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### The Three Frances: 1940-1944

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THE THREE FRANCES:

1940-1944

Sarah Fishman  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 30, 1979

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To Claude and Laurence Doubinsky  
whose help and encouragement  
made this thesis  
a pleasurable and rewarding experience

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## INTRODUCTION

France during the German Occupation was divided into two zones, the northern two-thirds, directly occupied by German troops, and the southern zone, which remained until 1942 an independent French state. However France, divided more than physically, can also be broken down into three groups, the Collaborators and the Resisters, who responded actively to the Occupation, and Passive France, the large majority of French people who allowed events to run their course without attempting actively to shape them.

This thesis, rather than a history of France from 1940 through 1944, will examine these three categories of response to the occupation. Why did some collaborate, some resist, and the majority remain passive? What role did the prewar period play in furthering this division of France? Were there general attitudes about France and her relationship to Germany and to the Allies that characterized each group as a whole? What ideas about the political, social, and economic future of France motivated each group? Finally, what was the significance of the choices each group made for themselves and for France?

# LA DÉPÊCHE

6, rue de la Préfecture, TOURS

DU CENTRE

Téléphone 37-91 et la suite (4 lignes)

**Interdiction formelle  
d'afficher**  
(Ordre  
de la Kommandantur)

## APPEL A LA POPULATION TOURANGELLE

Dans les circonstances graves que nous traversons, il importe que la population tourangelle tout entière garde son calme et sa dignité.

Tous les habitants doivent concourir de tout leur cœur et de toutes leurs forces à l'œuvre commune de reconstruction et de rétablissement de la vie économique.

L'Administration continuera à fonctionner régulièrement sous l'autorité de ses chefs. La population devra observer une attitude correcte et loyale à l'égard des autorités d'occupation qui garantissent, suivant l'usage, la sécurité des personnes et des biens.

Tous les services qui concourent à la vie matérielle et spirituelle de la population seront normalement assurés.

L'union de tous est nécessaire. Pas de découragement. Gardons confiance.

Tours, le 22 juin 1940.

Le Préfet d'Indre-et-Loire,  
Camille VERNET.

Le Maire de Tours,  
Ferdinand MORIN.

L'Archevêque de Tours,  
Mgr L.-J. GAILLARD.

## TOURANGEAUX!

Notre belle ville de Tours vient de traverser des heures tragiques et tous ceux qui ont vécu ces derniers jours conserveront le souvenir d'instantanément pénibles.

Les autorités allemandes nous ont donné l'ordre de reprendre la publication du journal afin d'assurer le plus vite possible la reprise de la vie de la cité. Nous nous acquitterons de cette tâche au mieux des intérêts de tous et nous espérons pouvoir compter sur l'appui de nos concitoyens.

Qu'il nous soit permis d'abord de nous incliner très respectueusement devant notre cher Préfet, M. Camille Vernet, que le Gouvernement vient de promouvoir Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur, à la suite de sa conduite héroïque sous les bombardements : M. Vernet a, jours et nuits, exposé sa vie et s'est consacré tout entier à la sauvegarde des habitants, ainsi qu'à l'organisation du ravitaillement de la population.

M. Ferdinand Morin, notre Député - Maire, s'est également signalé à la reconnaissance des Tourangeaux et sa belle attitude ne sera pas oubliée de ses administrés.

Son Eminence Mgr Gaillard, Archevêque de Tours, déjà bien connu pour son affabilité et sa simplicité, a donné aux autorités le meilleur de lui-même dans ces moments douloureux.

Nous dirons aussi toute notre gratitude aux fonctionnaires des grands services publics, aux collaborateurs directs des administrations préfectorale et municipale qui ont accompli leur devoir en toutes circonstances avec sang-froid et dignité.

Nous nous efforcerons de vous donner chaque jour les informations exactes qui nous seront transmises ainsi que les nouvelles locales, reflet de l'existence de la ville que nous aimons.

Les circonstances nous obligent à simplifier ce premier numéro. Nous nous en excusons en souhaitant pouvoir l'améliorer rapidement.

Et maintenant Tourangeaux, courage ! Travaillons et espérons !

### CIRCULATION

Nous rappelons que toute circulation des pions, bicyclettes, voitures, est interdite à Tours, par ordre de la Kommandantur, de 22 heures à 5 heures du matin, heure allemande.

### AVANCE DE L'HEURE

Nous rappelons à nos concitoyens que toutes les pendules doivent être avancées d'une heure, de façon à donner l'heure allemande à partir du samedi 22 juin, à 12 heures. L'observation de ces ordres est essentielle pour éviter tout désagrément avec les autorités allemandes.

## COMMUNIQUÉS DE LA MAIRIE.

### Monnaie allemande

Les commerçants sont tenus d'accepter en paiement la monnaie allemande à raison de cinq pfennings pour un franc français.

### Remise des armes

Toutes les armes et munitions utilisables, y compris fusils de chasse, doivent être déposées immédiatement à la Kommandantur de police (cours de l'Hôtel de Ville).

### Postes de T.S.F.

L'usage des postes ÉCOUTEURS de T.S.F. est formellement interdit. Ces postes doivent être remis immédiatement à la Kommandantur.

### Réouverture des Magasins

Il est recommandé aux commerçants de la Ville de procéder immédiatement à la réouverture de leurs magasins ou entrepôts.

### Pour trouver du travail

Le Maire de Tours fait appel à tous les hommes et femmes sans emploi pour se faire inscrire à l'Office Municipal de placement, 2, place des Halles, de 8 h. à 17 h. et de 14 à 18 h.

### Service médical

Liste des Docteurs non mobilisés restant à la disposition de la population tourangelle :  
M. Bardet, 114, rue de la Faye, Beaugy, 13, rue André-Guy-Vigny.  
Chavalon, 121, rue de Basse-Genet.  
Chevet, 123, rue Georges-Band, Cossé, 2, rue Georges-Band.  
Claudeau, 32, rue Zola-Lola.  
Promenay, Hospice général (service des aliénés).  
Rousseau, 13, rue Roger-B.

### Service des Pharmacies

Toutes les pharmacies non saisies seront ouvertes à partir du mardi 24 juin courant.

### Logements vacants

Le public est invité à déclarer immédiatement tous les logements et appartements vacants à la mairie, 2, place des Halles, à l'Hotel de Ville, bureau n° 1.

### Avis

#### aux personnes égarées

Nous sollicitons de tout cœur aux mains de nos concitoyens et sœurs à l'entière disposition de nous pour les aider à retrouver le plus rapidement possible ceux des nôtres qui ont été perdus dans le tourbillon de la bataille.

Une rubrique spéciale sera insérée dans nos colonnes, dans la mesure de nos possibilités. Ces informations seront gratuites, en tant qu'elles concerneront des personnes en titre direct (père, mère, frère ou sœur disparus).

#### Avis aux services publics

Nous demandons aux services publics qui ont des communications à faire passer dans le journal de les envoyer à la première heure, de manière à ce qu'elles puissent passer dans l'édition de l'après-midi.

#### Avis à nos dépositaires

Tous nos dépositaires de la ville et des environs immédiats ont intérêt à se mettre immédiatement en relation avec nous pour la

### COMMUNIQUE OFFICIEL DE L'ARMÉE ALLEMANDE

Le Commandement suprême de l'armée allemande communique en date du 21 juin :

Les mouvements de nos troupes en vue de l'occupation de la Normandie, de la Bretagne et de la Vendée ainsi que l'embouchure de la Loire et la vallée du Rhône se poursuivent selon nos plans. Nos troupes rapides partant de la Bourgogne ont pris Lyon. Lors de l'occupation de Nervi, nos troupes ont mis la main sur 700 tanks neufs.

En Lorraine et en Alsace, le nettoyage de certaines parties de la ligne Maginot, largement défendue par les Français, continue. Les troupes françaises combattant au nord de la Lorraine ont été éliminées par notre attaque. Quelques éléments isolés se maintiennent encore dans la partie ouest de l'Alsace. Le Vieux-Armund, bien connu par les durs combats qu'il a soutenus pendant la Grande Guerre, est en notre possession.

L'aviation a continué également le 20 juin ses attaques sur les routes de communication de l'arrière de l'ennemi. Devant la forêt de Palatinat, nos escadrons spécialisés d'attaque ont réduit au silence une série d'ouvrages de la ligne Maginot, aidant ainsi à briser la résistance de l'ennemi. Lors des combats en Alsace, qui ont conduit à la prise de Strasbourg, Sélestat et Colmar, et pour forcer la trouée de Belfort, nos troupes ont été soutenues efficacement par le ty de la D. C. A. dirigé contre des escadrons de sol.

La Rochelle et à l'embouchure de la Gironde, nos escadrons de bombardement et d'attaque ont causé un transport de troupes de 10.000 tonnes et un croiseur auxiliaire de 4.000 tonnes.

### LES PLENIPOTENTIAIRES FRANÇAIS

Berlin, 21 juin. — Le gouvernement français a désigné les plénipotentiaires chargés de discuter les conditions de l'armistice. Ce sont : le général Huntzinger, l'ambassadeur de la D. C. A. ; 2. de nos avions ne sont pas rentrés à leur base.

Nos sous-marins annoncent la destruction de 4 bâtiments anglais, parmi lesquels se trouvait un bâtiment de la Royal - Mail de 11.000 tonnes.

