it to social analysis, looking to understand the relationship between language use and wider socio-cultural structures.[37] Two dimensions of discourse that Norman Fairclough has stressed scholars need to recognise has structured how this thesis understands Algerian coverage and what this meant. One dimension is the text itself, which must be analysed not only according to what it contains (content analysis) but also what *is not* present and what *could have* been included.[38] This is relevant here because it is vital to take into account the linguistic forms and content of Algerian coverage to understand how its meaning was shaped in Britain. The second dimension is social practices, which concerns the "social and cultural goings-on which the communicative event is part of."[39] This

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[33] Jeremy Tunstall, *Newspaper Power: The New National Press in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 223.
[34] Mick Temple, *The British Press* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 1996), 62
[35] Temple, *The British Press,* 62.
[36] Gillian Brown and George Yule, *Discourse Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1; John Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 24.
[37] Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers,* 26; Stefan Titscher, Michael Meyer, Ruth Wodak and Eva Vetter, *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis,* trans. Bryan Jenner (London: Sage, 2000), 143.
[38] Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Arnold, 1995), 57; Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers,* 38.
[39] Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 58; Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers,* 42.

relates to the thesis because it is concerned with how coverage of Algeria was part of a wider context of decolonisation and its meaning and representation. This thesis is therefore inspired - but not restricted - by CDA in its analysis. It considers how press representation of the Algerian War both was situated in, and formed, the deeper cultural context of Britain coming to terms with a rapidly decolonising world. In doing so, it is possible to understand how this coverage related to understandings of British decolonisation despite the fact that direct comparisons were often not made by the press.

The following three chapters are organised thematically. Chapter one deals with how the war was represented as one of deep colonial chaos that was having a traumatic and corrupting influence on both Algeria and France. This discourse was consistent from 1954 through to 1962 and framed how Algeria was covered throughout the period. Chapter two looks at how Algeria came to confirm the inevitability of decolonisation in the pages of the *Mirror* and the *Mail*. Before the fall of the Fourth Republic this was completely absent from reporting, and the French claim to Algeria was supported or at the very least tolerated. However, the rise of Charles de Gaulle dramatically changed things as French Algeria - and colonialism in general - came to be seen in both papers as increasingly out of step with the march of History. The third chapter builds on the previous, looking at how these ideas about decolonialisation and historical change were transplanted onto the actors of the conflict. In both papers, the perception that French Algeria was anachronistic was enabled and evidenced by articles designating its defenders as extremist reactionaries, and those working towards independence as brave heroes. The thematic, rather than chronological, structure means that this thesis sometimes rereads material from chapter one in later chapters. This is because the press representation of the conflict as one of unique colonial chaos was so consistent that it framed the shift in recognising the apparent inevitability of decolonisation. As chapters two and three will show, what changed was what both papers considered the root of this chaotic trauma to be.

Chapter One: Colonial Chaos in Algeria and the Metropole

"No nation has had more colonial trouble than the French, and the events in Algeria, for sheer horror and savagery, make Cyprus seem like a holiday camp."[40] Published in the *Daily Mirror* on 12 September 1958 and written by 'Cassandra' - the pseudonym of influential columnist, William Connor - this sentence exemplifies how the British popular press framed the Algerian War. Not only does 'Cassandra' note the conflict for its exceptional horror and compares it to that of Britain's own colonial troubles, but also roots this within a broader assumption about France's historic imperial failings. The context of this sentence within the article itself also captures Algeria's status in the popular press. Included in a piece chronicling 'Cassandra's' experience as an English tourist in France, the conflict functions as a reference point which illustrates French decay.

This chapter is concerned with how the *Mirror* and the *Mail* framed the Algerian War as a uniquely traumatic conflict. Coffey has argued that newspapers presented British decolonization in 'non-negative' terms, as Britain's role was constantly rationalised and dissected.[41] In contrast, coverage of decolonization in Algeria can only be characterized as presenting an image of deep damage to both the colony and metropole. The chapter positions such coverage within the broader contexts of historic British representations of French Algeria, contemporary representations of British decolonisation, and the British government's own attitude towards its neighbours' colonial trouble. By highlighting these explicit and implicit comparisons we can see how coverage of Algeria cushioned the domestic impact of imperial decline.

The chapter's first section looks at coverage of fighting in the colony itself. This section gives a more general overview of reporting and illustrates how Algeria came to be seen as a unique 'trouble-spot' in the colonial world. This section will also look at two specific themes which capture this coverage: reporting on the city of Algiers itself and warnings against a 'British Algeria'. The chapter's second section analyses the effect the war was seen to have on metropolitan

[40] William Connor (Cassandra), "Cassandra in France: Pot Luck," *The Daily Mirror*, September 12, 1958, 4.
[41] Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 74.

France. It is here that the chaos of Algeria was constructed as a uniquely French problem, as France was represented as debilitated by political and legal breakdown.

Chaos in Algeria

Readers of both papers were alerted to the opening of hostilities on 2 November 1954 in small articles within world-news columns.[42] Despite the sensationalist *Mirror* headline of 'TERROR WAVE BY NIGHT', the reports largely recounted the simple facts of the story, and this straightforward journalistic style dominated coverage throughout the rest of 1954 and 1955.[43] Indeed, reporting itself was relatively piecemeal and vague compared to that of the more in-depth coverage in the later stages of the war. From 1 November 1954 to 1 January 1956, the *Mirror* and the *Mail* published around 25 and 54 articles on the conflict respectively. These were rarely long, often amounting to no more than 100 words, with only one or two being over 500. In keeping with their tabloid style, the rhetoric was still sensationalist. For example, in something Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy have noted to be common with most international news, the *Mail* presented the conflict through a Second World War lens with a headline of "French face 'night of long knives'" in May 1955.[44] Sensationalism was not unique to Algerian reporting, however. Coffey, Lewis, and Webster have all pointed to similar rhetoric in coverage of British colonial violence.[45] In the beginning, then, Algeria was reported in similar terms to Britain's own colonial trouble-spots. Indeed, reports of these conflicts often appeared alongside each other. *Mirror* articles on Algeria were primarily in the "World News Spotlight" column and sandwiched between news of British colonial conflict or international diplomacy. Reporting in the *Mail* would similarly appear as a small feature of international coverage. The Algerian War was therefore sensationalised as a

[42] Daily Mirror Reporter , "Terror Wave By Night," *The Daily Mirror*, November 02, 1954, 12; Daily Mail Cable, "In Algeria – 7 Die in Bomb Attack," *The Daily Mail,* November 02, 1954, 6.
[43] Daily Mirror Reporter , "Terror Wave By Night," 12.
[44] Gordan Young, "French Face 'Night of Long Knives'," *The Daily Mail,* May 23, 1955, 9; Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present* (Oxford: Peter Lang Ltd, 2015), 52;
[45] Rosalind Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper Rule Britannia': British Press Coverage of a Malawi Youth League Demonstration in Blantyre, Nyasaland, in January 1960," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 41, no. 6 (2015): 1273; Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 228-229; Webster, *Englishness and Empire,* 119.

trouble-spot, but not imbued with any unique meaning. At most, it was just another example of the changing world Europe was facing.

Despite the initial piecemeal reporting, 1956 onwards saw a vast increase in the volume of coverage. From 1956 to 1958, the *Mail* published nearly 140 articles on Algeria, then around 230 from 1958 to 1960, almost 320 from 1960 to 1962, and then close to 180 in the seven months leading up to Algerian independence. The *Mirror* published around 60 articles from 1956 to 1958, just under 120 from 1958 to 1960, over 180 from 1960 to 1962, and then about 185 in those final seven months. A key process started to play out in this rapidly increasing coverage where Algeria shifted from being *a* trouble-spot, to *the* trouble-spot of the colonial world. The *Mail* led the way in this. Though this changed later on, the paper was initially sympathetic to the colonial project in Algeria and this meant its reporting echoed themes of Britain's colonial wars.[46] For example, in a feature taking up nearly half of the fourth page of an April 1956 edition, a British-born Foreign Legionnaire recounts his conflict experience and presents an image of besieged white domesticity.[47] The Legionnaire refers to the "constant atmosphere of fear" French settlers have to live under, describing how every man, woman, child, and animal in raided farms die in a manner he "would rather not speak about".[48] Such a story resembles the ones identified by Webster in representations of Kenya, where even white women and children were not safe in their own home and pinned down by savage natives.[49] In fact, the Legionnaire himself even frames this nightmare as "like the Mau Mau terror – only worse."[50] Such a comparison would not have been read lightly in Britain. John Lonsdale has noted that the Mau Mau were seen by both left and right as especially evil and more atrocious than rebels in other parts of the British world.[51] Appearing in one of the first sentences of the article, the proposition that this terror was worse than that of the Mau Mau

[46] Chapter two charts this change.
[47] John Keatinge, "AMBUSH!...My Nightmare Dash to Bring up Ammunition," *The Daily Mail,* April 18, 1956, 4.
[48] Keatinge, "AMBUSH!...," 4..
[49] Webster, *Englishness and Empire,* 122.
[50] Keatinge, "AMBUSH!...," 4.
[51] John Lonsdale, "Mau Maus of the Mind: Making Mau Mau and Remaking Kenya," *Journal of African History* 31, no. 3 (1990): 393, 420-421.

immediately marks Algerian violence as uniquely extreme. Such a suggestion was reinforced by new reportage in a common process where clear moments of opinion-forming were supported by numerous news items detailing colonial chaos. Sensationalist *Mail* reporting around the same time, with headlines such as "ALGERIA: IT'S FULL WAR NOW", "Total War on France", and "TROOPS RING CITY OF FEAR" helped to frame and evidence the extreme terror of the Algerian conflict.[52] This is also what allowed 'Cassandra' in 1958 to refer to the "sheer horror" of Algeria and compare it to the Cyprus conflict.[53] Reports on "war-torn" or "strife-torn" Algeria, and the *Mirror's* feverish reporting on the collapsing of the Fourth Republic and undemocratic ascension of de Gaulle, supported 'Cassandra's' value-judgement that "no nation has had more colonial trouble than the French."[54]

The ubiquity of coverage on the colonial chaos in Algeria, and the way in which it ran through so much reporting, makes it difficult to pin down as a discourse in its own terms. A good way to capture it, however, is to look at reporting on the capital city of Algiers, which came to symbolise the chaos in which Algeria found itself. This was especially the case in the final years of the conflict, with the headlines alone painting an image of traumatic violence. For example, *Mail* front-page titles such as "CROWDS POUR OUT OF THE CASBAHS AND FALL TO FRENCH MACHINE-GUNS" and "ALGIERS EXPLODES", as well as other items titled "In Algiers Yesterday a Boy Went Shopping for Death" and "We're sick of killings say the women of Algiers" all represent the city as one of fear and constant death.[55] The *Mirror* published similar headlines such as "RIOT CITY TANKS MOVE IN", "61 KILLED IN ALGIERS DAY OF HATE", and "IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH", as well as articles which detail "Mob fury…Violence…Hate and

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[52] Daily Mail Reporter, "ALGERIA: IT'S FULL WAR NOW," *The Daily Mail,* March 20, 1956, 5;; Daily Mail Reporter, "'Total War on France'," *The Daily Mail*, March 31, 1956, 7; Alan Humphreys, "Troops Ring City of Fear," *The Daily Mail,* February 06, 1956, 6.
[53] Cassandra, "Cassandra in France: Pot Luck," 4.
[54] Peter Stephens, "Mollet Flies to see de Gaulle," *The Daily Mirror,* May 31, 1958, 3; Peter Stephens, "De Gaulle is Pouring Cash into Algeria," *The Daily Mirror,* July 04, 1958, 4; Daily Mirror Reporter , "400 Murdered in Ravine," *The Daily Mirror,* September 23, 1958, 24; Peter Stephens, "FRANCE FACES REVOLT," *The Daily Mirror,* May 14, 1958; Cassandra, "Cassandra in France: Pot Luck," 4.
[55] Robin Smyth, "CROWDS POUR OUT OF THE CASBAHS AND FALL TO FRENCH MACHINE-GUNS: ALGIERS MASSACRE," *The Daily Mail,* December 12, 1960, 1; John Starr, "ALGIERS EXPLODES," *The Daily Mail,* May 15, 1962, 1; Robin Smyth, "In Algiers Yesterday a Boy Went Shopping for Death," *The Daily Mail,* January 23, 1962, 6; John Starr, "We're sick of killings say the women of Algiers," *The Daily Mail,* June 01, 1962, 2.

fear [in] the seething capital of French Algeria".[56] It is important to recognise how these headlines would have been read alongside representations of British decolonisation. Elizabeth Buettner has pointed out that both Labour and Conservative politicians portrayed Britain's decolonisation process as one of peaceful transfers of power, encouraging the perception that British Imperialism was of a higher calibre than its Continental forms.[57] Similarly, Coffey has pointed to the self-congratulatory press reporting on Ghanaian independence in 1957, with imagery of a British policy triumph figuring as the defining pattern throughout all coverage of decolonisation in Africa.[58] Reports of extreme violence, chaos, and colonial mismanagement would have been read alongside these triumphalist and non-negative narratives. The contrasts could not have been more stark, revealing how Algeria functioned to cushion any feeling of trauma that British decolonisation might have brought.

