



Media Watch: January 2019

An article entitled "**Syria: Turkish raids on olive groves**" and written by Jérémy André was published by the newspaper "Le Point" on January 12, 2019.

The "journalist" Jérémy André introduces his article by telling "*Turkey would have won the gold medal for having named the military operation of Afrine¹ "olive branch", if baptizing a military operation was a contest of cynicism*". Jérémy André, who does not seem to practice his profession with loyalty, has tried to start with humor his article that will prove to be a plea to slander Turkey.

In essence, André wants to make his readers believe that the Republic of Turkey "occupies" Afrine in particular to loot the olive groves that belonged to Kurds who had to flee the city because of the military operation. "Olive oil is a real yellow gold in the region [...] and the harvest of 2018 would be worth 130 million euros according to economists and agronomists", as he likes to recall.

The author relies mainly on the work led by the economist Omar Celeng and on the various testimonies he would have collected on the spot. The names of the witnesses have been changed.

Prima facie, it is true that such a name change may appear to be justified in order to preserve the identity of the witnesses. However, changing the names of witnesses significantly affects the reliability of information provided by them because there is nothing to verify the reality of the testimonies, both as regards their content and their existence. The evidence provided in this way may therefore be mere unfounded allegations.

Using such doubtful testimonies in order to attack the Republic of Turkey reveals only the cowardice of the one who is at its origin. Cowardice; the word is hard but well-deserved by the author because without the efforts of Turkey², Europe would have been helpless in facing the waves of migration caused by the war in Syria

The seriousness of the article is actually reduced to nothing when Jérémy André showed he relies on the agency Firat - press agency of which he knows the proximity with PKK - to affirm that there is a "*looting protocol signed by representatives of Syrian armed groups who hold the region of Afrine*".

¹ The author qualified the Afrine operation as an **invasion**

² Turkey has welcomed more than **3.5 million Syrians** on its soil and this, for an **estimated cost of 50 billion dollars** (the costs have been supported largely by the Turkish government as well as NGOs)

The author seems to have made his choice: rather than informing objectively his readers about how really the situation in Turkey is and, in the region, he preferred to become a propaganda vector being fully confident in an agency close to a terrorist group - the PKK - recognized as such by the EU, the USA and many others.

Le Point's support to André is just as reprehensible as tarnishing the image of journalism. Journalism should only be about informing the public about what really happened or is really happening, not about becoming a means of propaganda to achieve objectionable goals (as for example, *divide et impera*).

Main source: <https://www.lepoint.fr/tiny/1-2285205> (*full access for subscribers only*)