En raison des communications extrêmement difficiles par l'Espagne, cette communication du gouvernement français n'est arrivée que tard dans la nuit de jeudi dernier. Elle n'a pu être remise au Führer qu'à 4 heures du matin. Le commandement suprême allemand a immédiatement pris les dispositions nécessaires pour recevoir la délégation française.

### ARRETE

Afin de rétablir la circulation et la vie économique, les habitants du pays occupé sont tenus de se tenir à la disposition de l'administration militaire allemande ou de la police locale ou de toute autre institution, en vue de rendre des services.

Ces services auront surtout rapport à la réparation des chemins de fer endommagés, aux ponts, rues et autres moyens de communication.

### AUX HABITANTS des pays occupés Ordonnance du 10 Mai 1940

Le commandant en chef de l'armée allemande nous donne pleins pouvoirs de communiquer ce qui suit :

I. L'armée allemande garantit aux habitants pleine sécurité personnelle et sauvegarde de leurs biens. Ceux qui se comportent paisiblement et tranquillement n'ont rien à craindre.

II. Tout acte de violence ou de sabotage sera puni des peines les plus sévères. Sera considéré comme acte de sabotage tout endommagement ou détournement de produits récoltés, de provisions de guerre et d'installations de tout genre, ainsi que l'endommagement d'édifices de l'autorité occupante. Les usines à gaz, d'électricité, d'eau, les chemins de fer, les écoles et les objets d'art se trouvent sous la protection particulière de l'armée occupante.

III. Par décret spécial, la remise des armes à feu et de matériel de guerre a été ordonnée. Ce décret ne s'applique pas à des armes tombées hors d'usage. Les armes de chasse devront être remises en indiquant le nom, la profession et le domicile du propriétaire, au bourgmestre responsable, qui prendra soin de ce dépôt.

IV. Seront passibles de conseil de guerre les individus incriminés d'avoir commis les faits suivants :

1. Toute assistance prêter à des militaires non allemands se trouvant dans les territoires occupés.  
2. Toute aide portée à des civils qui essayent de s'enfuir vers les territoires non occupés.  
3. Toute transmission de nouvelles à des personnes ou à des autorités se trouvant en dehors des territoires occupés, et ceci aux dépens de l'armée allemande et du Reich.  
4. Tout rapport avec des prisonniers.  
5. Toute offense de l'armée alle-

été approuvées au préalable par le commandement allemand, ainsi que toute autre manifestation anti-allemande.

V. Toute provocation au chômage volontaire, tout refus de travail prémedité, toute grève ou lock-out.

VI. Les administrations de l'Etat et des communes, la police et les écoles devront poursuivre leur activité. Elles restent ainsi au service de leur propre population. Les chefs et directeurs seront responsables envers l'autorité occupante ou fonctionnaire loyal des services. Les personnes qui se trouvent en service public continueront à recevoir leurs traitements et salaires.

VII. Toutes les entreprises, les maisons de commerce, les banques poursuivront leur travail dans l'intérêt de la population. Toute fermeture injustifiée sera punie.

VIII. Dans l'intérêt d'un ravitaillement régulier et ordonné de la population, tout accaparement de marchandises d'usage journalier est interdit. L'accaparement sera considéré comme acte de sabotage. Le trafic nécessaire pour le ravitaillement de la population, en particulier le ravitaillement des marchés, ne sera pas entravé pour autant que les besoins militaires le permettent. Les producteurs de marchandises de première nécessité ainsi que les commerçants doivent poursuivre leur activité et mettre leurs marchandises à la disposition du public.

IX. Toute augmentation des prix et des rémunérations au delà du niveau existant le jour de l'occupation est défendue, à moins que des exceptions ne soient explicitement permises.

Le Commandant en chef  
du groupe d'armées.

### ARRETE

Les pillards sont passibles  
de la loi de guerre

## Chapter One

### Collaboration

The collaborators, defined as those who actively shaped policies or tried to, openly voiced pro-collaboration sentiments, and those who worked, out of choice, with the Germans, included a wide variety of people with a wide range of ideas. They can be broken down into two categories: official collaborators, which includes the prominent Vichy leaders such as Pétain and Laval, the less visible but no less important corps of civil servants, and unofficial collaborators, which includes the ideological collaboration of fascist writers such as Drieu la Rochelle and Robert Brasillach and of leaders of fascist groups such as Jacques Doriot, and the opportunistic collaboration of journalists, several members of the pre-war Left, and profiteers. This distinction is made simply on the basis of the holding of an official position of power and does not imply that official collaborators had no ideology.

Collaboration was a decision to work with Germany. To understand why men like Pétain and the fascists, whose traditional orientation had been nationalistic and anti-German, chose this path is the focus of this chapter. The role of the prewar years was crucial to this decision. In the initial post-World War One period, the two opposing forces, the traditionalists, who were never reconciled to the principles of the Revolution and wished for a return to social

hierarchy, rural decentralized society, and even in some cases monarchy, and the Jacobin Left, socialists, syndicalists and communists who pushed for a strong centralized state and a planned economy, were balanced by a wide middle range of Liberals who espoused political and legal liberalism, universal suffrage, and equality, but were socially conservative and opposed to an active state. Thus, although France on the surface was turbulent, underneath was a fairly stable balance and a broad consensus of middle class, liberal beliefs, the "Republican synthesis".

Developments in the mid-thirties, both internal and external, were to shatter this balance. In 1933 Hitler came to power in Germany. The world wide depression was finally felt in France. Several ministers were suspected of shielding a fraudulent financier named Stavisky from prosecution. Veterans' pensions were cut back. All of this catalyzed the Right into action and on February 6, 1934, massive demonstrations rocked Paris, causing the Prime Minister to resign. In response to this uprising of the Right at home and the threat of fascism abroad, the Socialists, Communists, and the Radicals formed a coalition, the Popular Front, which came to power in 1936 with the election of Léon Blum. The Popular Front was unable to resolve the economic crisis primarily because they did not have specific formulas for the scale and type of reform needed. The Spanish Civil War accentuated the Left-Right polarization of France and created a rift in the coalition between pacifists who wanted to avoid war at all costs, and those who felt the threat of fascism would have to be

fought. The Popular Front was unable to bring about wide-scale reform. It did, however, alarm the Right, who saw it as a Communist takeover. The Right was leaning more and more towards appeasement of Germany to prevent the spread of Bolshevism and to avoid war and disaster. The Third Republic was unable to overcome this polarization and went through a series of crises and ministers until the defeat of 1940, when it voted itself out of existence.

Those who collaborated in 1940 had already chosen sides in the mid-thirties. Most collaborators had been members of the pre-war Right, those who had participated in the nationalist demonstrations of 1934, those removed from office or defeated by the Popular Front in the 1936 elections, and leaders of proto-fascist leagues or veterans groups. In general, they were alienated from or antagonized by the Third Republic. The traditionalists, members of the old upper class who had had wealth but little political influence, resented the Third Republic and yearned for a return to the conditions in the <sup>pre-twentieth century</sup> days of France's greatness. These men became the prominent Vichy leaders and set the tone for Vichy but in the end were unable to set the direction, which is why Paxton calls Vichy "the last stand of men who believed a nation could exert world influence without passing through the industrial revolution".<sup>1</sup>

The bureaucrats, a highly trained and select group of administrators, felt vastly superior to the elected deputies from whom they had taken orders. In 1940, they finally had the freedom they wanted and ultimately they

played a crucial role in the direction of Vichy's internal politics. Many journalists had also been highly alienated from the Third Republic. The overabundance of journalists in an industry controlled almost exclusively by several large financiers created an underpaid, underemployed and resentful group that delighted in the demise of the Third Republic and the freedom it gave them.

Finally, and most surprisingly, were the few members of the pre-war Left coalition who found their way into the collaborationist camp. Men such as Marcel Déat, Charles Spinasse, and Marcel Bucard, who were ardent pacifists, were uncomfortable in the Popular Front coalition. They were apprehensive about the communists and, by 1940, were disillusioned with the Parliamentary system's inability to act. Although their political ideas were in opposition to conservative or fascist ideas, they may have seen collaboration as an opportunity to accomplish their goals in a strong state.

With the exception of the Leftists, collaborators had been on the Right of the political spectrum. The first problem to confront them was the external Franco-German one. In 1940, collaboration meant a decision to accept Germany's victory over France as definitive. This was an important choice, as there were other options that were given serious consideration. Plans were made to go to North Africa and continue the fight from there. In June 1940 France's navy was still intact, General Nogues' forces in North Africa were ready to fight and supplies were on their way from the United States. Yet the government de-



cided not to continue the fight, partly because it seemed militarily unfeasible. The French army, victors of World War I, had been defeated in less than six weeks. If they could not withstand Germany's might, who could? On June 16 Marshall Pétain threatened to resign if he could not sue for peace. The experience of World War I also led to a strong desire, in the population as well as the government, to avoid the chaos and destruction of turning France into a battleground. Russia's experience in 1917 led many to believe that continued warfare not only meant destruction but revolution and communism. Finally, the country as compared to its World War I rally "To Berlin" was so internally divided that there was no unified drive to fight the Germans. Thus <sup>Raynaud</sup> ~~Deladier~~ turned over the Prime Ministry to Philippe Pétain, who asked for an Armistice.