Both the *Mail* and the *Mirror* also turned to Orientalist motifs when discussing the "demented city" of Algiers.[59] The main feature on the eighth page of a March 1962 edition of the *Mail* described the city as something out of the famous Rip Kirby detective comic-strips.[60] The journalist details how "whiskered, leather-faced Arabs hurry past with their veiled women shrouded in white cotton and mystery", with the constant possibility that "a Sten gun might be concealed underneath the shroud."[61] Indeed, the author muses that if a Rip Kirby story was set here, people would have a hard time believing such a place could exist.[62] A *Mirror* article, dominating the fourth page of an April 1962 edition, tells a similarly dramatic story. In an attempt to help readers imagine the terror of Algiers, the article transplants the violence onto a London setting,

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[56] Peter Stephens, "RIOT CITY TANKS MOVE IN," *The Daily Mirror,* December 10, 1960, 1; Peter Stephens, "61 KILLED IN ALGIERS DAY OF HATE," *The Daily Mirror,* December 12, 1960, 1; Daily Mirror Reporter , "IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH," *The Daily Mirror,* February 27, 1962, 3; Daily Mirror Reporter , "Fury in Algiers," *The Daily Mirror,* December 12, 1960, 12.
[57] Elizabeth Buettner, "Extended Families or Bodily Decomposition? Biological Metaphors in the Age of European Decolonisation", in *Rhetorics of Empire: Language of Colonial Conflict after 1900* ed. Martin Thomas and Richard Toye. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 212; Buettner, *Europe after Empire,* 60.
[58] Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 41.
[59] Donald Wise, "Thousands Flee from Terror City," *The Daily Mirror,* May 21, 1962, 5; Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin Books, 1978).
[60] Alan Gardner, "RIP KIRBY City," *The Daily Mail,* March 02, 1962, 8.
[61] Gardner, "RIP KIRBY City," 8.
[62] Gardner, "RIP KIRBY City," 8.

with stories of shootings in Piccadilly Circus and mortar rounds fired into Paddington Station.[63] It is worth quoting the author's explanation for such terrible violence at length :

> *"How can people do these things? Because they live in a violent city that has seen these things done since the Crusades, since the days when its pirates were the terror of the civilised world. Because they are sun loving, highly sexed, noisy people with hot Arab, Spanish and Italian blood in their veins. They understand brute force and respect it."*[64]

Not only does the author use the Orientalist hallmarks of depravity and sensuality to explain the unique violence of Algiers, but also blurs the racial categories between *pied-noir* settlers and Muslims (separate political and legal identities), to show just how corrupting this conflict had become.[65] We can see in both these articles, then, how Algiers is represented as a colonial city mired in extreme and traumatic violence. Again, there is a process here by which clear moments of opinion-forming are supported by headlines and news-reports. The *Mail* journalist may have mused that people would be unlikely to believe that such a "Rip Kirby city" could exist, but they certainly would have if they followed the paper's headlines.[66] Coverage of Algiers therefore captures how the Algerian War was represented. People lived in constant fear as the violence took on near fictional proportions.

Another way to capture how Algeria was presented as *the* colonial trouble-spot is through warnings against a 'British Algeria'. Though it is something which runs throughout all coverage, this is the most obvious example of how Algeria was part of a British 'politics of comparison' in mid-twentieth-century colonial discourse.[67] For the *Mirror*, 'Cassandra' once again provided commentary, musing in October 1959 that British problems in Central Africa could come to rival that of France's in Algeria.[68] Significantly, this point comes right after 'Cassandra' mentioning the

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[63] Donald Wise, "Try to Imagine This Terror Here," *The Daily Mirror,* April 19, 1962, 4.
[64] Wise, "Try to Imagine This Terror," 4.
[65] For an explanation of these identities see: Lizabeth Zack, "Who Fought the Algerian War? Political Identity and Conflict in French-Ruled Algeria," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 16, no. 1 (2002): 55-97.
[66] Gardner, "RIP KIRBY City," 8.
[67] Potter and Saha, ""Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 15.
[68] William Connor (Cassandra), "THE GREAT QUIZ," *The Daily Mirror,* October 16, 1959, 6.

legacy of the Hola Camp Massacre from a half a year previous.[69] The massacre, where eleven un-convicted Mau Mau detainees were beaten to death in a remote Kenyan 'rehabilitation' camp, was hugely controversial back in Britain. Whilst there was no consensus over what its implications were for imperial rule, it had shaken the assumed moral foundation of Empire.[70] To warn against an Algeria-style conflict immediately after mentioning this massacre is therefore a clear indication that Britain could easily head down the French road. The *Mail* similarly took part in a 'politics of comparison'. An April 1958 article on political difficulties in the Aden Protectorate warns that failure to act decisively could result in "a long-drawn struggle which could well become known as Britain's 'Algeria'."[71] A front-page column in May 1958 argues that the trouble-spot could be cleaned up with ease if "we were as ruthless as some nations."[72] Indeed, if Britain followed the French route, and poured a mass of troops into the island, it could be pacified in weeks. But this was not the British way, whose inclination for mercy meant she could not "practice genocide".[73] Quite bizarrely then, the article is arguing both that the imperial brutality of France is un-British and the wrong way to handle colonial conflict, whilst also stating that if Britain were to employ such ruthless tactics it would do it a whole lot better than the French![74] Regardless, the message is clear that French actions in Algeria should be a warning on how not to deal with independence movements.

The 'politics of comparison' so obvious here rested not only on contemporary representations of colonial chaos but also upon deeper historical foundations. These foundations were present, explicitly or implicitly, throughout all coverage but are particularly relevant to discuss here. Max Jones et al. have pointed out that as consistent imperial rivals, Britain and France have been constant reference points for one another in the development of their national

[69] Connor (Cassandra), "THE GREAT QUIZ," 6.
[70] Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation 1918-1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 263; For a discussion on the national debate Hola engendered see: Toye, "Arguing about Hola Camp".
[71] Ralph Izzard, "The Uneasy Sultan Asks the £3,000,000 Question Today…," *The Daily Mail,* April 29, 1958, 4.
[72] Daily Mail Comment, "What to do in Cyprus," *The Daily Mail,* May 28, 1956, 1.
[73] Daily Mail Comment, "What to do in Cyprus," 1.
[74] Daily Mail Comment, "What to do in Cyprus," 1.

narratives.[75] More specifically to Algeria, Alex Middleton has highlighted the common rhetorical usage of the colony in Victorian public culture, where it was used to criticise policies that were seen to fall short of Britain's own higher standard of imperial rule.[76] Warnings against a 'British Algeria' therefore relied on the centuries-old historical context of French imperialism as a reference point for failure. This is what allowed the distinction to be made between 'British' and 'French' ways of dealing with colonial crisis, as France had been traditionally seen as exceptionally ruthless in its imperial actions.[77] It is also what allowed warnings against a 'British Algeria' to have weight, drawing from the deeper context of French imperialism as a constant reference point. Such comparisons came to be even more explicit in representations of what the conflict was doing to metropolitan France, the concern of the following section.

Chaos in France

It was in the reporting on the effect that the war was having on metropolitan France that the *Mirror* and the *Mail* most clearly presented the conflict as a uniquely traumatic - and uniquely French - problem. This helped to separate colonial decline from problems with imperialism itself and attribute it instead to specifically French characteristics. This echoed the British government's own position. Martin Thomas has identified how official assessments of France's colonial conflicts looked for explanations in its politics, culture, or society, rather than broader colonial conditions in their own right.[78] For example, one perspective was that the French elite had failed to engender political stability, as they veered from chaotic coalitions to rigid autocracy.[79] Another perspective saw imperial collapse as a symptom and cause of a social malaise, with French society breaking up along numerous axes of status, and a steady decrease in engagement with its empire as people

[75] Max Jones, Berny Sèbe, John Strachan, Bertrand Taithe & Peter Yeandle, "Decolonising Imperial Heroes: Britain and France," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, no. 5 (2014): 791-792.
[76] Alex Middleton, "French Algeria in British Imperial Thought, 1830–70," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, no. 1 (2015): 55
[77] Middleton, "French Algeria in British Imperial Thought," 47.
[78] Martin Thomas, "A Path Not Taken? British Perspectives on French Colonial Violence after 1945", in *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* ed. Sarah Stockwell and L.J. Butler. (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 171.
[79] Thomas, "A Path Not Taken?", 161.

turned towards heady consumerism.[80] As Thomas notes, these readings constructed "French failings as the absence of British solutions", and this is the same attitude taken up by the *Mirror* and the *Mail*.[81] The colonial chaos that was ripping through the country was seen to be rooted in conditions specific to France, with the breakdown of democracy, order, and society presented as the cause and result of the Algerian crisis.

The political instability of the Fourth Republic, and the undemocratic ascension of de Gaulle, was presented by the *Mail* and the *Mirror* as both causing and resulting from the Algerian crisis. In a feature dominating the eighth page of an October 1957 *Mail* paper, the French people are depicted as having as much say in the politics of the country as the inhabitants of Britain's Dartmoor Prison.[82] Indeed, the common Frenchman now suffers from an inferiority complex, as his politicians "have thrown away an empire, not only through folly but for personal ambition, even for personal spite.[83] The article stresses that this traumatic powerlessness is rooted in the "fundamental difference between politics in Britain and France", as the French parliamentary system allows M.P.s to retain their seat even if a government falls.[84] This shows how French failures are constructed as the absence of British solutions, and these failures are held to have led to such malaise amongst the French population.[85] The "ghastly war that is bleeding France to death" is presented as a symptom and cause of political instability.[86] Its failures are the fault of an ineffective political elite, leading to apathy and crisis amongst the population. The following month, a similar narrative was portrayed in the paper, only this time the French malaise was framed in gendered terms. A feature dominating the edition's sixth-page, the headline states "What ARE we going to do about France?" – already giving the impression of a despairing parent.[87] The article refers to France as "Europe's poor little rich girl" and links this to a deep pessimism amongst the population

[80] Thomas, "A Path Not Taken?", 163.
[81] Thomas, "A Path Not Taken?", 161.
[82] Noel Barber, "It's Every Frenchman for Himself," *The Daily Mail,* October 03, 1957, 8.
[83] Barber, "It's Every Frenchman for Himself," 8.
[84] Barber, "It's Every Frenchman for Himself," 8.
[85] Thomas, "A Path Not Taken?", 161.
[86] Barber, "It's Every Frenchman for Himself," 8.
[87] Noel Barber, "What are we going to do about France?," *The Daily Mail,* November 20, 1957, 6.

as they have witnessed imperial decline and faced the "virtually insoluble" problem of Algeria, which is far more difficult than "even our own Cyprus".[88] The article admits that Britain's own imperial decline has been just as rapid, but also points out that the British have proved their influence throughout the world and that the working man still knows his country is of value.[89] This would be true of France if she "chose the straight and narrow path."[90] This representation in the *Mail* of a weak and feminised France can again be related to parallel discourses in Britain. Webster has identified how representations of colonial wars in the right-wing press and popular films in the mid-fifties would often portray an image of a "feminised metropolis that was betraying the cause of empire."[91] This drew from a long tradition of visions of imperial authority as defined by military strength, obedience, and manliness.[92] The imagery of a feminised France was therefore a potent and recognisable symbol of how its imperial decline was both causing and resulting from societal failure.

Buettner has noted how the connection between metropole and periphery in mid-twentieth century discourses on colonialism were often conceptualised by the rhetorical usage of biological metaphor.[93] This is something also evident in Algerian coverage at the time, with a *Mail* front-page comment in October 1958 declaring the French crisis to be an infection spreading to "the very heart of Europe."[94] This political instability was then transplanted back into military action in North Africa. For example, another front-page comment section in February 1958 placed the reason for an over-zealous bombing of a Tunisian village reportedly hiding Algerian rebels, as rooted in the weakness of the French government, who had no control over its military.[95] The link that the *Mail* presented between political instability and colonial crisis, and the ways in which these fed each other, therefore left no doubt that Algeria was traumatising France. Compare this, then, to Coffey's

[88] Barber, "What are we going to do about France?," 6.
[89] Barber, "What are we going to do about France?," 6.
[90] Barber, "What are we going to do about France?," 6.
[91] Webster, *Englishness and Empire,* 135.
[92] Webster, *Englishness and Empire,* 135.
[93] Buettner, "Extended Families or Bodily Decomposition?", 208;
[94] Daily Mail Comment, "The Sputnik Birthday," *The Daily Mail,* October 04, 1958, 1.
[95] Daily Mail Comment, "The Bombing in Tunisia," *The Daily Mail,* February 12, 1958, 1.

findings on press coverage of British decolonisation. For example, coverage of Kenya and Nyasaland masked criticisms of the British government, focusing instead on a range of other themes such as African or settler violence, or successful implementation of colonial policy.[96] In contrast, French political instability, government failure, and colonial chaos were all intimately linked.

This is something the *Mirror* also did. There was a subtle difference, however, in how it reported the apparent democratic collapse of France. The *Mail* emphasised the inherent instability of France's political system and this was present in *Mirror* coverage as well, but existed alongside fear that such instability would lead to reactionary forces taking over in France. For example, a February 1960 'Cassandra' column despairs that France, with its great democratic tradition, should be "reduced to the pathetic Franco-Tito-Salazar formula", with the solving of the Algeria crisis (and therefore the saving of France) having to rely solely on de Gaulle.[97] Like the *Mail's* coverage, this demonstrates how France was represented as suffering from a political crisis as a result of Algeria. However, it also reveals a more progressive anxiety over the failure of democracy that is not as present in the *Mail.* This fear is also evident in an earlier February 1956 'Cassandra' article, which, like the *Mail* article on the Tunisian bombing, transplants this political chaos back into the conflict itself by placing the blame for settler riots on the fact that democracy has been "dragged down and rolled in the mire" in metropolitan France.[98] Even before the 1958 fall of the Fourth Republic, therefore, the *Mirror* had highlighted the link between colonial chaos and democratic instability. Indeed, this link was made even more clear in a front-page article during the May 1958 crisis where it was claimed that fears over the "complete breakdown of democratic political life in France" seemed to be justified.[99] The *Mirror's* commentary on political breakdown differed slightly to the *Mail's* therefore. Whereas the *Mail* emphasised the inherent and fundamental chaos

[96] Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 108.
[97] William Connor (Cassandra), "COME DINE WITH ME," *The Daily Mirror,* February 01, 1960, 4.
[98] William Connor (Cassandra), "MOLLET TO THE STAKE," *The Daily Mirror,* February 08, 1956, 4.
[99] Stephens, "FRANCE FACES REVOLT," 1.

that both caused, and was made by worse by, the Algerian War, the *Mirror* conveyed a much more progressive anxiety over the potential breakdown of democratic order.

