[FR] NTM Rap Group Sentenced on Appeal for Insulting the Police

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In 1996, for the first time ever, a rap group was taken to court for the content of its songs. Following a concert during which the group NTM sang violent words about police institutions, the Public Prosecutor at the Regional Court in Toulon started proceedings against the two singers. The verdict of the judges in the initial proceedings, sentencing the two performers to three months' imprisonment and six months' ban on singing on the basis of Articles 433-5 and 433-22 of the Criminal Code which sanctions insulting a public servant, was considered severe by observers, particularly as the facts of the case had occurred in the awkward political context of towns in the Var area. Although the Deputy Public Prosecutor at the Court of Appeal in Aix-en-Provence, before which the case was brought, had called for a lesser penalty, on 23 June 1997 the judges finally decided on a heavier sentence - two months' suspended prison sentence plus a fine of FRF 25 000 for each of the two members of the group.

TGI Toulon, 14 novembre 1996, M. P & FASP et autres c/ Lopes et Morville, inédit CA d'Aix en Provence, 23 juin 1997, Lopes et Morville c/ M. P & FASP et autres

Regional Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance) of Toulon, 14 November 1996, M.P. & FASP et al. v. Lopes and Morville, Court of Appeal (Cour d'Appel) of Aix-en-Provence, 23 June 1997, Loper and Morville v. M.P. & FASP et al

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