The existence of a French state in the unoccupied zone meant that a certain amount of collaboration would be inevitable. However, other important assumptions were made that caused collaboration with Germany to go far beyond this minimum. Central to the decision to collaborate was the supposition that Germany was the wave of the future and that France's best policy was to work towards a European bloc with Germany the centrifugal force and France an autonomous partner. This bloc would be able to withstand the imperialism of Great Britain, the United States, and Russia and would be itself an imperialistic power in Africa, France's escape vitale and a major source of raw materials for Europe.

Officially, this attempt to build a new order took the form of incessant offers of closer collaboration in return for a definitive peace treaty that would normalize relations between the two countries and lessen the punitive aspects of the armistice. Pétain, in a speech of August 14, 1941, lamented that "our relations with Germany are defined by an Armistice the character of which can only be provisional".<sup>2</sup> He went on to ask the French to "surmount the heavy heritage of mistrust bequeathed by centuries of dissension and quarrels, in order to orient ourselves towards the larger perspectives of a reconciled continent".<sup>3</sup> On October 22, 1941, Pétain and Laval met with Hitler and Ribbentrop in the town of Montoire. In spite of Laval's postwar claim that he "did not engineer this meeting"<sup>4</sup> they were, according to Robert Paxton's research into German archives, the culmination of months of French entreaty.<sup>5</sup> The meetings were highly publicized but all that came of them was that "Marshal Pétain and Chancellor Hitler agreed on the principle of collaboration to reconstruct peace in Europe".<sup>6</sup>

Vichy leaders were supported in their efforts to re-order France's external situation by the unofficial collaborators. Robert Brasillach, a fascist essayist and journalist, agreed with the principle of collaboration because "the politics of Montoire is the only course open to France . . . we are for collaboration with dignity, because it is simply the only means to pull ourselves through and to avoid the return of the bloody errors that lead us to this atrocious and lost war".<sup>7</sup>

Drieu LaRochelle, a novelist and fascist essayist, saw the question in terms of huge masses. To him, the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was the century of continents dominated by the hegemony of one nation, such as the United States in the Western hemisphere and Japan in Asia. Faced with these vast agglomerations, Drieu felt Europe had to regroup if she were not to perish. France, "only one element among other elements of the first class"<sup>8</sup>, could no longer make it on her own as a world power and would therefore have to take her place in a Europe of hierarchical forces. Germany, the "incomparable force to which hegemony can no longer be disputed or refused"<sup>9</sup>, would be in the middle surrounded by the next largest powers, England, Italy, and France, and then a whole degradation of smaller powers.<sup>10</sup>

Lucien Rebatet, another fascist writer, had none of Drieu's or Brasillach's hesitancy in accepting France's defeat and was the only writer I found to do so out of admiration for Germany's internal system. "What possibly can the 1942 generation of French hate in the Germans? After all, their knowledge of Germany is nil, they don't want to learn anything, and they only hold childish ideas about them. These are therefore the prejudices that it is important to fight first of all."<sup>11</sup> He felt that the "liquidation of an interminable quarrel" between France and Germany would be "one of the grand events in the history of this planet".<sup>12</sup>

Jacques Doriot, leader of the protofascist Parti Popu-

laire Français, called for collaboration with Germany, who, because of its powerful economic organization and its political situation, would become the key to the entire European system. He felt that France would only be strengthened by adapting herself to the economy of a continental bloc.

These pro-German leanings were strengthened by growing anti-British feelings. To the collaborators, England had, with a system of alliances, led France into the war and deserted her at Dunkirk. The bombing of the French navy on July 4, 1940, at Mers-el-Kebir exacerbated this tension and the situation in North Africa in 1941 almost caused it to break out into full-fledged war. England's attacks and advances in Africa were always taken to be aggressions against France. It was at this point that French and German interests most closely coincided and therefore that French collaboration went the farthest. Vichy was determined not to loose "a square yard of her home territory nor yet of her colonial empire"<sup>13</sup>, even if that meant "a reordering of so-called 'traditional' external friendships of enmities."<sup>14</sup> Throughout 1941 Vichy forces fought off Anglo-Gaullist attacks in North Africa and Syria. In May, 1941, the Protocols of Paris were signed allowing Germany to use Syrian airfields and military supplies to exploit the anti-British uprising in Iraq. After they signed, Admiral François Darlan, then the foreign minister of Vichy, expressed his anger at England, "who treats us like a continental Ireland, indeed like a colony."<sup>15</sup>

Strong resentment towards England was also expressed by the unofficial collaborators. Abel Bonnard, a member of the Académie Française and a conservative with fascist leanings, accused England of "dragging France into this war where she so poorly supported us"<sup>16</sup> and then having the nerve to speak of France as having sold out to the enemy. "Without a doubt, England calls sold governments she could not buy."<sup>17</sup>

Lucien Rebatet blamed the war entirely on two agents, "Jews and Great Britain".<sup>18</sup> He allegorized France as an innocent virgin whose maidenhood was torn to pieces by her evil guardians in London who sent her alone to meet the big bad wolf.<sup>19</sup>

Drieu LaRochelle accused England of being the "vassal of America"<sup>20</sup> and of trying to recupérate in Africa and Syria what she had lost to the United States. Anti-British feelings were extended by many collaborators to include anti-Americanism. According to Rebatet, "the United States are making a joke out of England".<sup>21</sup> The official collaborators, however, did their best not to antagonize the United States, who in 1941 put pressure on England to ease the blockade of France, and who could easily seize France's colonial empire. When the United States entered the war in 1942 she became much tougher on Vichy, who nevertheless continued to try to appease the United States and avoid antagonism.

However, among the fascist writers anti-Americanism was vicious. The United States, according to Brasillach

"one of the most dangerous enemies of France"<sup>22</sup>, together with England, led France into the war and then attempted to do to England what England had done to France, leave her to do the fighting while stealing her empire. To the fascists, America was the citadel of all they hated. "Of 130 million inhabitants in the United States, there are first 13 million blacks, next 8 million Jews."<sup>23</sup> Rebatet wrote, "the enormous load of democracy is over there today, with its adolescent silliness, our defects proportional to skyscrapers, ten times more Jews, one hundred times more peasants".<sup>24</sup> America was as far from France in spirit as it was in miles. How could the manufacturers of skyscrapers in series have any respect for "our cities, our villages, our customs, and our conception of life"?<sup>25</sup> Journalists and writers were afraid, especially after the United States entered the war, that an Allied victory would mean American dominance in Europe and that American mass culture would invade along with the soldiers and dollars and annihilate "ancient and glorious nations"<sup>26</sup> like France. "America governing Europe, what madness!"<sup>27</sup>

The new European order would also be able to withstand Soviet Russia. Before the war, the feeling that a strong Germany was the best barrier to Russia led many conservatives, who previously favored a tough policy towards Germany, to call for appeasement. Official and unofficial collaborators were overjoyed when Germany invaded the Soviet Union. A French division of the Waffen SS, the Charlemagne division, was formed by Joseph Darnard to fight the Russians on the eastern front.

All of these reasons for choosing to work with the Germans, the feeling that the war was lost, that a German victory was really better for France than a British victory or an American or a Russian victory, that France could, by bargaining with the Germans, become a partner in a European bloc, underline the fact that collaborators, with very few exceptions, did not feel they were betraying France or being unpatriotic. Nor were they passively reacting to German demands but actively taking direction of France's external affairs. They were serving France's interests in what they saw as the best way. They rightly foresaw that France alone was no longer a world power, and while they accused the resistants and Gaullists of being England's pawns, they themselves ended up pawns of Germany. Because of their misinterpretation of their capacity to deal with Germany, "Vichy was more like a pressed orange than like a tough nut".<sup>28</sup> Ultimately, Vichy was unable to preserve France's colonial empire or her navy or prevent the total occupation of France.

So far collaboration has been dealt with in terms of its Franco-German aspect. Of equal importance, however, was the Franco-French aspect, for collaborators wanted more than a reordering of external affairs. Robert Paxton writes: "Collaboration now meant taking advantage of a foreign army to carry out major changes in the way Frenchmen were governed, schooled, and employed."<sup>29</sup> Especially in this sense, Vichy France can be seen as the continuation of the virtual civil war that existed in France before the

occupation. Most collaborators, members of the anti-Republican Right, saw the death of the Third Republic as a triumph for them, and they vented their frustrations by blaming it for the defeat. "The disaster is only, in reality, the reflection in military matters of the weaknesses and defects of the former political regime",<sup>30</sup> Pétain declared. It was the endless struggle of coalitions of narrow economic interests that rendered the government weak and incapable of dealing with internal problems or of conducting an external policy "worthy of France".<sup>31</sup> Not only was the political system indicted; Catholic Church leaders saw the defeat as punishment for France's moral degeneracy, as evidenced by "paid vacations, pernod, strikes, bad films, bathing suits, democracy, and the absence of religion".<sup>32</sup> Brasillach, in his journal written in a prisoner of war camp in Germany, described the 1930's as a "period of sleep. . . but it was also one of the most ridiculous periods. Never have stupidity, pedantry, bombast, pretension, and triumphant mediocrity been so arrogant".<sup>33</sup> Rebatet described France as "covered with ruins, ruins of things, ruins of dogmas" and attributed these ruins not to a "single and fortuitous calamity" but to a "long slipping, a series of successive collapses that have accumulated these enormous piles of debris".<sup>34</sup> Le Cri du Peuple, Doriot's fascist newspaper, expressed strongly this hatred of the Third Republic in its description of Marianne de France, "that insolent emblem of. . . an abhored regime. . . infamous whore, with your Constitution of nothingness, your



regime of social injustice, your doctrine of lies, and your Godless morality".<sup>35</sup>

Collaborators went beyond simply denouncing the former system. They actively attempted to rebuild France according to their new image. After the war the Vichy notables tried to gloss this over by blaming the legislation and actions taken by the government on German pressure. However, German pressure on France's internal affairs, at least until 1942, was practically nonexistent and it was in this initial period that almost all the laws were passed.<sup>36</sup>

Before attempting to define a general collaborationist mentality, it must be noted that there were wide differences in ideology and a wide variety of goals among the collaborators. The traditionalists, the bureaucrats, and the fascists all had different aims for France's reconstruction. The traditionalists' program was the official "National Revolution", an examination of which will indicate their major goals. Pétain, the primary spokesman for Vichy and the traditionalists, replaced "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" with the motto "Work, Family, and Fatherland". This signified a political restructuring away from democracy and the "false idea of the natural equality of man"<sup>37</sup> towards a system of social hierarchy led by the true elites.