Despite their differences, both papers revealed a patronising attitude towards France and again, it is remarkable how much this echoed official British assessments. Gladwyn Jebb, the British ambassador to Paris in 1954, recalled in his memoirs that France was seen as "a weak sister who must be kept on the straight and narrow path of Western solidarity by a firm, purposeful and self-confident Britain."[100] This idea of France as a wayward and compromised colonial state who must follow the example of Britain is expressed implicitly and explicitly through these articles. Such representation functioned to paint a picture of France that was suffering from the unique problem of Algeria that had no comparison in the British world. Not only did this emphasise that France was experiencing a much deeper colonial trauma than Britain, but also served to separate imperial decline away from issues with the system itself and instead onto specifically French characteristics.

Alongside the highlighting of political instability, the *Mirror* and the *Mail* also emphasised the breakdown of law and order in France. In this theme, representations of Paris bore remarkable similarities to the ones of Algiers. Indeed, the French capital was itself subject to Orientalist motifs as early as July 1957 in a fourth-page *Mail* feature. The article covers the increasing overspill of the conflict into Paris, noting that a similar occurrence has not happened with Cypriot violence in London.[101] According to the article, this is because the British capital "has nothing to compare with the 'casbahs' of Paris" where not even police dare to walk alone.[102] The article then expands this diagnosis to the rest of France, claiming there are places in the country where it is not safe for anyone with white skin to be alone.[103] Playing on metropolitan racial fears this article paints an image of Paris mired by colonial chaos in much the same way Algiers came to be. Though not utilising such racial themes, the *Mirror* also portrayed Paris as facing a legal breakdown due to

[100] Gladwyn Jebb, *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1972), 268.
[101] Jeffrey Blyth, "The Gunmen of Paris," *The Daily Mail*, July 19, 1957, 4.
[102] Blyth, "The Gunmen of Paris," 4.
[103] Blyth, "The Gunmen of Paris," 4.

Algeria. Headlines such as "PARIS…the City of SUDDEN DEATH!" in April 1957 and "TOMMY-GUNS OUT IN PARIS STREETS" in February 1958 both present images of extreme lawlessness as a result of Algerian violence.[104]

Something viscerally indicative of both papers' portrayal of how Algeria was damaging law and order in France was a *Mirror* centre-page spread in March 1962, depicting the French toddler Delphine who had been caught in a bomb-blast in Paris.[105] Two pictures of Delphine were included. One was a picture of her before the attack and the second was of her bloodied and half-blinded face after the explosion.[106] For the *Mirror*, this represents France before and after "the horror of Algeria" which is now similarly unseeing and mutilated.[107] Such imagery worked to drive home the fact that the Algerian War was corrupting and destroying France.

Again, this coverage, and the highlighting of political instability, drew on a deep historical context of representations of French colonialism. Middleton has noted how Victorian commentators thought Algeria to be corrupting domestic French politics, with fears that the excessive violence in the colony would spread back into Europe and contribute to a repression of public opinion.[108] A century later, this took on an even more visceral edge. Political instability, metropolitan violence, and colonial chaos were all presented as symptoms and causes of each other, with the coverage of Delphine most clearly capturing this. This functioned to mark Algeria as a unique colonial conflict that was deeply traumatising France. Again, this would have been read alongside press coverage of British decolonisation that made no such traumatic link between metropole and colony.

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[104] Noel Whitcomb, "PARIS…the City of SUDDEN DEATH!," *The Daily Mirror,* April 25, 1957, 2; Peter Stephens, "TOMMY-GUNS OUT IN PARIS STREETS," *The Daily Mirror,* February 17, 1958, 2.
[105] Peter Stephens, "THE TRAGEDY OF FRANCE," *The Daily Mirror*, March 02, 1962, 12-13.
[106] Stephens, "THE TRAGEDY OF FRANCE," 12-13.
[107] Stephens, "THE TRAGEDY OF FRANCE," 12-13.
[108] Middleton, "French Algeria in British Imperial Thought," 47.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how popular press discourses on the Algerian War framed it as uniquely traumatic and chaotic. The two papers presented remarkably similar narratives. Admittedly, the differing political leanings of the papers meant that the *Mail* was more likely to emphasise (and revel in) the connection between colonial chaos and French culture, whilst the *Mirror* highlighted (and deplored) the apparent breakdown of French democracy. Despite these relatively surface-level differences, however, both papers presented France as mired in deep and unique colonial chaos in a way Britain was not. This points to the permanence of British self-conceptions about its (post)imperial role in the world, as well as how deep perceptions of French colonialism ran. It is also remarkable how consistent this rhetoric was from 1956 onwards, becoming only increasingly fevered as the war dragged on. There were, of course, particular moments that were covered more intensely than others. For example the so-called 'week of barricades' in late-January 1960, where settlers tried to overthrow the Algiers government, was treated to a front-page story every day in the *Mail,* and events were similarly covered daily in either front-page or full-page spreads in the *Mirror* from 25 January to 02 February.[109] The fall of the Fourth Republic and rise of de Gaulle was also a watershed moment, particularly in how it influenced the soon to be discussed ideas about the inevitably of decolonisation. However, these events simply contributed to the increasing velocity of coverage rather than standing as individual moments. Throughout most of its lifetime, then, the Algerian War was represented as uniquely traumatic and an example of a uniquely French problem. This chapter has not tried to suggest that the conflict was not exceptionally brutal, but

[109] Daily Mail Reporter**,** "2am DE GAULLE CALL," *The Daily Mail,* January 25, 1960, 1; Michael Jacobson, "DEBRE IN ALGIERS," *The Daily Mail*, January 26, 1960, 1; Michael Jacobson and Robin Smyth, "DICTATOR de GAULLE?," *The Daily Mail,* January 27, 1960, 1; Michael Jacobson and Robin Smyth, "THE WAITING GAME," *The Daily Mail,* January 28, 1960, 1; Michael Jacobson and Robin Smyth, "De GAULLE DECIDES," *The Daily Mail,* January 29, 1960, 1; Michael Jacobson and Robin Smyth, "I MUST BE OBEYED," *The Daily Mail,* January 30, 1960, 1; Vincent Mulchrone and Hugh Medlicott, "The Squeeze Starts," *The Daily Mail,* February 01, 1960, 1; Michael Jacobson and Robin Smyth, "Lagaillarde Flown to Paris Jail," *The Daily Mail,* February 02, 1960, 1; Peter Stephens, "REVOLT – against de Gaulle," *The Daily Mirror,* January 25, 1960, 1; Peter Stephens, "DE GAULLE'S NO. 1 for Algiers," *The Daily Mirror,* January 26, 1960, 5; Peter Stephens, "DE GAULLE: A NEW CRISIS," *The Daily Mirror,* January 27, 1960, 24; Peter Stephens, "SHOTS IN A CRISIS TOWN," *The Daily Mirror,* January 28, 1960, 24; Peter Stephens, "NOW REBELS RULE ALGIERS," *The Daily Mirror,* January 29, 1960, 24; Peter Stephens, "DE GAULLE: OBEY ME!," *The Daily Mirror,* January 30, 1960, 20; Peter Stephens, "TROOPS QUIT REBEL 'ARMY'," *The Daily Mirror,* February 01, 1960, 20; Peter Stephens, "Victor De Gaulle Seeks New Powers," *The Daily Mirror,* February 02, 1960, 24.

rather highlight the way in which a one-sided discourse of French colonial trauma existed alongside the narratives of British orderly withdrawal. The following chapter will use the findings so far to frame how the Algerian War transformed decolonisation into an inevitable historical process.

Chapter Two: The Tide of History in Algeria

In March 1958, a front-page comment feature declared to *Mail* readers that "France will never voluntarily withdraw from Algeria."[110] Indeed, the article asked why she should be expected to at all, stating that "Algeria is a part of her bone structure…In 128 years she has peopled it with the 1,200,000 men and women of French blood who today call it home."[111] Less than three years later, in December 1960, an article from the same front-page feature informed readers that the "awful and complex problem" that was Algeria will certainly end in a form of self-government as the "tide of history is flowing that way."[112] In the space of thirty-three months, French Algeria had gone from an immutable and natural fact, to something anachronistic that will surely be swept away by the tide of history, or perhaps, the wind of change. What had happened in these months that enabled such a dramatic shift? The continuing colonial trouble-spots in British territories such as Kenya and Harold MacMillan's famous address to the Parliament of South Africa surely had a large impact. However, for readers of the *Mail*, as well as the *Mirror*, it was the rise of de Gaulle and his presidency that bore the clearest connection to the apparent inevitably of decolonization.

This chapter charts how a change in the relevance and assumed necessity of colonialism was expressed through coverage of Algeria in the *Mail* and the *Mirror.* In both papers, colonialism quickly became something that was dead and out of step with the march of history. Throughout this coverage, the framing of the conflict as uniquely traumatic stayed consistent. What changed however was the root of this trauma, as French Algeria came to be seen as a poison that must be removed for the good of France and the West. Whilst the previous chapter showed the *Mail* and the *Mirror* to be remarkably similar in their framing of Algeria, their roads to accepting the apparent inevitability of decolonization differed. The *Mirror's* position on French Algeria was more ambiguous than the *Mail's* in the first years of the conflict, meaning that its editorial position did not shift as radically. What is more, proclamations on the death of colonialism came slightly earlier

[110] Daily Mail Comment, "The Desert Blooms," *The Daily Mail,* March 07, 1958, 1.
[111] Daily Mail Comment, "The Desert Blooms," 1.
[112] Daily Mail Comment, "One Man's Courage," *The Daily Mail,* December 12, 1960, 1.

in the *Mirror*. Because of this, the chapter analyses the shift in the relevance of colonialism in both papers separately.

The Daily Mail

The shift from the perceived immutability of French Algeria to the apparent inevitability of its death was consistently framed in the *Mail* in terms of British foreign policy. Martin Thomas has argued that British foreign officials never understood nor accepted the French understanding of Algeria as more than just a precious colonial possession.[113] However, this was not the case with the editorial position of the *Mail* which, in the early years of the conflict, strongly defended the concept of French Algeria. A front-page comment feature in October 1955 praised the "righteous indignation" of France's walkout at the United Nations over the vote to inscribe the Algerian question on the General Assembly's agenda.[114] The article argues that "for too long the colonial Powers have suffered constant nagging and interference from the anti-colonial bloc who always gang up against them".[115] Indeed, Algeria, according to the article, should not be the concern of the UN at all, whose own charter forbids intervention into domestic matters.[116] Early Cold War anxieties became tied with colonial ones as the article warned against Soviet Russia, "the most ruthless colonial Power of all", moving into Asia and Africa once the "old, stable, humane colonial Powers" have been pushed out.[117] In this article, then, solidarity is professed with France, as Algeria is presented as an example of how Western power was increasingly being challenged on the international stage. This is what defined the early coverage on this theme, with French Algeria being designated by *Mail* editorials as a Western objective.

Such a designation can be understood within the wider context of the 1950's where colonialism was still seen as essential. With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to, as Frederick

[113] Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, 12.
[114] Daily Mail Comment, "The French Leave," *The Daily Mail,* October 04, 1955, 1; Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution,* 153.
[115] Daily Mail Comment, "The French Leave," 1.
[116] Daily Mail Comment, "The French Leave," 1.
[117] Daily Mail Comment, "The French Leave," 1.

Cooper describes, "put all colonial territories on the train to the nation-state."[118] However, this obscures an understanding of decolonisation as a process where a variety of possibilities, real or desired, existed.[119] Indeed, in both Britain and France, African colonies were still seen as vital to stimulate their war-damaged economies.[120] It was natural, then, that Algeria was unquestionably accepted as vital to France - colonialism itself was still seen as economically, politically, and morally viable.

This perspective was a consistent *Mail* editorial position in the early years of the conflict. Another front-page comment in November 1957 argued that "settlement in Algeria has become imperative if the West is to remain secure".[121] The article is not specific about what this settlement should be. However, its anxieties over Soviet influence in the region if the West's position disintegrated - along with other articles stating the case more directly - is a clear indication that settlement means continued French control.[122] Proclamations of French Algeria as Western policy increased in intensity in the following months. In December 1957, another front-page comment called for a Western policy aimed at resisting the "gross violations of international morality" where European powers are removed from countries across Asia and Africa.[123] The feature argues that Western powers need to support one another in this situation, declaring that if "France cannot survive as a Power without Algeria then the retention of Algeria is a Western objective".[124] Once again, then, the *Mail's* editorial position professes solidarity with a fellow imperial state and highlights the necessity of the continuation of colonial power. In March 1958, the feature appeared that was discussed at the start of this chapter and then in May that year, another was published with the title "THE WEST IN DANGER".[125] Discussing the military coup by French generals in Algeria

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[118] Frederick Cooper, "Reconstructing Empire in British and French Africa," *Past & Present* 210, Issue suppl_6 (2011): 200.
[119] Frederick Cooper, "Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective," *The Journal of African History* 49, No. 2 (2008): 169.
[120] Cooper, "Reconstructing Empire in British and French Africa," 199.
[121] Daily Mail Comment, "A Task for Giants," *The Daily Mail,* November 25, 1957, 1.
[122] Daily Mail Comment, "A Task for Giants," 1.
[123] Daily Mail Comment, "Closing the Ranks – III," *The Daily Mail,* December 11, 1957, 1.
[124] Daily Mail Comment, "Closing the Ranks – III," 1.
[125] Daily Mail Comment, "The Desert Blooms," 1; Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," *The Daily Mail,* May 15, 1958, 1.

(who demanded de Gaulle's return to power, threatened the invasion of metropolitan France, and whose actions soon led to the fall of the Fourth Republic), the article stresses that this was a crisis for the entire Western world.[126] Not only was French weakness a serious danger to NATO, but the coup was also a symptom of the faltering of Western authority throughout the world.[127] In the article's view, then, the primary concern was not the rebellious generals, but rather a deeper crisis of colonial power that should foster alarm throughout the West.[128] The article also relates the unacceptable faltering of colonial power with the unique trauma France was facing, declaring that it is the "reaction of men who are sick in soul and spirit at the retreats and humiliations suffered by France in recent years."[129] The article names Indo-China, Suez, and, to top it off, Algeria which, "bound by hoops of steel to the body of the Republic" is now in danger of collapsing.[130] The crisis that is plaguing the West is therefore also resulting in an even greater social malaise within France and this highlights how, in the *Mail,* the framing of the exceptional trauma of Algeria interacted with proclamations on the necessity of colonialism. The bodily metaphor used here is another example of how the relationship between metropole and periphery was conceptualised within colonial discourses, driving home that it was an organic and natural one.[131] The necessity of colonialism is also evident in some of the articles discussed in the previous chapter. For example, the eighth page feature in October 1957, which declared Frenchmen to have as much say in their country's affairs as the prisoners of Dartmoor, sees the apparent throwing away of empire by politicians as leading to a deep inferiority complex amongst the population.[132] The assumption here is that imperial decline would naturally trigger social trauma if it had happened the way it had in France.

In the early years of the conflict, then, readers of the *Mail* were continually informed that Algeria naturally belonged to France and should continue to do so. This existed alongside the

[126] Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," 1.
[127] Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," 1
[128] Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," 1
[129] Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," 1
[130] Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," 1
[131] Buettner, "Extended Families or Bodily Decomposition?", 20.
[132] Barber, "It's Every Frenchman for Himself," 8.

continual framing of Algeria as a uniquely traumatic problem. At this stage however, the root of the trauma clearly lay in the colonial decline that France was unable to manage effectively. Again, this position on the continued viability of French Algeria can be placed within the deeper context of the contemporary relevance of Empire. Jordanna Bailkin has noted that in 1950's Britain, it was not always clear if empire was actually ending and John MacKenzie has highlighted the persistence of imperial cultures throughout the nation.[133] For example, the BBC continued to project confident images of imperial development, whilst stories and accounts of colonial adventure continued to sell well in the publishing world.[134] Moreover, grand imperial ceremony, most conspicuous in the 1953 coronation of Elizabeth II, gave the impression that Empire was alive and well, something also helped by the continued production of locomotives for Commonwealth countries and the popularity of imperial destinations on shipping lines.[135] Imperialism and its culture was therefore still seen as viable in this time, and the continued insistence that French Algeria naturally belonged, and was vital, to France and the West is another way in which this mentality can be viewed. Indeed, the forcefulness with which this perspective was expressed, along with the fact that it was continually framed as deeply traumatic, shows that at this stage, coverage of Algeria functioned as a warning against the mishandling of illegitimate anti-colonial forces.

However, as outlined at the start of this chapter, a radical shift occurred in the closing years of the 1950's where decolonisation of French Algeria, and decolonisation itself, came to be presented by the *Mail* as an inevitable event of History. Bill Schwarz has highlighted the stark contrast between 1955, where imperial values could justifiably exist in public life, and 1965, where The Beatles could play-up their induction as Members of the British Empire with theatrical farce and face criticism only from conservative voices now seen as anachronistic by the mainstream public.[136] In ten years, then, imperial culture had gone from something ubiquitous and relevant, to

[133] Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (London: University of California Press, 2012), 6; John M. MacKenzie, "The Persistence of Empire in Metropolitan Culture", in *British Culture and the End of Empire* ed. Stuart Ward. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).
[134] MacKenzie, "The Persistence of Empire", 28, 30.
[135] MacKenzie, "The Persistence of Empire", 30-31.
[136] Schwarz, *The White Man's World,* 6-7.

something backwards and eccentric. In *Mail* coverage of Algeria, this change happened in the even shorter space of time of under three years and decolonisation had been designated as an inevitable reality.

This came with little warning or explanation. The closing years of the decade saw de Gaulle become president of the newly constituted Fifth Republic in January 1959, with him introducing political and economic reforms for the benefit of Algerian Muslims, whilst also declaring in September 1959 that they would eventually be given the opportunity to choose self-determination should they want it.[137] De Gaulle's actions were complex and contradictory, with his personal position on French Algeria always being rather ambiguous. Nevertheless, the *Mail* attempted to cover them faithfully and provided extensive commentary which was largely supportive of de Gaulle. Indeed, the new president was often valorised by the *Mail*, confirming his image as the man destined to save France from the Algerian crisis. A notable example of this is in another front-page comment in July 1958, which praises his actions so far as premier and "fanatical devotion to the best interests of France".[138] Pre-empting much of the coverage of the 1960's, the article binds de Gaulle to the historical task of solving the Algerian problem, arguing that if he can settle the French people's crisis (the article believes he can), then he will "go down in history as one of their greatest sons."[139] This positive coverage of de Gaulle and the way in which it presented him as bound to French destiny, alongside the growing criticism of French settlers and the Army (discussed in chapter three), no doubt laid some groundwork for the evocations on the tide of history that came in 1960. But this position still emerged without clear warning or explanation.

The first evocation on the tide of history in French Algeria was in the December 1960 article discussed at the start of this chapter. A commentary on the upcoming referendum on Algerian self-determination, the article declares that "the sooner a settlement is reached the better, not only for France but for her friends too. Algeria is a sore in the body of Europe, a drain on its

[137] Thomas, *The French North African Crisis,* 187-192; Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization,* 73-77.
[138] Daily Mail Comment, "A Month of De Gaulle," *The Daily Mail,* July 3, 1958, 1.
[139] Daily Mail Comment, "A Month of De Gaulle," 1.

resources, and an embarrassment to its politics".[140] Algeria is still framed here both by its traumatic impact and in terms of British foreign policy, but in an opposite way to the early years of the war. 'Settlement' now meant decolonisation, with French Algeria's continued existence being deeply damaging both for France and Western interests. Again de Gaulle is valorised, and his moral courage praised by the article whilst also dismissing as nonsense the suggestion that his Algerian policy was failing France.[141]

This dramatic acceptance of the inevitability of an Algerian Algeria can be related to Todd Shepard's insights on the 'invention of decolonisation'. Shepard has highlighted how from late 1961 onwards, acceptance of Algerian independence was justified by French leaders and commentators by invoking the 'tide of History".[142] The reasons for such were not elaborated on, but 'decolonization' had transformed from a descriptive word into an inevitable effect of an abstract historical force.[143] This was Hegel's conception of History with a capital *H*, where the nation was the organising principle on the road towards the universal realisation of freedom.[144] The understanding that 'history was on the march' meant that no further discussion - be it on racism or the contradiction of liberal values and imperialism - was required.[145] Shepard's focus here is exclusively on the French perspective, and evidences his argument using mainly politicians, intellectuals, and the occasional magazine or newspaper. It is remarkable, therefore, that in a British tabloid newspaper, nearly identical proclamations were being made even before they became mainstream in French political circles.[146] This is not to say that de Gaulle was reading the *Mail* for advice on what to do about Algeria, but it does point towards the way in which the conflict was also having a deep effect on British understandings of decolonisation. This highlights the

[140] Daily Mail Comment, "One Man's Courage," 1.
[141] Daily Mail Comment, "One Man's Courage," 1.
[142] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization,* 82.
[143] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization,* 82-83, 271-272.
[144] Herman L. Bennett, "The Subject in the Plot: National Boundaries and the "History" of the Black Atlantic," *African Studies Review* 43, no. 1 (2001): 104-105; Henning Truper, "Introduction: Teleology and History – Nineteenth-century Fortunes of an Enlightenment Project", in *Historical Teleologies in the Modern World* ed. Henning Truper, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Sanjay Subrahmanyam (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 9-10.
[145] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization,* 82-83, 271-272.
[146] This first *Mail* article was published in December 1960 and Shepard identifies the shift in France occurring in late 1961.

necessity of writing 'connected histories' of empires.[147] Parallel to, and even before, these French discussions, Algeria was leading to the invention of decolonization in the British popular press. This shows that France's own imperial decline cut across national boundaries and came to hold meaning within British popular culture. Algeria is therefore one of the 'fragile threads' which connected Britain, France, and their coming to terms with decolonization.[148]

The *Mail,* then, had suddenly evoked the 'tide of history' to justify Algerian independence with little explanation or elaboration. This continued throughout the rest of the war and it is clear that editorial staff wished to present the process as a historic moment. In another front-page commentary on the result of the January 1961 referendum approving a form of self-determination, it is declared that the peoples "Oui to President de Gaulle will become a historic word for France and the whole Western world".[149] According to the article, Algeria will continue to "poison" France until self-determination is achieved, with the promise of this now meaning that France can get on the road to recovery and take up its NATO responsibilities.[150] The rest of 1961 saw similar proclamations. Two front-page comment articles in April, when French generals were once again attempting a coup, both made similar points. One evoked the 'tide of history', declaring that it was on de Gaulle's side and pointing out that whatever the outcome of the putsch, Algeria will inevitability be Algerian and not French.[151] For this reason alone, "de Gaulle must receive the wholehearted backing" of the West, to avert disaster for France and the free world.[152] The other article similarly asserted the historical inevitability of Algerian independence, valorising the "subtle brilliance" of de Gaulle as he coaxes his countrymen to accept this fact.[153] France's health is once again related to the need to lose Algeria, with the article concluding that once the "poisoned problem" is out of her system, she can "turn to a more settled, united and contented future".[154] By

[147] Potter and Saha, ""Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 7.
[148] Potter and Saha, ""Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 15; Subrahmanyan, "Connected Histories," 761-762.
[149] Daily Mail Comment, "A Word for the West," *The Daily Mail,* January 10, 1961, 1.
[150] Daily Mail Comment, "A Word for the West," 1.
[151] Daily Mail Comment, "France on the Brink," *The Daily Mail,* April 24, 1961, 1.
[152] Daily Mail Comment, "France on the Brink," 1.
[153] Daily Mail Comment, "A Poisoned Problem," *The Daily Mail,* April 25, 1961, 1.
[154] Daily Mail Comment, "A Poisoned Problem," 1.

October, an eighth-page *Mail* feature article even revealed impatience that independence was not coming sooner, declaring that "one day the Algerian settlement *must* come", asking readers "how much harder will it be tomorrow than it is today?"[155] In similar fashion to France, these evocations of the historical destiny of independence meant that debate on the past viability of empire could be foreclosed. Recognising that Algeria must be Algerian was not a moral awakening to the unacceptability of colonial domination, but rather an acceptance that it was historically determined. This meant that the imperial record itself could go unchallenged. At no point in its coverage did the *Mail* justify independence in terms of the moral failures of colonialism. At most, France's own failings were highlighted, but the primary theme was that an Algerian Algeria was an inevitable event in the march of History.

The perspective can be understood within the broader context of Britain coming to terms with decolonisation in the late fifties and early sixties. Joanna Lewis has argued that coverage of the Kenyan Emergency in the popular press appears to have become disengaged from supporting direct imperial control.[156] This was especially the case with the *Mirror*, which criticised colonial officials and was concerned about what abuses meant for Britain's reputation, but also for the *Mail* which likewise appeared to have eventually accepted the "unstoppable power of African nationalism".[157] What is more, prime-minister Harold MacMillan had famously declared to the Parliament of the Union of South Africa in February 1960 that the 'wind of change' was blowing through Africa and this must be accepted as a fact, with national policies taking account of it.[158] The speech was seen as a statement of policy intent and the phrase quickly entered public discourses on decolonisation, helped by a supportive British press.[159] This was a watershed event, but political rhetoric had already shifted towards an acceptance of decolonisation. Richard Toye has pointed out that parliamentary debate on the Hola massacre in 1959 showed that Labour and

[155] James Cameron, "Those Bodies in the Seine," *The Daily Mail,* October 30, 1961, 1; Original emphasis.
[156] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 245-247.
[157] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 245-247.
[158] Sarah Stockwell and L.J. Butler, "Introduction" in *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* ed. Sarah Stockwell and L.J. Butler (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 3.
[159] Stockwell and Butler, "Introduction" 3; Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 143-146.

Conservatives were now claiming who was better at decolonising, rather than who was the better imperialist.[160]

It would be easy to read *Mail* reporting on the apparent inevitability of the end of French Algeria as simply a pragmatic acceptance of these broader processes. However, this misunderstands the unique nature of this coverage. For one, the phrase 'tide(s) of history' was used in reference to decolonisation exclusively in coverage of Algeria in this period and not in any commentary on the British world. The 'wind of change' may have rapidly entered the public lexicon, but it is arguable that this is a much less visceral phrase than the 'tide of history'. Martin Shipway has noted that the evocation of a tide carried "the additional, racially tinged, suggestions that the colonial powers might be engulfed by it".[161] Indeed, as a geographical metaphor it can be read as conveying a much more unstoppable force. Tides must come and go in accordance with the moon, the phases of which are determined by unchanging laws of physics. Wind, by contrast, can change unexpectedly in direction or intensity, and even the strongest of winds can leave some structures (such as the Commonwealth) standing. On top of this exclusive usage, the forcefulness with which the 'tide of history' was unquestionably evoked shows that Algeria had become unique and held as emblematic for the necessity of decolonisation. This can be considered alongside the more contradictory attitudes to the British colonies. Indeed, Lewis is rather vague about how disengaged the press had become from Empire and, especially in the case of the *Mail*, does not locate a central editorial position on the imperial cause.[162] There was no such vagueness when it came to Algeria. From 1960 onwards, there was no question that an Algerian Algeria was inevitable. The uniqueness of these discourses therefore suggest that the conflict was a space in which an acceptance that colonialism was finished could be mapped out. It seems that - in the *Mail* at least - Algeria was a means to think through the concept of decolonisation in the most direct

[160] Toye, "Arguing about Hola Camp", 197.
[161] Martin Shipway, "The Wind of Change and the Tides of History: de Gaulle, MacMillan and the Beginnings of the French Decolonizing Endgame", in *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* ed. Sarah Stockwell and L.J. Butler (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 180-181.
[162] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 245-247; This ambiguity is likely rooted in the paper's own vagueness, rather than a failure in scholarship.

terms possible. Tracing the exact reasons for this is difficult, but considering how chapter one highlighted that France was a constant reference point for Britain, it is likely that Algeria was distant enough from the British Empire that it did not threaten its legacy, but close enough to home to hold symbolic, political, and economic meaning. The extremity of the conflict also cannot be underestimated to have had an effect, a point which is discussed further in the final chapter.