Traditionalists also wanted to root out the modern mass culture, decadence, and anti-clericalism they saw as the cause of France's decline. Pétain felt "a good mass

never did anyone any harm"<sup>38</sup> and saw the strengthening of Catholicism as an important part of the National Revolution. Vichy France did much to ease longstanding Church-State tensions, such as granting aid to Bishops for educational use and restoring Church property confiscated and not yet used. This gained Vichy the support of several prominent Church leaders. Pleased by this new direction, they also justified their support by the traditional loyalty of the church to "those who legitimately hold power."<sup>39</sup> Serious criticism by the Church came only in 1942 with the massive deportations of Jews.

The traditional Vichy program also set out to improve the condition of France's youth. Pétain wrote that of the tasks the government had to undertake, none were more important than the reform of national education.<sup>40</sup> The educational system was purged of Free Masons and Jews, and all teachers were required to take an oath of loyalty to Pétain. The curriculum was restructured to include religious education and courses in good citizenship. The government also supported various youth groups, such as the Chantiers de la Jeunesse, a group created by the army to remove draft age men from the cities and put them to work in the countryside. In 1942 eight months of service in the Chantiers became mandatory for all 21-year-old men.

Concern about social decadence centered on the declining birthrate in France. To the traditionalist, the family was the core of French society, "the essential cell and the foundation of the social edifice",<sup>41</sup> as Pé-

tain put it. Programs were set up to strengthen the family. Birth control had already been outlawed, so Vichy outlawed abortion and divorce during the first three years of marriage. Incentive payments were set up for fathers ~~of large families~~ of large families, who were also rewarded with statutory seats on local committees. For the mothers there was the Medal of the French Family, who, by "their enlightened care, laborious activity, and their devotion, have made a constant effort in the best way to inspire in their children physical and moral hygiene, love of work, and the probity and care of social and patriotic duties".<sup>42</sup>

The official economic program of Vichy was based on the traditional desire to move away from modern concentration and depersonalization of agriculture and industry. Vichy promoted a return to the soil program in an attempt to rebuild family agricultural units, "the principle economic and social base of France".<sup>43</sup> Corporatism, a third way between Communism and Capitalism, was the principle of industrial reorganization. Ideally, employers, managers, and workers would organise into natural economic groupings by branch of industry. These corporations would govern themselves, thus attenuating the chaos of the free market system, since all members would share an interest in their corporation. Class struggle would be eliminated. Just in case, Pétain outlawed strikes and lock-outs and dissolved all workers' unions and syndicates.

This was the public face of Vichy but underneath the

surface, the experts, civil servants, and technicians had different goals in mind. They were pushing France away from family business, small farms, and self-regulation towards economic centralization and concentrated industry. This was partly due to the necessity of meeting Germany's demands and to the scarcity of raw materials. The civil servants, although a conservative, highly elite group of men, were not traditionalists and, when freed from the meddling of elected officials, administered France's economy as efficiently as possible.

Opposing both the traditionalists and the bureaucrats was another strand of ideology for rebuilding France, that of the fascist intellectuals and group leaders who, until the last months of the German occupation, never had any official power or influence. Their writings demonstrate most strongly what they were against. They were, as already noted, anti-communist, anti-American, and anti-British. They also condemned the softness, mediocrity, egoism, and materialism of pre-war French society and were troubled by the decadence and decline of France. This they blamed partly on the dehumanization and mechanization of capitalism, false ideas of liberty, and the political institution of democracy, but they felt it was primarily due to the moral and physical degradation of the people. They had vague ideas of economic reorganization such as the breaking up of trusts and monied interests. Drieu yearned for a return to a medieval-type guild system. Above all, Fascists sought the rejuvenation of France through a spir-

itual revolution. Their vision was of an ideal manhood of discipline, energy, vitality, and strength, thus Brasillach's concern with setting up youth organizations that would mold France's young men. Unlike German Nazism, French fascism remained elitist, believing that the country should be run by small groups of exceptional men, and never became a mass movement. It was unable to attract support in a society that had not broken down to the extent that Germany's society had, and French fascists were never able to unite into one group with one leader.

They differed from the traditionalists in that the ruling elite would not be drawn from the old social classes but from all social groups. They disliked the softness and complacency of upper class values and <sup>their</sup> ~~its~~ reliance on Catholicism. While they initially <sup>praised</sup> Vichy's reforms, they frequently criticized it for not going far enough fast enough.

Despite this wide range of ideologies and goals, there were some common denominators that make the label "collaborator" viable and were central to the decision to collaborate. The strongest link among all collaborators was anti-communism. Communists always represent a threat to the property and standing of the old upper classes. Fascists disliked the Communist materialism and emphasis on the economic motivation of man's actions.

Communists were also feared because of their ties with Russia. Brasillach, in responding to the increase in acts of sabotage, said, "Moscow alone is guilty. . . Moscow

wants the loss of France, wants revolution".<sup>44</sup> Drieu La Rochelle instructed those who claimed that communism in France would be a native French communism to "go ask the people of Bessarabia, Lithuania, or Poland if the communism installed by the red hordes is Bessarabian, Lithuanian, or Polish. It is Russian and Russian Jewish entirely. . .".<sup>45</sup>

The Communist Party itself did much to provoke this fear and Drieu's charge that "communists are French patriots when the Russians tell them to pretend to be".<sup>46</sup> Throughout the twenties the Communist Party remained isolated from French politics. In the mid-thirties, when Russian fears were aroused by Germany's militarism and a strong France seemed desirable, the Party became highly nationalistic and anti-fascist. The sincerity of the communists' patriotism was thrown into doubt in 1939 with the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact, when the party made an abrupt about-face, refused to support the war effort, and denounced the war as imperialistic folly. In 1941, when Germany attacked Russia, the party once again switched lines and became highly patriotic and its members became leading participants in the Resistance. This series of changes not only lead the collaborationists to believe that French communists were Russian agents, but also caused a great deal of confusion among the rank-and-file members. Marcel Giltin, an ex-communist, announced in Le Cri du Peuple that he left the Communist Party because of its hypocrisy and tactical use of patriotism. "We have refused to accomplish so cynical an about-face."<sup>47</sup> To all collaborators, com-

munism represented a horrible danger, "not only to civilization, but to the well-being of each of us . . . to the family, the career, the fields, the factory, the shop, the workshop, the laboratory, the office".<sup>48</sup>

The fear of Communism was closely related to the second aspect of a collaborationist mentality: fear of social disorder. At the outset the Vichy officials manifested this fear by deciding not to continue the fight, as the disorder that would have been created by continued warfare was considered a worse danger than occupation by foreign troops. This concern for order was a primary reason so many civil servants and local government officials stayed on the job. In 1941 Camille Vernet, the prefect of Tours during the German invasion of June, 1940, was honored with these words: "You did your duty, you stayed on the job, you avoided panic and maintained order in Tours. You have given a good example to the country."<sup>49</sup> The fear of social disorder explains why, even after the colonies were lost, France totally occupied, the navy scuttled, Vichy officials stayed on the job. Laval claimed after the war, "Had I abandoned my post in November, 1942, the whole of the country would have become a vast maquis. The cost would have been thousands and thousands of dead. . . . How could the head of the Government be justified in making a decision which would expose the entire French population to this terrible risk?"<sup>50</sup> This is one reason that the Vichy leaders did not quit even after the war had turned decisively against Germany. Pétain, in May,

1944, warned the population against joining the Resistance because it would lead to "a civil war which will destroy all that the foreign war has saved until now. . . The voices that preach disobedience to you are not French voices (and) will deliver the country to a disaster that all my efforts wanted it to avoid. . . Order, work, and union are the necessary conditions of our restoration."<sup>51</sup>

The government's equation of the Resistance with Communism and terrorism lead to the most brutal collaboration with German repression during the last two years of the occupation. A special militia, created by Darnand, was used to fight the Resistance and became an instrument of terror and repression. In recruiting its members, it issued "a call to all who want to fight in its ranks, animated by the spirit of sacrifice. Its goals for the moment are the struggle against terrorism."<sup>52</sup> The fascists applauded this repression. They had previously criticized the government for not going far enough. Brasillach in 1941 suggested simply shooting all the Communist leaders already in jail.<sup>53</sup>

Although there were differences in ideology among the Collaborators, all of them were anti-Liberals and denied democracy, equality, and liberty in exchange for order, hierarchy, and authority.