Coverage of Algeria in the *Mail* therefore functioned in a unique way to confirm the inevitability of decolonisation. This continued in the six months leading up to Algerian independence in July 1962. In a new year address to readers, the *Mail* recognised that 1961 had been a year of "continual crisis", with Algeria being one of these along with growing communist threats.[163] However, according to the article, these crises are ones of transition, coming either because "the time has come to be done with the post-war era or because of struggles for national independence".[164] These crises are therefore no more than events in an unfolding Historical process. The place of a free Algeria in this was confirmed two days after the 1 July referendum in Algeria which approved the *Évian Accords,* when another front-page feature declared that "after 132 years of subjection to France and after a long, bloody war for freedom the country achieves independence".[165] Comparing this emphasis on the apparent historic oppression of Algeria to the 1958 article which declared it had been a part France's "bone structure" for 128 years illustrates how dramatic the shift in the *Mail's* position was.[166] Algeria had now achieved the historical task of national independence, an inevitable ideal in the Hegelian march of History.

The Daily Mirror

The *Mirror's* position on the necessity of French Algeria, and colonialism in general, was more ambiguous than the *Mail's* in the first years of the war. What is more, the *Mirror* also began to strongly proclaim the inevitability of decolonization much sooner than the *Mail*. This can be related to the broader editorial position of the paper at this time. Lewis has shown that the *Mirror* was

[163] Daily Mail Comment, "A World in Transition," *The Daily Mail,* January 01, 1962, 1.
[164] Daily Mail Comment, "A World in Transition," 1.
[165] Daily Mail Comment, "The Old Adam," *The Daily Mail,* July 03, 1962, 1
[166] Daily Mail Comment, "The Old Adam," 1; Daily Mail Comment, "The Desert Blooms," 1.

always suspicious of colonial officials, and critical of the Conservative government's "backward" approach to Africa, throughout the Kenyan Emergency, something which drew on a deeper "class-driven distrust for the bearers of imperial power".[167] What is more, the paper consistently campaigned against the colour bar and racist stereotypes (despite sometimes compromising this position in moments of high controversy and tension), and prominently spoke out against military action over Suez in 1956.[168] This does not mean the *Mirror* was strictly anti-imperialist. Criticism of policy and abuses in Kenya was couched in a rhetoric of how it damaged Britain's liberal reputation of colonial rule, and a narrative of British exceptionalism was always central to much of its foreign coverage.[169] However, it does mean that acceptance and support of French Algeria was not as clear-cut as it was in the *Mail.*

Because of this ambiguity, it is fruitful to focus on what was not said in the early years of the conflict and compare this to what was said in the later years to locate the shift towards accepting the apparent inevitability of decolonization. As outlined in the first chapter, both the *Mirror* and the *Mail* increasingly represented the Algerian War as uniquely traumatic. Implicit and explicit criticism of French policy existed in this coverage, but the designation of Algeria as part of France (and the necessity of colonialism in general) went largely unquestioned. For example, one of the first articles on the war in November 1954, and one of the few to go into any depth in the first years of the conflict, informed readers that "Algeria isn't a colony; it is legally part of France, the same as Normandy or Provence".[170] Made as a simple statement of reality, French Algeria is clearly taken here as a simple fact. A sympathetic understanding of French Algeria was even suggested in the February 1956 'Cassandra' column on settler riots discussed in the first chapter.[171] 'Cassandra' opens the column by asking the reader to imagine Canada was a part of Britain in the same way Algeria was a part of France, in order to help them understand how serious it was that a

[167] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 227-230.
[168] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* 214-215, 52-53.
[169] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 238-239; Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* 54.
[170] John Thompson, "The Prisoner Prophet Starts a War," *The Daily Mirror,* November 10, 1954, 7.
[171] Connor (Cassandra), "MOLLET TO THE STAKE," 4.

mob of *pied-noirs* were calling for the execution of their Premier.[172] 'Cassandra' therefore recognizes French Algeria as a natural fact and, although obviously critical of the settlers, is not critical of the concept itself. Indeed, the Canada comparison (rather than, say, Kenya) is telling. A 'white dominion', long dominated by a European culture and population, the future of Canada was a lot more secure than the African or Asian colonies. To compare Algeria to Canada suggests that it too is equally European and now naturally so. Beyond suggestions such as these however, the concept of French Algeria goes largely unexamined, as it is referred to as a natural fact and nothing more.

The ambiguity over the *Mirror's* position on French Algeria remained until mid-1957. A May column from Labour M.P., Richard Crossman, referring to French military actions in Algeria as "a hopeless effort to crush the Moslem Resistance Movement", was the first suggestion that French Algeria was finished.[173] Crossman would later come to lead the way in proclaiming the end of French Algeria in the *Mirror*. This appears to counter the thesis' position that the press needs to be separated from political manoeuvring in Westminster. However, it is clear that Crossman's opinions were published because they aligned with the editorial position of the *Mirror*. For one, his commentary on Algeria was sandwiched between nearly identical editorial proclamations. What is more, the fact that the paper described him as their "brilliant political columnist", and financed a two-week reporting tour of France and Algeria in January 1959, shows that Crossman was as much an employee of the *Mirror* as he was an M.P.[174]

From 1958, the *Mirror* grew more and more critical of continued French presence in Algeria. After the February bombing of the Tunisian village, a second-page comment article declared that France's salvation, and its true voice, are the French people who "have never ceased to protest against the futile policy of repression in Algeria".[175] Such a perspective grew in intensity throughout the rest of the year. A Crossman column in May declared that Britain and America must

[172] Connor (Cassandra), "MOLLET TO THE STAKE," 4.
[173] Richard Crossman, "This Should Make MacMillan Sit Up and Take Notice," *The Daily Mirror*, May 24, 1957, 10.
[174] Daily Mirror Reporter, "Crossman on Tour," *The Daily Mirror*, January 06, 1959, 5.
[175] Daily Mirror Editorial, "Tormented France," *The Daily Mirror*, February 13, 1958, 2.

accept the right to independence for all Arab peoples, even if France is refusing to in Algeria.[176] Crossman here also discourages any Englishman from taking a superior attitude over France, as Britain could have very easily been dragged into a "cruel, hopeless colonial war" just like Algeria if they had occupied Egypt after Suez.[177] Alongside the comparison between Britain and France's decolonisation processes (albeit one based in a non-nationalistic attitude), this is the first indication in the *Mirror* that national independence was something inevitable. This was confirmed further later that month when, in reaction to the imminent ascent of de Gaulle after the May coup, a *Mirror* editorial laid out four tests for the incoming leader. The second test was Algeria, with any solution having to accept that "colonialism is dead and done with".[178] Even though it quite literally was not (Britain and France still held a range of colonies throughout the world), the *Mirror* editorial was proclaiming the end of colonialism. Like the *Mail,* this death was intimately bound to de Gaulle, pointing towards the significance of Algeria in shaping the meaning of decolonisation. The bind between de Gaulle and decolonisation was reiterated further in another Crossman column in December 1958 which speaks approvingly of the president's policy of dropping the "crazy idea of integrating Algeria into France" and imposing instead a "sane liberal solution".[179] The concept of French Algeria had now become ludicrous and the task of getting rid of it lay solely with de Gaulle, who every Frenchmen now depended on for the preservation of their liberties.[180] In an April 1959 column, Crossman again confirmed the inevitability of decolonisation. Laying out his various "charges" against the outgoing United States Secretary of State, John Dulles, Crossman criticises America's encouraging of colonialism just as it was dying.[181] Not only did Dulles induce the "the French to continue their hopeless struggle in Indo-China", but is also responsible for America's funding of France's "disastrous campaign to hold Algeria by brute force".[182] Once again, foreign

[176] Richard Crossman, "Look at France to see where the Suez Episode Could Have Landed Us!," *The Daily Mirror*, May 16, 1958, 8.
[177] Crossman, "Look at France," 8.
[178] Daily Mirror Editorial, "Four Tests for De Gaulle," *The Daily Mirror*, May 28, 1958, 2.
[179] Richard Crossman, "Mr. MacMillan Must Now Order Cyprus Troops Inquiry," *The Daily Mirror*, December 05, 1958, 8.
[180] Crossman, "Mr. MacMillan Must Now Order Cyprus Troops Inquiry," 8.
[181] Richard Crossman, "Here Are My Five Charge Against Dulles," *The Daily Mirror*, April 21, 1959, 8.
[182] Crossman, "Here Are My Five Charge Against Dulles," 8.

policy concerns were revealed as Crossman notes how such a policy will alienate African and Asian peoples from the West.[183] Before it became mainstream political opinion, then, decolonisation was unambiguously presented as inevitable in the pages of the *Mirror*.

This opinion took on an even more prophetic style in the 1960's in the *Mirror*. Once again, de Gaulle was inherently bound to this. A second-page editorial in February 1960, titled "VIVE DE GAULLE", declares that the general knows that "France, like Britain, must move with the times in Africa".[184] The article declares that it will be tragic for Algeria if de Gaulle fails, but an even greater tragedy for France.[185] The times were changing therefore, and France had to accept this for its own sake. Published two days before MacMillan had made his 'wind of change' speech, this article and the ones before it show that the *Mirror* was leading the way in proclaiming the inevitability of decolonisation. Though maybe not as visceral as the *Mail's* proclamations on the 'tide of history', there was no question that an Algerian Algeria was inevitable and that colonialism was out of step with historical progress. A year later, the idea that France must lose Algeria for its own sake was put forward even more clearly in a column dominating the fourth-page of a January 1962 edition. The article declares that de Gaulle must act decisively to end the war and come to an agreement with the nationalists, emphasising the upmost importance of this by finishing with the statement that: "Freedom for Algeria has become inseparable from continued freedom for France herself".[186] Finally, a July article on de Gaulle's efforts to encourage Frenchmen to accept closer relations with Germany, declares that this is a task he will undoubtedly achieve considering he has already managed to change "the feeling of pride that Algeria is French into relief that it is no longer French".[187]

There is a clear perception in this coverage that France's own destiny lay in an independent Algeria, something which also ran through many of the *Mail* articles. France itself was therefore just as much caught up in the march of History as Algeria. As Herman Bennett notes, Hegel posited

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[183] Crossman, "Here Are My Five Charge Against Dulles," 8.
[184] Daily Mirror Editorial, "VIVE DE GAULLE!," *The Daily Mirror*, February 01, 1960, 2.
[185] Daily Mirror Editorial, "VIVE DE GAULLE!," 2.
[186] Basil Davidson, "Now Only Peace in Algeria Can Save De Gaulle," *The Daily Mirror*, January 30, 1962, 4.
[187] Mary Malone, "Big Hand for Adenaur," *The Daily Mirror*, July 03, 1962, 7.

the "nation as History's leitmotif and organizing principle", with it being the way in which people could become free citizens.[188] The *Mirror's* coverage, as well as the *Mail's,* forwarded the belief that for the French people to be free citizens, Algeria had to be decolonised. This demonstrates how much decolonisation had become seen as necessary in these papers. The refusal to accept this meant that a European nation could never be free.

Conclusion

In both the *Mail* and the *Mirror,* therefore, French Algeria had fast transformed from a natural reality to something deeply anachronistic. This sat in the broader context of British culture becoming divorced from Empire at the end of the fifties. However as a discourse, Algeria also formed this deeper cultural setting. This was most clearly the case with the *Mail*, whose radical shift towards proclaiming the inevitability of decolonisation, alongside the unique and forceful nature of this rhetoric, reveal that Algeria was a space to think through decolonisation in an unambiguous way. The *Mirror* appears to have been less defining in the 1960's and much more reactive to events, rather than active in forming a unique discourse. However, the proclamations that colonialism was 'dead' quite some time before any indication of this by the *Mail* or the British and French governments show that it encouraged its mass readership to believe that decolonisation was inevitable. Indeed, even though it was not as defining as the *Mail* in the final years of the conflict, the *Mirror's* linking of the necessity of an Algerian Algeria to France's own destiny, reveals a perception that decolonisation was a necessary process in the march of History.

Coverage of the Algerian War confirmed to readers the inevitability of decolonisation, cushioning the domestic impact of decline. Alongside this broader argument, this chapter has also drawn out two of the major contentions of this thesis. First is the importance of the press as a historical actor in its own right. The forcefulness and speed with which the *Mail* and *Mirror* expressed the necessity of decolonisation in a way independent of government statements highlights the need to consider their discourses individually. This shows that the meaning of

[188] Bennett, "The Subject in the Plot," 104-105.

decolonisation was shaped for, and spread to, public culture independent of official policy. Second is the necessity of writing 'connected histories' of empires.[189] Shepard's conceptual insights on the "invention of decolonization" in France have guided much of this chapter's analysis. But looking at how France's imperial decline was interpreted in Britain shows that Algeria was leading to an invention of decolonisation that was almost identical to what was happening in France, only occurring sooner and in the pages of the tabloid press. The *Mail* and the *Mirror* therefore came to proclaim the historical inevitability of decolonisation independent of government narratives and before a near identical process occurred in French circles. The following chapter will look at how these abstract ideas about History and the inevitability of decolonisation were transplanted onto the actors of the conflict themselves.

[189] Potter and Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 7.

Chapter Three: Extremists and Saints in Algeria

With the approaching July referendum in Algeria which would approve the *Évian Accords* and finally mean full independence, a *Mail* foreign-news column at the end of June 1962 praised the FLN and how they had been "extraordinarily disciplined over the Algerian multitude".[190] Indeed, the group "has resisted the most atrocious and bloody provocations and has leaned over backwards to show a spirit of reason that in the circumstances would seem almost saintly".[191] Such veneration is a far cry from the delegitimizing criticisms the FLN faced from both the *Mail* and the *Mirror* throughout most of the conflict. Not only are they praised with religious imagery, but are also seen as the legitimate representatives of the Algerian people.

This chapter looks at how the primary actors in the conflict were swept along by the tide of history and given new moral statuses in the British popular press. Whilst in the early stages of the war, French Algeria was supported by the *Mail* and at least tolerated by the *Mirror*, by the end of the conflict it was a cause seen in both papers as reactionary, whose supporters ranked alongside Nazis and American segregationists. Concurrently, in the final six months of the war, the Algerians fighting for self-determination came to be represented as like the mature and disciplined group described above. In the pages of the *Mirror* and *Mail*, then, French Algeria came to be associated with backwards and reactionary politics, confirming the inevitability of decolonisation and its role in the ongoing process of History. This chapter follows a similar structure to the first in that it deals with both the *Mirror* and the *Mail* together. However, no separation of Algeria and France is made here and the chapter simply charts the shifts in how the actors of the conflict were represented.

Violent Terrorists and Bandits

At the very start of the conflict, there was no question about the illegitimacy of the nationalist cause, with reports frequently using the description of terror, terrorism, or terrorist. This was the case in the articles in both papers which alerted readers to the outbreak of hostilities and went on

[190] James Cameron, "As the Slogans Replace the Slaughter…," *The Daily Mail,* June 25, 1962, 6.
[191] Cameron, "As the Slogans Replace the Slaughter…," 6.

throughout the first four years of the conflict without any counterpoint.[192] The designation of 'bandit' was also used by both papers. For example, a *Mail* article in the first week of the conflict reports on French tanks and aircraft assaulting a "bandit village" in the Aurès mountains - interestingly making no distinction between nationalist rebels and Algerian citizens.[193] The word was used again in October 1955 in a short, but front-page, news item on a bus hijacking where eight Europeans and five soldiers were killed, with forty Algerians being taken prisoner.[194] The *Mirror* similarly designated Algerian nationalists as 'bandits' in their own reporting of military action in the Aurès mountains in the first week of the conflict.[195] In one sense, these linguistic tags of 'terrorist' or 'bandit' can be understood as descriptive words in straightforward news reporting. Whilst this is true to some extent, it is also important to understand the deeper context of these words at the time. Susan Carruthers has highlighted how the designations of 'terrorist' and 'bandit' were central to the British government's delegitimizing strategies in their counter-insurgency campaigns in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus.[196] The press, especially right-wing publications, echoed these designations in their reporting and the coverage on Algerian nationalists would have been read alongside this.[197]

Indeed, the Algerian cause was actively compared and related to colonial insurgencies in the British world. This is evident in the April 1956 *Mail* article analysed in the first chapter where the British-born Legionnaire frames nationalist action as "like the Mau Mau terror – only worse".[198] As discussed, Mau-Mau held a prominent place in British consciousness and to make this comparison ranks the FLN as only more illegitimate and atrocious.[199] Readers of the *Mail* were exposed to further comparisons later that year in October, with a page five news-report on how Egypt was supposedly supplying arms to both the EOKA (the Greek Cypriot group fighting against

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[192] Daily Mirror Reporter, "Terror Wave By Night," 12; D.M Cable, "In Algeria – 7 Die in Bomb Attack," 6.
[193] Daily Mail Reporter, "In Algeria – Tanks Hit a Bandit Village," *The Daily Mail,* November 05, 1954, 6
[194] Daily Mail Reporter, "Bandits Kill 8 in Bus Raid," *The Daily Mail,* October 18, 1955, 1.
[195] Daily Mirror Reporter, "Foreign Legion Challenges the 'Army of God'," *The Daily Mirror,* November 05, 1954, 12.
[196] Susan Lisa Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds: British Governments, the Media and Colonial Counter-Insurgency, 1944-1960* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1995), 156.
[197] Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds*, 213.
[198] Keatinge, "AMBUSH!...," 4.
[199] Lonsdale, "Mau Maus of the Mind," 420-421.

British rule in Cyprus) and Algerian nationalists. [200] According to the article, Egypt has been "acting as a secret arsenal and training ground for rebels for all parts of the Middle East and Africa".[201] Not only, then, are Algerian nationalists placed in the same league as the EOKA (who, like the Mau-Mau, were subject to a delegitimising campaign by the British government), but are also reported to be receiving backing from an outwardly anti-British power.[202] This association was confirmed further later in the month with a page three article on how members of Egypt's National Guard were volunteering to fight in "death squads" against the French in Algeria and receiving official support for their actions.[203] At a time of increasing international tension over the Suez Canal, this focus on Egypt in Algerian coverage is significant. The press, particularly right-wing publications, were hostile to Egypt, singling out its president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and demonizing him as the "Hitler of the Nile."[204] Political and public opinion over what to do about Suez was of course split, with a large-scale protest against intervention in Trafalgar Square and critical commentary from left-wing papers such as the *Mirror*.[205] Nevertheless, there is no question that Egypt was seen as belligerent and Nasser a troubling dictator, and the association of Algerian nationalism with this serves to delegitimize its cause.[206]

This can further be related to another tactic of British colonial counter-insurgency: attempting to reveal the 'hidden hands' behind an independence movement. Carruthers has highlighted how during the Cyprus Emergency, the British government made efforts to reveal how nationalist terrorism was backed by the Soviet Union in order to delegitimize its cause.[207] This was echoed in right-wing papers, who smeared the Cypriot cause with the stain of communism to mobilize public opinion against it.[208] We can see a similar narrative being produced here as a

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[200] Jeffrey Blyth, "Nasser Gives British Guns to EOKA and Algerian Rebels," *The Daily Mail,* October 23, 1956, 5.
[201] Blyth, "Nasser Gives British," 5.
[202] Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds*, 232.
[203] Daily Mail Foreign Service, "Egyptians to Fight French," *The Daily Mail,* October 27, 1956, 3.
[204] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* 52
[205] Richard Whiting, "The Empire and British Politics", in *Britain's Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century* ed. Andrew Thompson. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 181-184; Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 56; Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* 53.
[206] Guillaume Parmentier, "The British Press in the Suez Crisis ," *The Historical Journal* 23, no. 2 (1980): 443.
[207] Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds*, 232.
[208] Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds*, 232.

scheming Egypt is represented as working behind the scenes of the Algerian conflict. Indeed, in June 1957 the *Mail* also emphasized the USSR's involvement, with a front-page report on "communist shipping authorities in Helsinki" trying to bribe a British freighter into smuggling arms to Tangier, where they would then be taken across the border to "help the Algerian rebels in a new campaign of terror".[209] As well as anxiety over a belligerent Egypt aiding Algerian nationalists, therefore, readers of the *Mail* would have also read of Soviet involvement in much the same way they did with Cyprus.

Readers of the *Mirror* would have likewise seen comparisons between Algerian nationalists and Britain's illegitimate enemies, albeit more subtly. For example, a May 1955 article in the paper's 'World News Spotlight' column reports on France sending more troops to Algeria to fight against extremist nationalists.[210] Also in the column is an article on the state of Mau Mau forces in Kenya, which uses similar language in its description of the fighters and similarly privileges the government's viewpoint.[211] There is little difference, therefore, between how Algerian nationalists are represented and how the Mau Mau are represented. It is clear, then, that in the first years of the war, Algerian nationalism was understood on the same terms as the illegitimate anti-colonial movements the British were facing. This was both implicit, with parallel descriptions and designations being used, and explicit, with the nationalist cause being directly placed within the same league as these anti-British movements.

The nationalist cause was delegitimised further in both papers with their highlighting of particular atrocities and tortures, whilst paying relatively little attention to French abuses. Joanna Lewis has noted how both the *Mirror* and the *Mail* were keen to emphasise acts of lurid violence by the Mau Mau.[212] For the *Mirror,* this subsided somewhat as the Emergency bore on, with it increasingly focusing on criticism of colonial authorities.[213] The paper was also more naturally sympathetic to slaughtered Africans, whereas the *Mail* gave greater coverage to massacred

[209] Walter Farr, "Britons Asked to Run Red-Plot Arms," *The Daily Mail,* June 08, 1957, 1
[210] Daily Mirror Reporter, "France To Send More Troops to Africa," *The Daily Mirror,* May 20, 1955, 20.
[211] Daily Mirror Reporter, "Surrender by Noon Or…," *The Daily Mirror,* May 20, 1955, 20.
[212] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 233.
[213] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 234-235.

Europeans.[214] In the Algerian context, this was not so straightforward. Indeed, the first *Mirror* coverage of any mass deaths during the conflict was in a third-page article in August 1955, which reports on seven hundred people being killed in anti-French riots across all of North Africa, and privileges European casualties in particular, stating that the body count for this group is not known but thought to be more than one-hundred.[215] In contrast, non-European casualties are given no special mention, whilst also referencing "the outlaws who infest the region".[216] European casualties were highlighted in *Mirror* coverage further in May 1956 with a 'World News Spotlight' report on twenty European farmers being savagely murdered by "fanatical anti-French rebels…[who] rushed the farms, shooting, stabbing, looting and firing every building."[217] A similar report was published in June 1957, in a second-page world news spotlight report on 300 Muslim men and boys massacred in a "night of silent knives" by nationalist forces.[218] The column spared no gore over the "wholesale slaughter", detailing the severing of hands, and sons and fathers having their throats slit.[219] The *Mail* also emphasised the nationalists' lurid violence. For example, a fifth-page article in March details how Arab rebels burned 13 farms and beheaded 600 cattle, and another fifth-page report in May 1956 details how nineteen naked French soldiers had to endure a "dance of death" performed around them in the Algerian hills, as their captors stabbed, stoned, and tortured them t death.[220]

These articles are not highlighted here to suggest that such atrocities did not happen. But what is significant is that both papers covered them in detail whilst paying relatively little attention to French abuses. Michael Brett has noted how books primarily written by journalists at the time were highly critical of French torture.[221] Likewise, Martin Thomas has written that 'the press' covered the September 1956 to September 1957 Battle of Algiers - a campaign of guerrilla warfare

[214] Lewis, "'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'", 233.
[215] David Raymond, "700 Die in 'Black Weekend' Riots," *The Daily Mail,* August 22, 1955, 3.
[216] Raymond, "700 Die in 'Black Weekend' Riots," 3.
[217] Peter Stephens, "20 Killed in Three Hours," *The Daily Mirror*, May 08, 1956, 24.
[218] Peter Stephens, "300 Murdered in Village," *The Daily Mirror,* June 01, 1957, 2.
[219] Stephens, "300 Murdered in Village," 2.
[220] Alan Humphreys, "MPs. Talk in Shadow of Massacre," *The Daily Mail,* March 09, 1956, 5; Daily Mail Reporter, "Torture Men Dance Round Their Victims," *The Daily Mail,* May 22, 1956, 5.
[221] Michael Brett, "Anglo-Saxon Attitudes: The Algerian War of Independence in Retrospect," *The Journal of African History* 35, no. 2 (1994): 218-220.

involving the extensive use of torture by the French Army and ultimately ending in a tactical defeat for the FLN - extensively and critically.[222] What is more, the *Guardian* serialised Henri Alleg's infamous 1958 account of his torture at the hands of the Army.[223] However, this highlights the methodological weakness in focusing on only highbrow books and upmarket newspapers. The Battle of Algiers was reported on in both the *Mail* and *Mirror*, but in very straightforward style with no reference to army abuses. At certain points in the conflict, torture and abuse was reported and, as chapter one has already shown, both papers were highly critical of France. However, specific accounts of torture and exceptional violence were rare, patchy, and vague, especially when compared to coverage of nationalist actions. This treatment in some of the biggest newspapers of the time contradicts Thomas' claim of a highly critical press during the Battle of Algiers. Thomas does not mention who he considers to belong to this 'press', failing to detail which newspapers were critical and potentially revealing a flawed assumption that upmarket publications (and their lower circulation figures) can be considered indicative of nationwide discourses. The more detailed reporting on Algerian abuse therefore demonstrates how it was a rhetoric which served to mark the cause as morally bankrupt. Overall then, in the first years of conflict there was no question that Algerian nationalism was wholly illegitimate and irrational. This of course was rooted in the broader understanding that colonialism was still viable and justified.

Disavowing the Settler Cause

The cause of French Algeria therefore went largely unchallenged in the first years of the conflict. As shown in the second chapter, the *Mail* defended it outright and the *Mirror* at least seemed to understand it. From around 1958 onwards, however, the defenders of the colony slowly came to be regarded in both papers as the fanatics of the conflict. Strident criticism of FLN actions continued, but this now competed for column space with increasing denunciations of those who still fought for French Algeria. Again, it was the figure of de Gaulle who was inherently entwined with this process, pointing to the uniqueness of Algeria in shaping the meaning of decolonisation in Britain.

[222] Thomas, "A Path Not Taken?", 167-168.
[223] Thomas, "A Path Not Taken?", 168.