Finally, all collaborators believed in purging France of Free Masons, who were accused of being a conspiratorial society. Because they were frequently socialists and anti-clericalists, they were seen as symbolic of the hated Third



Republic. Dislike of Free Masons was prevalent but it was fairly mild and manifested itself in firings of civil servants and the publishing of lists of leading citizens who were Free Masons.

The collaborators also wanted to purge France of Jews, a favorite scapegoat everywhere in the interwar years. They were accused of subverting France's economy and of trying to take over the government. The French middle class's antisemitism was a displaced resentment of the larger economic forces that were crushing them. The upper classes had a traditional <sup>dislike</sup> for Jews, and among professionals such as doctors and lawyers Jews were hated for their success in these overcrowded fields.

Antisemitism in France went beyond this economic motive, but it was different from Nazi antisemitism. Rather than being racial, it was primarily cultural. Jews were resented because they were different, a separate people who could not be assimilated into French culture. Vallat asserted that the Alibert law was written within the country's right of "protecting the national community against the abuses and harmful influence of a foreign element".<sup>54</sup> Drieu, in a confused analysis of the Jewish problem, defined Jews as a racial and not a religious group. However, what he disliked was their "pretention to form a people among each people and a people above all other peoples".<sup>55</sup> His solution was the gradual assimilation of those Jews who sincerely wished to "renounce their specificity". The rest would be put into "the ghetto to

which they aspire".<sup>56</sup>

French antisemitism, based on this xenophobic fear of "particularism" and on resentment of the control exercised by Jews over the economy and government, resulted in laws passed in October, 1941, which defined as Jewish anyone with Jewish grandparents, excluded Jews from all government service and limited the percentage of Jews in various professions, with the exception of World War I veterans. Later, the citizenship of Jews who had immigrated to France as early as 1930 was revoked, foreign Jews were rounded up into work camps, and a program of the "aryanization" of Jewish enterprise, initiated by the Germans but followed through on by the French, took place in Paris.

Laval described the laws regulating the situation of the Jews as "the cruellest burden which the conqueror obliged us to bear".<sup>57</sup> However, Paxton claims that he was "unable to turn up any direct German order for French anti-Masonic, anti-Semitic, or other legislation during the most active period of Vichy legislation in 1940".<sup>58</sup> Xavier Vallet, the Commissioner General for Jewish Affairs in 1940-1942 wrote from his prison after the war, "There are those who believed that this law was the result of pressure by the occupation authorities on the French government. . . . The Alibert law. . . owes nothing at all to nazism (and was rather) spontaneous and indigenous, issued in fact several days before the first German ordinance."<sup>59</sup> The French probably would have gone no further than these laws

except that in 1942 the Final Solution began in the West and Germany set quotas for deportations from France at 100,000. The Vichy government then participated in the gruesome roundup of Jews and even, in a somewhat horrifying demonstration of their xenophobia, traded off foreign refugee Jews to save French Jews.

One final aspect of collaboration remains, one that colored all the other aspects. There were those who collaborated out of opportunism, or the crude desire to profit from the situation. Fortunes were made by taking advantage of the aryanization of Jewish enterprise, producing for the Germans, and acting as spies and informants. Opportunism also tinged other forms of collaboration. The fascist gang leaders attempted, although unsuccessfully, to use collaboration as a lever to power. The journalists and fascist writers used the defeat to take their revenge on all that had previously frustrated them. While this aspect of collaboration can be overexaggerated, the official collaboration of the French government essentially legitimized it. The government's collaboration was a springboard for the unofficial collaborators who would not have had the prestige or publicity they had if not for the official collaborators. After all, the government was basically using its country's defeat to accomplish certain ends, externally to reorder France's alliances and maintain and even aggrandize their colonial empire at Britain's expense, internally to reshape political, economic, and social institutions.

This is important in evaluating the significance of

collaboration for France. On the positive side, that Vichy spared France the worst hardships of total occupation is debatable. The most that can be said is that Vichy postponed them. Vichy did, however, sharpen old conflicts, aggravate internal tensions in the face of a foreign army, and, because of this, helped to push the country in 1944 into virtual civil warfare, in spite of their desire to avoid disorder. Vichy's existence also led France into complicity with actions, such as the Final Solution and repression of the Resistance, normally unthinkable. In this respect, the psychological damage done by collaboration was considerable. Most of the French continue to deny this aspect of their past, but the sense of guilt and unease can still be felt.

# NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Robert O. Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944, (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), p. 270.

<sup>2</sup>Le Temps, 14 August, 1941.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Pierre Laval, The Unpublished Diary of Pierre Laval, (London: The Falcon Press, Ltd., 1948), p. 72.

<sup>5</sup>Robert Paxton, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

<sup>6</sup>Le Temps, 28 October, 1941.

<sup>7</sup>Robert Brasillach, Oeuvres Complètes de Robert Brasillach, tome XII, (Paris: Au Club de l'Honnête Homme, 1964), p. 323.

<sup>8</sup>Drieu La Rochelle, Chroniques Politiques, 1934-1942, (Gallimard, 1943), p. 231.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>11</sup>Lucien Rebatet, Les Décombres, (Paris: Les Editions de Noël, 1942), p. 620.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 620.

<sup>13</sup>Pierre Laval, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>14</sup>Le Temps, 12 October, 1940.

<sup>15</sup>Le Temps, 2 June, 1941.

<sup>16</sup>Abel Bonnard, Pensées dans l'Action, (Paris: Grasset, 1941), p. 7.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>18</sup>Lucien Rebatet, op. cit., p. 597.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 597.

<sup>20</sup>Drieu La Rochelle, op. cit., p. 311.

<sup>21</sup>Lucien Rebatet, op. cit., p. 602.

<sup>22</sup>Robert Brasillach, op. cit., p. 370.

<sup>23</sup>Drieu La Rochelle, op. cit., p. 312.

- <sup>24</sup>Lucien Rebatet, op. cit., p. 602.
- <sup>25</sup>La Dépêche du Centre-Ouest, (Tours: 6, rue de la Préfecture, 4 January, 1944).
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup>Drieu La Rochelle, op. cit., p. 312.
- <sup>28</sup>Stanley Hoffman, "Collaborationism in France during World War II", Journal of Modern History, vol. 40, no. 3, (September, 1968), p. 378.
- <sup>29</sup>Robert Paxton, op. cit., p. 33.
- <sup>30</sup>Le Temps, 12 October, 1940.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup>Jacques Duquesne, Les Catholiques français sous l'occupation, (Paris: Editions Bernard Grassét, 1966), p. 26.
- <sup>33</sup>Defeat and Beyond: An Anthology of French Wartime Writing, 1940-1945, ed. Germaine Brée and George Bernauer, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p. 44.
- <sup>34</sup>Lucien Rebatet, op. cit., p. 13.
- <sup>35</sup>Le Cri du Peuple, 31 March, 1941.
- <sup>36</sup>Robert Paxton, op. cit., p. 143.
- <sup>37</sup>Le Temps, 12 October, 1940.
- <sup>38</sup>Jacques Duquesne, op. cit., p. 40.
- <sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 11.
- <sup>40</sup>Philippe Pétain, Paroles aux Français, (Paris: H. Lardanchet, 1942), p. 221.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 168.
- <sup>42</sup>La Dépêche du Centre-Ouest, 3 July, 1941.
- <sup>43</sup>Le Temps, 12 October, 1940.
- <sup>44</sup>Robert Brasillach, op. cit., p. 346.
- <sup>45</sup>Drieu La Rochelle, op. cit., p. 335.
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 335.
- <sup>47</sup>Le Cri du Peuple, 14 October, 1940.
- <sup>49</sup>Robert Brasillach, op. cit., p. 352.

- <sup>49</sup>La Dépêche du Centre-Ouest, 2 July, 1941.
- <sup>50</sup>Pierre Laval, op. cit., p. 78.
- <sup>51</sup>Le Cri du Peuple, 29 April, 30 April, 1 May, 1944.
- <sup>52</sup>La Dépêche du Centre-Ouest, 27 January, 1943.
- <sup>53</sup>Robert Brasillach, op. cit., p. 386.
- <sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 628.
- <sup>55</sup>Drieu La Rochelle, op. cit., p. 158.
- <sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 159.
- <sup>57</sup>Pierre Laval, op. cit., p. 104.
- <sup>58</sup>Robert Paxton, op. cit., p. 143.
- <sup>59</sup>France During the German Occupation, 1940-1944, transl. Philip W. Whitcomb, vol II, (Stanford: The Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, 1957), p. 626.

AUTORISATION  
de peindre et de dessiner

-:-:-

Monsieur DUBREUIL Ferdinand ,  
Artiste peintre et graveur sur bois , demeurant  
à TOURS, 22 bis rue de la Californie , est  
autorisé à dessiner et à peindre des paysages  
dans les ruines de TOURS, à l'exception des  
objectifs militaires .

Tours , le 25 novembre 1940 .

Le Maire de Tours

*Mocun*



*Houh...*

BERECHTIGUNG  
zu malen und zu zeichnen

-:-:-

Herr DUBREUIL Ferdinand ,  
Kunstmaler und Holzschneider , wohnhaft in  
TOURS , 22 bis rue de la Californie , hat die  
Berechtigung in den Ruinen von Tours zu malen  
und zu zeichnen , mit Ausnahme von militärischen  
Anlagen .

Tours , den 25. November 1940.

Der Feldkommandant

I. A.

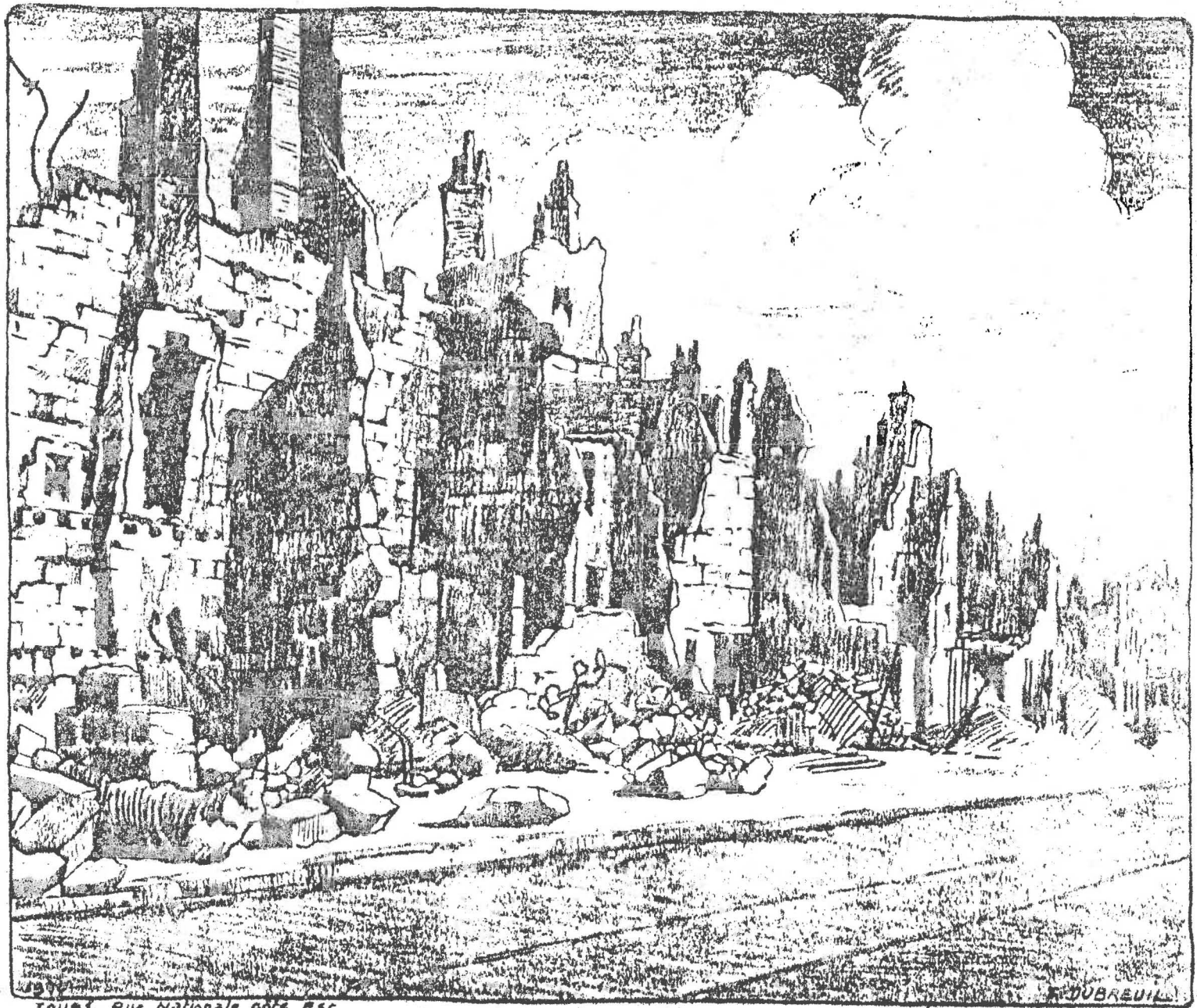
*Roller*

Ltn. u. Abwehroffizier

Gültig bis 31. Dezember 1940

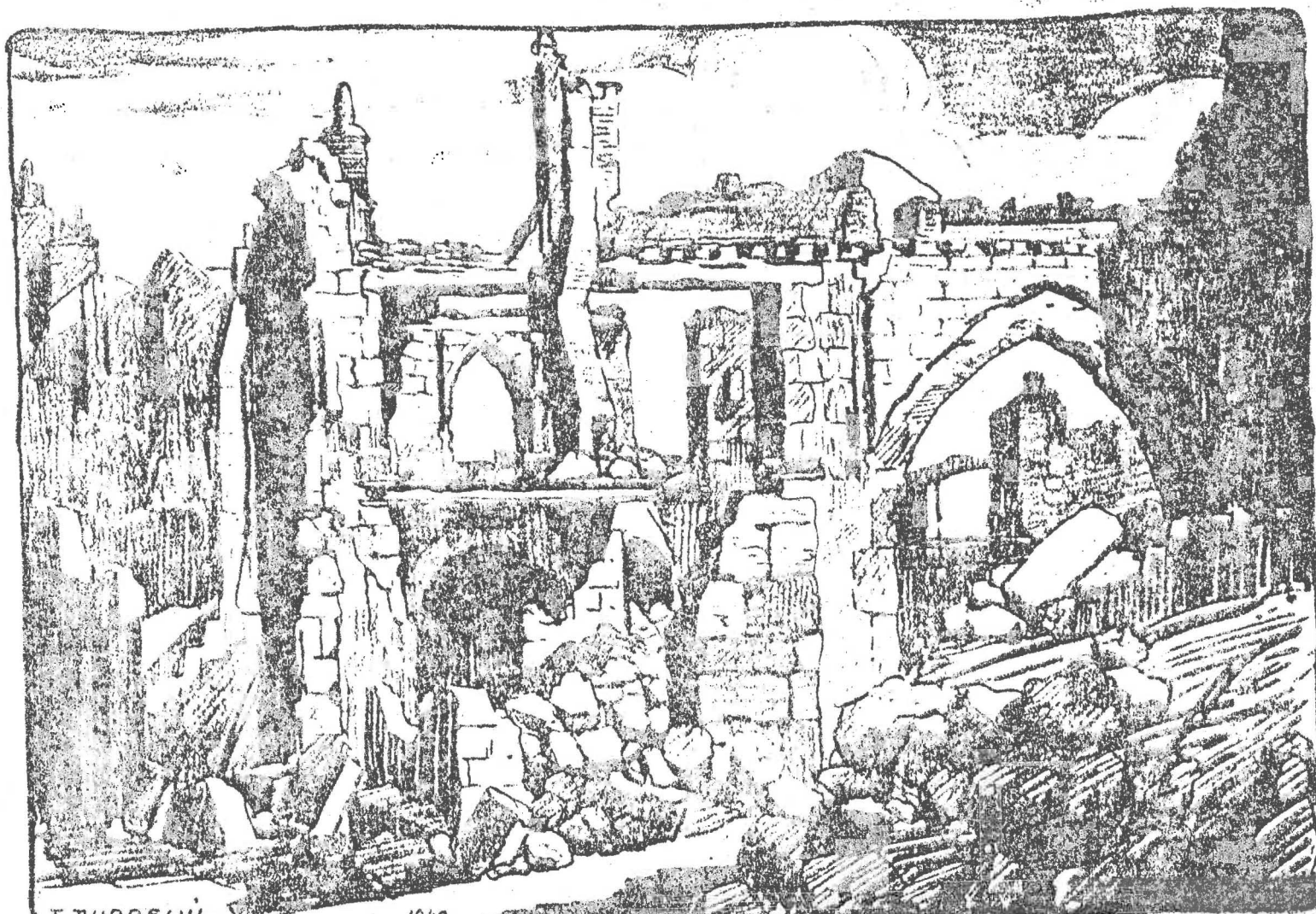






TOURS. Rue Nationale côté Est

R. DOUBREUIL



F. DUBREUIL

1940

TOURS. Angle Rue de Halles et Rue Marceau

## Chapter Two

## Passive France

Among the people in our class, we were three groups. Well, there were about thirty students in the class, thus there were three groups of ten. There was a group really very collaborationist, a group frankly Gaullist, and then a group...ah...that waited to see what was going to happen.

Dr. Chauvin

This chapter raised the problem of labeling a previously unnamed group. I considered <sup>calling</sup> this chapter "Neutral France". However, the majority of French people were not necessarily neutral; they simply did not act on their beliefs, and it is on this basis that I distinguish them from the collaborators and the resisters. Therefore, "Passive France" is the most accurate description of this category between the two extremes, this group that chose not to choose.

It is difficult to discover exactly what the political opinions of this majority were, since most citizens did not write editorials, publish books, or give speeches. One can only get at their emotions and reactions through reading personal letters and journals and by talking to people who were there. I interviewed fifteen people in Tours, France in an effort to learn more about the reactions of some of this majority to the occupation. Other difficulties arose, since the people available for interviewing were all under thirty during the war, and the opinions of the older sector of the population may have been different. Often they contradicted both themselves and others. The contradictions are significant <sup>they indicate that the reality of the situation was contradictory and because</sup> both because <sup>they make</sup> evident inaccuracies of thirty-year-old memories, inaccuracies that are significant in that they show a sense of unease and guilt. Certain questions and topics

were met with defensiveness and edginess that may be due to their awareness that by not actively opposing Vichy of the German Occupation, they were in a sense tacitly collaborating. Vichy could not have gone as far as it did in external reorientation or internal social programs had it not had a certain amount of popular consent, if not support.