This was especially obvious in the *Mail*. In chapter two, a May 1958 article was analysed which suggested sympathy for the French Generals in their coup, saying it was the "reaction of men who are sick in soul and spirit at the retreats and humiliations suffered by France in recent years."[224] Indeed, the article mitigates their treason, stating that it "must be difficult to remain loyal to an authority which crumbles every few months".[225] In October that year however, a page-six feature on the politicians working towards European integration refers to de Gaulle's "liberal outlook" on Algeria, and his successful handling "of the diehards and military fanatics" there and in France.[226] In five months, then, the defenders of French Algeria had gone from men whose situation could be sympathised with, to 'diehards' and 'fanatics'. With a more ambiguous position on French Algeria, the *Mirror's* criticism of its defenders was less dramatic. Indeed, unlike the *Mail,* the revolting Generals received no sympathetic treatment. A 'Cassandra' column on the ongoing May coup refers to one its leaders, Jacques Massu, and his "horrible methods of torture that rival the sadistic cruelties of the Nazi's".[227] This is the first concrete mention of French torture in the pages of the *Mirror* and it is telling that it is used to delegitimise the coup's leaders. With this already highly critical position on the French generals, there was no *Mail*-style dramatic shift in opinion. However, criticism in both papers was still highly similar. A June 1958 column by Crossman declared that if de Gaulle falls from power, then the power vacuum will be filled "by a bunch of young parachute colonels who started the revolt in Algeria and have already established a military dictatorship there".[228] Although with a greater focus on the potential collapse of French democracy, the criticism is remarkably similar to what the *Mail's* would be in October. The Army in Algeria was dangerous, dogmatic, and out of step with modern democracy.

In the final years of the decade and the first one of the next, both papers would increasingly denounce the defenders of French Algeria. For example, *Mirror* articles would often refer to the

[224] Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," 1
[225] Daily Mail Comment, "The West in Danger," 1
[226] George Murray, "The Wise Men of Europe," *The Daily Mail,* October 17, 1958, 6.
[227] William Connor (Cassandra), "The Cross of Lorraine," *The Daily Mirror*, May 19, 1958, 4.
[228] Richard Crossman, "De Gaulle is the Only Obstacle Against a Fascist France," *The Daily Mirror*, June 17, 1958, 8.

growing "hostility from right-wing extremists, who are furious at his [de Gaulle's] Algerian policy" or instead "fanatical extremists prepared to go to any length to prevent Algeria from getting its independence".[229] Massu - who was fired by de Gaulle in January 1960 for criticising the president in an interview - once again received unfavourable treatment in the *Mirror*, as he was described as the "the hook-nosed idol of the French Army".[230] The *Mirror* also indicted European settlers in general. A second-page report on de Gaulle's visit to Algeria in December 1960, criticised how it was "wrecked by the violence of the European mob…who oppose ANY step towards Algerian freedom".[231] The report also took another shot at the French Generals, declaring that if de Gaulle falls, then "power will have passed to a gang of mutinous army officers backed by French extremists in Algeria and by the most reactionary politicians in France".[232] This regular association of any defence of French Algeria with extremism was highly regular and held in contrast to the policies of de Gaulle, something also evident in *Mail* coverage during these years. The paper would regularly comment on how de Gaulle was "more determined than ever to break extremist opposition to his Algerian policy" and was sure to highlight the tough action he took against them.[233] For example, when he sent an envoy to Algiers in May 1959 to make a speech which was practically an "open declaration of war" against activist settlers, the *Mail* provided approving commentary on this hard-line against "extremists right-wing pressure".[234]

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[229] Quotes from: Michael King, "'Not Till Spring' – at Least," *The Daily Mirror,* October 22, 1959, 32; Peter Stephens, "My Friend Roger..," *The Daily Mirror*, June 02, 1961, 3. Examples of similar rhetoric can be found in: Daily Mirror Reporter, "Now de Gaulle Promises Jobs. His Five Year Plan for Algeria," *The Daily Mirror*, October 04, 1958, 24; Daily Mirror Reporter, "Throw Out De Gaulle, MPs Told," *The Daily Mirror*, October 03, 1959, 10; Peter Stephens, "Plot Against De Gaulle," *The Daily Mirror,* October 20, 1959, 3; Peter Stephens, "Now Rebels Rule Algiers," *The Daily Mirror,* January 29, 1960, 24; Peter Stephens, 'DICTATOR'…De Gaulle Gets Sweeping Powers by Overwhelming Vote," *The Daily Mirror*, February 03, 1960, 3.

[230] Peter Stephens, "Algiers General on Mat," *The Daily Mirror*, January 20, 1960, 25; Peter Stephens, "'Sacked,' Massu is Told," *The Daily Mirror*, January 23, 1960, 5.

[231] Daily Mirror Reporter, "De Gaulle – or Disaster?," *The Daily Mirror,* December 13, 1960, 2.

[232] Daily Mirror Reporter, "De Gaulle – or Disaster?," 2.

[233] Quote from: Boris Kidel, "De Gaulle Moves Against Salan," *The Daily Mail*, December 16, 1960, 11. Examples of similar rhetoric can be found in: Daily Mail Reporter, "De Gaulle Faces Showdown," *The Daily Mail,* October 15, 1958, 1; Vincent Mulchrone, "De Gaulle and Army Snuff Out Revolt," *The Daily Mail,* October 17, 1958, 9; Robin Smyth, "De Gaulle Saved France with a Lie…," *The Daily Mail,* February 06, 1959, 6; Robin Smyth, "De Gaulle Guards Against the Terrorists," *The Daily Mail,* February 25, 1960, 11.

[234] Daily Mail Reporter, "Shut Up or Go De Gaulle's Envoy Warns," *The Daily Mail,* May 14, 1959, 13

Despite their difference in politics, then, the *Mirror* and the *Mail's* characterisations of the defenders of French Algeria were nearly identical, denouncing them as extremists and reactionary. A similar process occurred in France, but seemingly quite a few years later. Shepard notes that in 1962, the common understanding amongst the metropolitan population was that "actions taken to defend French Algeria were merely hateful and, since they bucked the tide of History, irrational".[235] Indeed, such actions even threatened the French Republic itself, with the presumption that anyone doing so was deeply racist, fascist, or Vichyite.[236] Here then is the 'tide of history' transplanted onto the actors of the conflict, with anyone refusing to be carried along by it marked as backwards and irrational. This new designation for French Algeria's defenders was pre-empted by the *Mirror* and the *Mail.* Whilst denouncements reached a fever-pitch in 1962, the association of French Algeria with reactionary, far-right politics had already been happening since 1958. Again, this points to how Algeria was having a deep effect on British understandings of decolonisation.

Indeed, this suggestion is strengthened when considering how the *Mail* and the *Mirror* covered the militant support of French Algeria. Running through the chapters so far has been the idea that it was the extremity of Algeria that led to an acceptance of the apparent inevitability of decolonisation. This is reinforced here as the actions of the French Generals led to a dramatic change in the moral acceptability of French Algeria. These Generals were dismissed as extremist and reactionary before the avalanche of proclamations on the historical inevitability of decolonisation. It seems, therefore, that their behaviour transformed colonialism into something toxic and out-of-step with the present-day. This goes against Shepard's characterisation somewhat, who suggests that the association of reactionary politics with French Algeria only came after the 'tide of history' had been evoked. In the British context however, it seems that it was the fanaticism of the French Generals that set the groundwork for such a dramatic break from the perceived necessity of Empire.

[235] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization,* 86.
[236] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization,* 89.

Denunciations of the defenders of French Algeria reached new heights in 1961 and 1962 and it is in these final years where they truly became marked as deeply evil in the pages of the *Mirror* and the *Mail.* The French Generals were again the targets of much of this negative coverage. The front-page *Mail* comment in April 1961, which was discussed in chapter two, and saw Algeria as a "poisoned problem", declared that the rebelling Generals had formed "one of the great reactionary movements of our day."[237] Again, a near identical argument was forwarded in the *Mirror,* with a second-page message from the editorial staff to the French people to "STAND FAST WITH DE GAULLE", lest France be "seized and ruled by mutinous Generals – by blind and stupid reactionaries – ready to bring their country down in ruins rather than face the fact that Algeria MUST inevitably have independence".[238] To underscore its significance, this message was also repeated in French, suggesting a strong sense of solidarity between the two European nations.[239] The moral unacceptability of French Algeria continued to be clear in the *Mirror*, with a second-page article on the challenges faced by American President, John F. Kennedy, in his attempts to combat racial segregation.[240] The article denounces the "Negro-baiting White hooligans…[who] violently resist the smallest advance towards equality" and compares their actions to "the blind idiocy of the French Generals in Algeria".[241] This shows just how toxic French Algeria had been made by the actions of its defenders. Deep racial tensions in America were now being framed and understood within the context of these French Generals.

The actions of the OAS (*Organisation Armée Secrète*), the paramilitary group formed by former Generals and settlers who refused to accept any break with France, came to dominate coverage of Algeria in 1962. Indeed, the group received more criticism than the FLN ever did even at the height of their activity. In February, a front-page *Mail* comment declared them to be "last-ditch diehards and out-of-date romantics" waging a "losing battle" of terrorism in France and

[237] Daily Mail Comment, "A Poisoned Problem," 1.
[238] Daily Mirror Editorial, "Stand Fast with De Gaulle," *The Daily* Mirror, April 25, 1961, 2.
[239] Daily Mirror Editorial, "Stand Fast with De Gaulle," 2.
[240] Daily Mirror Reporter, "A Time to Act," *The Daily Mirror*, May 23, 1961, 2.
[241] Daily Mirror Reporter, "A Time to Act," 2.

Algeria.[242] The article delegitimises the settler cause further, pointing out that "when it is realised that three-quarters of the 1,000,000 'Frenchmen' there are not even French but of mixed Mediterranean blood…their cause seems even less worthwhile".[243] This is a radical change from the 1958 article discussed in chapter two, which justified French Algeria on the basis that it is peopled with "1,200,000 men and women of French blood who today call it home."[244] In both these articles, the apparent purity of the settlers' blood is used to support the *Mail's* position on Algeria. However, the 'facts' are changed according to whether French Algeria is seen as justifiable or not.

After the signing of the *Évian Accords,* which officially brought an end to the war, two articles were published that contained sharp criticism of the OAS. One of them, an eighth-page column, declares that no one knows "what malevolent reaction the OAS has prepared for this day, but their odious impertinences increase", and dismisses the "squalid treachery of these corner-boy commandos".[245] The other article, a front-page comment, denounced the group's claim to the legacy of the wartime Free French, describing them instead as "mutineers and rebels – but rebels without a cause."[246] Again, the OAS are held up against de Gaulle, who the article praised for having "shown a complete understanding of democratic self-determination", and also looks toward the future, stating that once France is free of Algeria, she can play her part in the defence of the West and world peace.[247]

In the immediate aftermath of the April 8 French referendum to approve the treaty, another *Mail* article was published which refers to the "vile follies and desperate cruelty of the OAS".[248] Once again, the comparative decolonising experience in Britain was clear, with the author asking readers to imagine a similar election surrounding the peace treaty on Cyprus three years previous.[249] The *Mail* was also clear to indict the rest of the settler population. A March article

[242] Daily Mail Comment, "Spectres Over France," *The Daily Mail*, February 15, 1962, 1.
[243] Daily Mail Comment, "Spectres Over France," 1.
[244] Daily Mail Comment, "The Desert Blooms," 1.
[245] James Cameron, "This Strange Paradox That Paris is at Peace," *The Daily Mail,* March 19, 1962, 8.
[246] Daily Mail Comment, "Without a Cause," *The Daily Mail,* March 20, 1962, 1.
[247] Daily Mail Comment, "Without a Cause," 1.
[248] James Cameron, "The Meaning of 'Yes, but…'," *The Daily Mail,* April 09, 1962, 8.
[249] Cameron, "The Meaning of 'Yes, but…'," 8.

describes how a European crowd reacted to a Muslim being shot in the street, with a young girl shouting "sleep well, you dirty *melon* [contemporary abusive slang for Muslim]", and the whole crowd laughing in response.[250] The article also points out that the OAS' campaign of terror is supported by the vast majority of the European population, as Algeria is blighted by "violent and crude racial hatred".[251] The *Mirror* was likewise highly critical of the OAS. An article dominating the last page of a March edition reports on "the murderous time bomb attempt by the Secret Army" and the "thugs" trying to stop the cease-fire.[252]

The moral bankruptcy of the settler cause was confirmed further in a special 'Cassandra' feature on the military tribunal of Raoul Salan dominating the back-page of a May edition.[253] 'Cassandra' describes Salan, on trial for his role in the failed Algiers Putsch and founding of the OAS, as a maniac who upon hearing that his death sentence had been commuted to life imprisonment, broke into laughter that was like the "guffaw of Bedlam".[254] 'Cassandra' notes that Salan has been responsible for crimes that make "Nazi atrocities at Lidice in Czechoslovakia and the murders of the Ardeatine Cave near Rome seem like isolated aberrations".[255] In both the *Mail* and the *Mirror*, therefore, the cause of the OAS is delegitimised in ways even more extreme than the FLN ever was. Designations such as 'terrorists' and 'rebels' were used and, just like the Mau Mau, their lurid violence was emphasised. What is more, their cause was associated with not only extremists' politics but also, in *Mirror* coverage, Jim Crow segregationists and Nazi war-criminals, some of the worst figures that could be offered to readers at the time.