In any case, at least for the first two years after the defeat, many people remained in a state of somewhat stunned apathy. Analyzing<sup>reasons</sup> for doing something can be complex, but analyzing reasons for not doing anything presents problems all its own. Initially, at any rate, the shock of the defeat contributed greatly to the passivity of the people. The lightning-quick German invasion of France in June 1940, after months of tense inactivity, tore up the lives of millions of French people. In front of the invading Germans poured a stream of refugees from Northern France and Belgium. At the same time, the Germans were bombing cities, shops closed as the owners hid or left, newspaper publishing and radio broadcasting stopped. People's lives were severely disoriented and they had no clear idea of what was happening or why.

Since World War I, the French had been led to believe that their army was unsurpassed in Europe, and that the Maginot Line had been built as a "super trench" to ward off any invasion from the East. To be overrun in less than six weeks<sup>was incomprehensible</sup> to many, yet for most there was no desire to hold out and fight to the finish. The destruction and bloodletting of World War I had led to a strong aversion to war among the French. Most people simply wanted an end to the confusion and destruction and a return to "normal" conditions, as Marcel Verdier expressed in The Sorrow



and the Pity: "Like all the other forty million Frenchmen who lived through that particular day when I saw our Army routed, when I saw that the Germans were in Biarritz and that the whole of France was invaded, and that nothing was to be done about it, well, I felt as all the others did: there must be someone who can stop this massacre."<sup>1</sup> In Tours, concern over stopping the destruction led to a decision by the mayor to declare Tours an open city to the Germans without having received orders from the French government to do so. The French were humiliated by the defeat, a mood captured by Simone de Beauvoir's description of her journey back to Paris after the armistice had been signed. "It was absolutely hellish. Victory was written across every German face while every French face proclaimed defeat aloud."<sup>2</sup> Yet they, as did the government, preferred to accept defeat than to continue fighting.

They were given a symbol to soothe their fears, Philippe Pétain, the "victor of Verdun", a war hero who promised to help France regain her position externally and renew herself internally. Roger Tounze, a newspaperman in Clermont-Ferrand, spoke of the effect Pétain had on the French. "Well, at the beginning I did not understand anything, just like everybody else. On June twenty-fourth, in the morning, the lieutenant gave a beautiful speech, and then Marshal Pétain, the only marshal we had, sued for an armistice. I knew what an armistice was, but I did not fully realize what a marshal was."<sup>3</sup> The caring father image was emphasized by Pétain himself. "(1941) should be the year of France's recovery. It will be if all of you press yourselves close to me. . . . I have given

myself to France, that is to say, to all of you."<sup>4</sup>

Support for Pétain, especially in the first years, was widespread. Dr. Chauvin, a high school student in Tours, spoke of the political divisions among his classmates. "There were not many collaborators. On the other hand, there were partisans of Marshal Pétain, many more than collaborators. In our class, out of ten who were for Pétain, there were really only two or three collaborators, that's all."<sup>5</sup> This attitude not only shows that wide support for Pétain existed but that it was not considered collaborationist. Most of my interviewees either did not realize or could not believe that supporting a regime that collaborated with Germany was, in a sense, collaborating. In any case, Vichy seemed legitimate. The Chamber of Deputies had voted full powers to Pétain, and, as L'Abbé Labaume explained, "certain eminent jurists thought that Marshal Pétain's power was legitimate, and other eminent jurists. . . asserted that the Marshal Pétain was illegitimate in this government. So how were we to decide?"<sup>6</sup> How were ordinary citizens to decide this? My impression is that they did not decide; they simply accepted what existed. Madame Solange, in The Sorrow and the Pity, admitted she was Pétainiste. "I was for the Marshal, I don't know. I wasn't political." When asked what her support stemmed from she replied, "Well, maybe it was the Marshal's ideas. . . what he wanted to do for France. And I thought he was a very fine man."<sup>7</sup>

Pétain was a symbol of France's days of glory, a father figure, someone people would trust with France's

destiny. Support for the Vichy regime was also urged by the Church. Archbishop Fellin of Bordeaux, in June, 1940, urged the French, "Be thus united around our flag in mourning. . . and under the authority of those who legitimately hold power."<sup>8</sup> In spite of the decline of Catholicism in twentieth-century France, it still was a significant social force. The Church's support of Vichy thus gave it moral legitimacy and for this reason it is significant that the Archbishop of Tours accompanied the mayor and the prefect to surrender to the Germans. When I asked L'Abbé Labaume, himself a resistor, about the role of the Archbishop in Tours, he answered that "they (the archbishops) had a people to support, to animate, to protect also, you see. An imprudent action on their part brought on serious consequences; thus it was necessary for one thing that they be very prudent."<sup>9</sup>

There was also, especially during and after the invasion, a revival of religiosity. Some Catholics interpreted the defeat and occupation as punishment for France's sins. Archbishop Fellin felt that "if we have been conquered, it is maybe that we were no longer sufficiently supported at the bottom of our souls by this triple ideal which is three large realities: God, the Fatherland, the Family".<sup>10</sup> The increase in religiosity led to the publishing of a collection of 322 invocations to saints according to the nature of the demand made. Pilgrimage spots such as Lourdes were crowded. Another interesting phenomenon took place in 1943, Le Grand Retour. The statue of Notre Dame of Boulogne was smuggled across the demarcation line

in a truck and brought to Lourdes. It then was brought by missionaries from village to village, while pilgrims consecrated themselves with a sign of penance. "Our Lady of Sorrow, pray for France who suffers; Our Lady of Sorrow, pray for France who has sinned."<sup>11</sup> During this expedition, over five million souvenir pictures and one and a half million rosaries were sold.<sup>12</sup>

The majority of the people were passive for another important reason. France was being occupied, directly in the North, by a foreign army. Attitudes towards Germany and the Germans were confused. In 1940 Germany seemed invincible. England was the only country left opposing Germany, and faith in her ability to hold out was poor. Lack of hope combined with the shock of the defeat kept people from actively opposing the Germans. Dr. Chauvin, a student in Tours, felt that "anyway, there some very difficult moments because . . . Germany was a very solid country . . . people had to have a certain kind of admiration because it was, even so, a very well organized, very disciplined, very solid country."<sup>13</sup> However, he did not think at the time "that it was all over, that we had the Germans on our backs forever, not that, no!"<sup>14</sup> When I asked Madame Fournier, a secretary, if it seemed in 1940 as if the Germans were there to stay, she responded, "Oh, no, we always thought they would leave, and as soon as possible and right away. We never thought it would last five years . . . We always had the hope that they would leave, that they would leave. That's why we still had



the courage to live."<sup>15</sup> Although they never lost hope that the Germans would leave, they never saw themselves personally as having anything to do with getting rid of the Germans. Mr. Martin, who worked as a typesetter at the local paper in Tours, illustrated this passive waiting for someone to come liberate France. "We had this idea that we were going to be liberated, that one day the war would be over, but in what way? . . . We didn't know how we could get out of it because we didn't quite see how they would be able to make a landing."<sup>16</sup>

Doubtless, another reason why few direct anti-German actions were taken, although the French people wanted the Germans out and did not lose hope that they would leave, was simply fear of the Germans. In 1940, there was never any question that northern France was being occupied, which the first paper to appear in Tours after the armistice made very clear. All cars, trucks, and firearms were requisitioned, there was a curfew from 8:00 PM to 6:00 AM and a total blackout after dark, there was no drawing, sketching, or photographing in the streets without express permission of the German Commandant, no listening to the radio or singing in the streets or in homes, no gatherings of more than two in the streets. Even the clocks were all reset to German time. Madame X, who asked that her name not be used, felt that "it was always very painful to see this German constraint over our lives. This is what those who have never been occupied can never comprehend . . . All the same we spent four

years under the German boot."<sup>17</sup> Madame Fournier, a secretary, also commented on the constant fear inspired by the parading soldiers. "And when we saw a German, we were always afraid of him, we trembled."<sup>18</sup>

However, talk of fear of the Germans may have been a rationalization. Madame Fournier, who trembled at the sight of a German, worked in an office run by Germans. When I asked her about this, she became quite agitated. "Yes, but there the Germans were everywhere, they were in the administration, in the mayor's office . . . they were the ones who commanded, sure . . . they were the ones who were in charge of everything . . . there was the army, there were the civilians. . . You see, they were the leaders, so we were forced to be under their domination and to work with them."<sup>19</sup> Madame X said she and her husband were called collaborators by their neighbors because they had housed a German officer. I asked her if she considered herself a collaborator. "Absolutely not! We didn't consider ourselves collaborators. You couldn't close your house to the Germans. It was absolutely necessary to receive them. It was okay to shoot the Germans in the back, but not to oppose them face to face like that. We couldn't do that at all, at all, at all!"<sup>20</sup> Dr. Chauvin also expressed the belief that they could not directly oppose the Germans. "They had force. They arrested people and deported people to Germany . . . What could you do against that? Organize clandestinely, okay, but direct action against the Germans, no! It was

not possible."<sup>21</sup>

One scene in The Sorrow and the Pity illustrates that sometimes this fear was not based on an actual threat or risk. M. Dionnet was a schoolteacher in Clermont-Ferrand.