Valorising the Nationalist Cause

Alongside the denunciations of French Algeria's defenders from 1958, Algerian nationalism was also continually criticised up until 1962. The rhetoric was of much the same character as the coverage that was analysed earlier in this chapter. The designation of terrorist was still frequently

[250] Boris Kidel, "The Child Who Looked on Death and Laughed," *The Daily Mirror*, March 13, 1962, 6.
[251] Kidel, "The Child Who Looked on Death and Laughed," 6.
[252] Peter Stephens, "30 Murdered in Bomb Terror," *The Daily Mirror*, March 01, 1962, 32.
[253] William Connor (Cassandra), "No Wonder He Laughed," *The Daily Mirror,* May 25, 1962, 32.
[254] Connor (Cassandra), "No Wonder He Laughed," 34.
[255] Connor (Cassandra), "No Wonder He Laughed," 34.

used, and FLN violence in both metropolitan France and Algeria was spared no sensational or critical treatment.[256] Whilst coverage in the *Mirror* and *Mail* was therefore becoming increasingly concerned with the actions of the French Generals, *pied-noir* settlers, and the OAS, the FLN were by no means immune from criticism. The only difference now was that denunciations of Algerian nationalism existed alongside increasingly feverish denunciations of those who fought them, but not on behalf of de Gaulle and his Fifth Republic.

In 1962, however, this changed as the FLN was suddenly valorised as noble freedom-fighters and the legitimate voice of the Algerian people. The first instance of this was in an article dominating the fifth page of a March edition of the *Mirror,* which announced that Abderrahmane Fares, a "bland, dignified Moslem", would head the Provisional Executive in Algeria.[257] Farres' arrival in Algeria, who was jailed the previous year for being the chief fund-raiser for the FLN in France, "made history" according to the article, with his task now being "one of the most difficult in the world".[258] It will no doubt be made more difficult by the "fanatical Secret Army", who have sentenced him to death.[259] The article finishes by noting that for this "brave man" to succeed, the OAS must be crushed.[260] In this article, then, a man who had financed the acts of terror the paper had regularly denounced, was now held up as the future of Algeria and in contrast to backwards extremists. In April, the Algerian people themselves were venerated in a second-page editorial which declares that never has a "nation been so terribly provoked" in the face of daily OAS attacks.[261] Indeed, according to the article, this restraint, and the fact that they have been fighting for independence for seven years, shows that "if ever a people showed themselves ready for self-

[256] For example: Robin Smyth, "'Quit or You Die' Warning by Algerian Rebels," *The Daily Mail*, April 15, 1958, 9; Daily Mail Reporter, "Do-or-Die Rebels Wiped Out in 8-Hour Battle," *The Daily Mail,* June 25, 1959, 1; Daily Mail Reporter, "Swimmers Gunned," *The Daily Mail,* August 01, 1960, 1; Robin Smyth, "Gunman Kills Briton in Algiers," *The Daily Mail,* September 27, 1961, 1; Roland Atkinson, "Terror Gangs Attack," *The Daily Mirror*, August 26, 1958, 3; Daily Mirror Reporter, "Terror Bomb Kills Child," *The Daily Mirror*, July 06, 1959, 3; Peter Stephens, "Assassins With a Poison Pin," *The Daily Mirror*, October 22, 1960, 5; Roland Atkinson, "24 Terror Attacks in France," *The Daily Mirror,* August 24, 1961, 4.
[257] Peter Stephens, "Just Out of Jail – He Makes History in Algeria," *The Daily Mirror,* March 30, 1962, 5.
[258] Stephens, "Just Out of Jail," 5.
[259] Stephens, "Just Out of Jail," 5.
[260] Stephens, "Just Out of Jail," 5.
[261] Daily Mirror Editorial, "Algeria and the OAS: The Real Victors," *The Daily Mirror*, April 09, 1962, 2.

government it is the Algerians".[262] The Algerian people were therefore ready to enter History as a fully realised nation, placing them on the road to Hegel's universal realisation of freedom.[263] That the FLN were now the legitimate voice for this nation was confirmed in a 'Cassandra' column in May on the OAS and its "insensate death-dealing".[264] 'Cassandra' expresses surprise that the "FLN have managed to hold their people in check" and also suggests that reprisals would be justified, stating that "heaven help" the OAS and settler population if the Muslims rise against their provocations.[265] The FLN are represented here as the legitimate authority for a people who as a nation have been fighting for independence. This bind between the FLN and the Algerian nation was rare in coverage earlier in the war. To represent the Algerian population and FLN as united in their cause therefore legitimises the movement, highlighting the acceptability of national independence.

Again, a nearly identical narrative was forwarded in the *Mail.* A page-ten feature interview in April with "three legendary leaders of Algeria's struggle for independence" - set to be released from a French jail after previously being sentenced to death for their role in the conflict - praises how "not a word of hatred colours their words".[266] This is in spite of the torture they have received at the hands of the French Army, and the continued violence of "white settlers…trying to provoke a blood bath".[267] The interviewer does not deny the past crimes committed by these men, remarking how their bombs have "wrought havoc all over Algiers", noting in particular one explosion at a dance-hall which killed eleven Europeans.[268] However, this is reported in a relatively unsensational style, giving an impression that it was an unfortunate consequence of war, and is also sandwiched between strident denunciations of settler violence and the "iron discipline" of these leaders, who promise "immense hope for Algeria's future".[269] The interviewer also contradicts earlier *Mail*

[262] Daily Mirror Editorial, "Algeria and the OAS: The Real Victors," 2.
[263] Bennett, "The Subject in the Plot," 5-6; Truper, "Introduction", 9-10.
[264] William Connor (Cassandra), "The Old Ones," *The Daily Mirror,* May 09, 1962, 6.
[265] Connor (Cassandra), "The Old Ones," 6.
[266] Boris Kidel, "Tortured, Chained…but Amazingly, No Hatred," *The Daily Mail,* April 11, 1962, 10.
[267] Kidel, "Tortured, Chained…," 10.
[268] Kidel, "Tortured, Chained…," 10.
[269] Kidel, "Tortured, Chained…," 10.

anxieties over the hidden Soviet hands behind the Algerian movement, referring to this as "the settler's favourite bogeyman" and emphasising the nationalist contempt for Communist interference.[270] In this interview, then, the previous delegitimatizing tactic of nationalists being branded as violent terrorists backed by shadowy powers is disregarded, with the maturity and legitimacy of the Algerian cause being held up against the mob violence of European settlers. A similar narrative was evident in the June foreign-news column discussed at the start of this chapter which declared that FLN restraint had been "saintly".[271] Again, this maturity was compared to the "white extremists' group" that was the OAS.[272] Like the *Mirror*, then, the *Mail* came to venerate the nationalists' cause in the final months of the war.

This radically new stance on the FLN was not completely one sided. For example, a *Mirror* article in May declared that the torture carried out against Europeans in order to combat the OAS was done "more expertly and cruelly" than the reporter had ever seen before, and both papers would still occasionally refer to "Moslem terrorists".[273] This continued criticism was marginal however compared to the feverish denouncements of the OAS and the hagiographic portrayals of the independence movement. Finally, it is important to note that even though the FLN was now seen in both papers as leading a noble cause, the ultimate 'hero' here was de Gaulle. As this chapter and the previous one have shown, de Gaulle was portrayed in the *Mirror* and the *Mail* as the only man who could lead France and Algeria into this new stage of History. If we wished to continue with the religious imagery of that *Mail* article in June, we might say that if the FLN were saints, then de Gaulle was the God who had granted them that power. This places emphasis on decolonisation being something that was *given* rather than *taken*. Rather than simply reacting to an independence movement France had lost control of, it was de Gaulle who had realised that the tide of history was flowing towards independence and acted accordingly. This points to the way in

[270] Kidel, "Tortured, Chained…," 10.
[271] Cameron, "As the Slogans Replace the Slaughter…," 6.
[272] Cameron, "As the Slogans Replace the Slaughter…," 6.
[273] Donald Wise, "20 Found Tortured to Death," *The Daily Mirror*, May 23, 1962, 20; British United Press, "Murder Toll Soars in Algeria," *The Daily Mail,* January 17, 1962, 2; Peter Stephens, "The Killers," *The Daily Mirror*, February 26, 1962, 4.

which Europeans' colonial record could remain intact. It was the colonisers who had decided that the time was right to decolonise, not the nationalists fighting for independence.

Conclusion

This chapter has not tried to suggest that the actions of either the FLN or OAS were not terrorism. Both groups committed atrocities that even by the standard of the time were inhumane and exceptionally brutal. Indiscriminate massacres, torture, and regimes of fear were an endemic feature of the conflict and premeditated strategies of all the groups involved. What is significant however is the one-sided nature of the coverage of these crimes. The blood-thirstiness of the French General's was relatively underreported and only became a major talking point once they had become designated as backwards extremists. Concurrently, the wholesale slaughters by illegitimate terrorists, so closely covered in both papers, was largely forgiven as the FLN became the legitimate voice of the Algerian people. This was therefore the tide of history in action, with those on the wrong side of it immediately marked as reactionaries. However, the fact that the settlers' actions were condemned before the proclamations on the inevitability of decolonisation shows that it is likely the extremity of Algeria which led to this new perception. The renegade French General's and the settlers they fought for had made colonialism into something so toxic that it had no place in modern society or the future.

Conclusion

Coverage of the Algerian War in the *Mail* and *Mirror* therefore confirmed to readers the inevitability of decolonisation and demonstrated that the British model of decolonisation was the way forward. This thesis laid out its argument thematically. Chapter one demonstrated how both papers consistently represented the conflict to be having a uniquely traumatic influence on both metropolitan France and Algeria. The presentation of this colonial chaos in both papers as a uniquely French problem helped to confirm British self-congratulatory narratives of orderly withdrawal and the peaceful transferal of power. The second and third chapters then built on this framing to show how the apparent Historical necessity of decolonisation was mapped out in the papers coverage of the conflict. Chapter two highlighted the more conceptual manifestation of this, as the *Mirror* and the *Mail* marked Algeria as representative of decolonisation being an inevitable stage in the Hegelian march of History. Chapter three then took these more abstract concepts and investigated how they were transplanted onto the actors of the conflict itself. The association the papers made between French Algeria and reactionaries, along with the veneration of de Gaulle, and eventual veneration of the FLN, confirmed that colonialism was anachronistic.

This thesis conceptualised its argument using the framework of 'connected histories'.[274] Drawing on historic representations of French colonialism, press coverage of the Algerian War was an exercise in the 'politics of comparison', which cushioned the domestic impact by confirming Britain's apparently 'non-negative' decolonisation and the historical inevitability of this.[275] As well as being an excellent conceptual tool, this thesis' utilisation 'connected histories' has also revealed vital historical insight. It is clear that imperial decline cut across national boundaries and recognising this offers new ways to understand how societies reckoned with decolonisation. The most obvious example here is how the 'tide of history' was forcefully evoked independently of, and even prior to, nearly identical proclamations in France. This shows that Algeria not only uniquely

[274] Subrahmanyan, "Connected Histories."; Potter and Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories."
[275] Potter and Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories," 15; Coffey, "'Does the Daily Paper rule Britannia'," 24.

shaped the meaning of decolonisation in France but also did the same in Britain. This alone demonstrates why historians can ill afford to ignore the transnational dimension in cultural histories of decolonisation.

This argument also points towards the need for a more complicated understanding of the impact of decolonisation, rather than the either/or of the 'minimal impact' debate. Coverage of Algeria suggests that imperial decline did not register as a deep loss, but only because of an active process. Empire did not simply disappear from public view with no contestation, nor was it desperately clung to or mourned. Rather, the rapid decolonization process was written about in such a way to make it seem natural and inevitable, mitigating any feeling of loss. Decolonisation was a necessary event in the march of History, and the fact that Empire fast became associated with reactionaries and extremists meant that it was something that could easily be left in the past. This explains why The Beatles could play-up their MBE's with theatrical farce in 1965 with virtually no consequence, when only ten years previous imperial culture was still deeply relevant.[276] The tide of history that washed colonialism away meant that it was simply not relevant to the present-day circumstances. This also meant that the colonial record could go untarnished. National independence was something given to the colonies because Europe had realised the Historical inevitability of it. Proclamations on the necessity of decolonisation were not framed as a moral awakening to colonialism, but rather an acceptance that the Hegelian march of History was in action

This thesis also points towards a number of avenues for future research. An unfortunate limitation during this investigation has been the lack of a single digital archive for British newspapers which would allow for text-mining and the mass downloading of text files. The ability to quantify and visualise huge data sets would be highly beneficial to investigations such as this as it would allow for comprehensive comparison between how British and French decolonisation processes were written about. The limitations of digital archives aside, this thesis has also highlighted the potential for an even broader source base to offer insight into how the British public

[276] Schwarz, *The White Man's World,* 6-7.

learnt about Algeria. The often vague and piecemeal reporting on the events of the conflict suggest that people were increasingly relying on other forms of media to get their news. Both papers gave extensive commentary and opinion on the conflict, and documented particularly sensational and violent stories. Beyond this, however, the day-by-day of the conflict was taken for granted. Indeed, there were multiple occasions where significant events and developments were discussed at length without any previous reportage on them, suggesting that editors knew readers would already be informed through other outlets. An investigation which connected the primary opinion-formers of the day (newspapers), with the providers of more 'objective' knowledge of events (radio, television, and cinema) would enable a much more in-depth understanding of the place of Algeria in British popular culture.

Finally, and more generally, it has been a primary contention of this thesis that more research is needed to understand what decolonisation *meant* to the British public. What other ways can we understand how in that crucial time between 1955 and 1965, imperial culture slid from deep relevance to undeniable irrelevance? Highlighting spaces where such a process could be mapped out, as it was in news reporting on Algeria, is certainly one way, and there are other potential avenues for further research. For example, an investigation which charts how exactly the forms through which MacKenzie revealed imperial culture to be so persistent, changed or adapted as decolonisation came to be seen as inevitable is a potential way to identify this shift.[277] This just one example. But research such this, which starts with the question of what imperial decline meant and was publicly understood to be, rather than how it happened, promises a fresh opportunity to comprehend how the redefining event that was decolonisation, impacted British culture, society, and identity.

[277] MacKenzie, "The Persistence of Empire",

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