Dionnet: People came to this flag-raising ceremony against their will, you understand. It was a . . .

But they came anyway?

Dionnet: Well, they had to, in times like that. You begin to realize . . . you understand what people are really like, you know, how fear prevails, with very few exceptions.

Did they actually run any risk for not attending?

Dionnet: No, but they thought they did.<sup>22</sup>

The presence of Germans and the restrictions they imposed were objective reasons for fear. Yet the over-reaction of the interviewees to my questions, their constant insistence on having to work with the Germans or else be arrested, on having been forced to obey, gave me the impression that this fear was a kind of self-justification for not having done anything. This impression is furthered by the fact that in 1940 through 1942 the Germans were not particularly harsh in Tours, as my interviewees themselves admit. Mr. Martin, a typesetter, stated that at first, "outside of the curfew, let's say that life was relatively...normal, that is for a time of war."<sup>23</sup> A prefect report for the Eure Department, written in 1940, claimed that "in spite of all this (the material destruction) the state of mind of the population

in general is excellent and its rapports with the occupiers are marked by dignity and correctness. No incidents have been signaled to me and I must recognize that a very strict discipline appears to have been imposed on the German troops."<sup>24</sup>

The people I spoke with seemed to respect the Germans they knew personally. Occasionally I was left completely bewildered by the abruptness of the change in tone. After her long tirade about being under German domination and being forced to work with the Germans, Madame Fournier told me, "But they were reasonable, those who occupied the offices. They were reasonable. They weren't mean, they weren't severe, they weren't so terrible. Things went pretty smoothly,"<sup>25</sup> Perhaps the reality itself was contradictory - the fear created by parading soldiers, restrictions, and arrests on the one side and the basic humanity seen with one-to-one contact on the other. Madame Guinvarch, whose husband was a policeman in Tours, told me of the day she was out walking with her baby in a carriage when a German soldier stopped her, picked up and embraced the child, then explained that he had just received news that his wife and children had been killed in a bombing. "But really, the Germans, you couldn't say they hated us. They were our friends."<sup>26</sup> Alongside this humanity was a deep respect for the "correctness" and politeness of the Germans. The French middle class valued the formalities of politeness highly, and the Germans were praised for being "clean, impeccable, always very polite,"<sup>27</sup> as Madame Fournier described them.

Madame X referred to the German officer quartered at their house as "our German" and said, "He was a very correct man, very nice, indeed very much like us".<sup>28</sup> The June 23, 1940, entry in Mr. Chollet's journal of the events of the German invasion illustrated this admiration with the discomfort it brought. Mr. Chollet was approached by a German who asked him, "in a most correct French and a very courteous tone of voice, where he would be able to procure a guide to Franco-German conversation. I indicated the address of a bookstore. While he transcribed it in his notebook, I complimented him for the manner in which he expressed himself in our language. . . pushing politeness to the fullest, he thanked me in excellent terms and extended his hand. I avoided his gesture with a curt military salute, which seemed to disconcert him. He did not insist and turned away, his hand to his cap."<sup>29</sup> Correct French and politeness on the one hand and force and power on the other created this peculiar mixture of fear and respect.

Attitudes towards the Germans shifted noticeably after 1942, for a combination of reasons. First, as Mr. Martin explained, "as the years passed, we realized that first of all life was becoming more and more difficult".<sup>30</sup> Conditions did worsen; shortages of food, electricity, and fuel became quite severe. Roger Martin du Gard wrote to André Gide in September, 1942, "I'm not writing to you to whine about the food situation. All the same, things have reached such a point, in a region, that it must be talked about. Three and four days in a

row have passed where there has been nothing in the markets. I say nothing literally. Not a single vegetable, not a single fruit . . . There are entire families who have nothing more than their bread rations to eat every day."<sup>31</sup> The Germans also became harsher with the French. In November, 1942, all of France was directly occupied. That year also saw the start of massive Jewish deportations from France, and in 1943 compulsory labor was instituted. The increase in German severity toward the French is also noticeable in these figures from the Indre-et-Loire Department, of which Tours is the capitol.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Arrested</u>	<u>Shot, executed, or tortured to death</u>	<u>Interned</u>	<u>Deported</u> <sup>32</sup>
1940	22	0	20	2
1941	136	1	106	29
1942	579	30	195	354
1943	584	12	215	364
1944	604	33	125	446
indet.	<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>14</u>
total	1944	76	661	1207

The reasons for this increase were partly external. Mr. Martin explained that "life became more difficult from the time that the Germans felt that for them, if you like, the game was up. And then, when they had the Russian front, that gave them a lot of trouble. In every corner they felt a little bit...like they were losing ground...and they took it out on the countries where they had installed themselves."<sup>33</sup> In June, 1941, a prefect report for the Eure Department made note of the "immense hope (of those who only live in the hope and in

anticipation of a return to the previous state of affairs) at the news that Russia in turn has entered into the struggle".<sup>34</sup> Although, like the collaborators, many of those who remained passive feared a Russian victory as the triumph of Communism, still Russia's entry signalled the beginning of the end for Germany. The report also examined the population's response to English aggression in Syria. At first it created anger and confusion but quickly things settled down. "The entrance of General de Gaulle in Beyreuth will certainly be saluted in my district by an explosion of joy...controlled."<sup>35</sup> As the tide turned against Germany hopes were raised, "especially from the time Russia entered the war . . . We thought that the same thing would happen to Hitler that had happened to Napoleon. And after, when America entered the war, well then..."<sup>36</sup> With the possibility that Germany could be defeated, more people entered the resistance, which, although still a minority, became increasingly militant, which in turn led to increasing harshness by the Germans, and so on. By 1943 opinion had shifted decisively towards the Allies, yet there was still no real threat to the Germans.

The majority remained passive, not only due to fear of the Germans, but also due to a preoccupation with their own and their families' survival. Just getting by from day to day was a chore that required a great deal of time and energy. Everyone I spoke to agreed on the primary concern:

Dr. Chauvin: "Oh, yes, that was it, the number one preoccupation, eating, because really, we were very hungry. We were very thin."<sup>37</sup>

M<sup>me</sup> Fournier: "That which we missed principally was food. It's really the hardest thing to do without, isn't it? We didn't have much to eat."<sup>38</sup>

M<sup>me</sup> X: "The deprivation that was really something was the deprivation of food."<sup>39</sup>

"What was the main preoccupation of people at that time, according to you?"

Marcel Verdier: "Food, food!"<sup>40</sup>

Food shortage, the result of the loss of 700,000 French peasants to German POW camps, poor distribution, hoarding, and German requisitions, became a serious problem. Paxton writes that "France eventually was the worst nourished of the Western occupied nations"<sup>41</sup> and estimated caloric intake to have "descended as low as 1500 calories a day where there was access to black market supplies and even lower for city populations where there was not".<sup>42</sup> Thus, simply getting enough food was a complex, tiring process which involved knowing which tickets were good on what day and getting up early and standing for hours in lines. The French often tried to augment their legal ration, frequently by riding out to the countryside, to the farm of a friend or relative, and buying produce directly from them. A black market also developed which involved selling restricted food at exorbitant prices of selling ration tickets. For this Alfred Fabre-



Luce described the Frenchman as a "losing profiteer . . . He diminishes his own ration by trying to better it. Forty million resourceful ones are proud of having played tricks on each other."<sup>43</sup>

Those who had access to food, shopkeepers in particular, hoarded all they could. Jean Dutourd, in his novel Au Bon Beurre, describes a middle class shopkeeper family that owned a cremery and profited so well from black market buying and selling, watering down the milk and cream, and so on, that they ate huge meals out of spite. They now had power over the people they supposedly served. Although Au Bon Beurre is fiction, a prefect report for 1942 also described this phenomenon. "Those who do not need to fear material difficulties because, really, they are making profits off of the economic disorder, reveal a scorn for all morality . . . The merchant, the entrepreneur who enriches himself by means of the occupation, desires a life that corresponds to his gains. This one here does not steal, he traffics . . . He is lavish and buys all that is sold."<sup>44</sup>

Food was not the only item in short supply. Cigarettes, oil, coal, electricity, and so on, were also rationed. Buying a new pair of shoes required an application. The French often displayed ingenuity in getting by without these items. Old garden hoses were used as bicycle tires, a necessary vehicle because there were no cars. Homemade butter churns were constructed to convert some of the milk ration to butter. A product called

Filpas was sold to replace stockings. The women painted it on their legs to give the appearance of nylon. The variety of plants that were dried and smoked to augment the "decade" (ten days worth) of cigarettes gives credit to the French imagination - anything from corn silk and rose leaves to artichokes. Old clothes were repaired rather than replaced, and La Dépêche in Tours printed an article about new fabrics that were designed.

This summer, clothes made of vegetable fabric will be worn. Dresses or suits of wool or cotton will be as rare as they will be out of style...These new fabrics are not unpleasant. They are soft to the touch, supple, and hold up well...So goes the mode. Late comers will risk wearing an old-fashioned kind of fabric, and to be "à la mode", what won't one do.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, simple daily life was no longer simple but a source of constant worry. People were physically uncomfortable, hungry, and cold, but their frustrations affected them on a deeper, internal level. Madame X described it as "something that is quite spiritual, but that is a part of the most important part of our ideas, of our dispositions".<sup>46</sup> This constant anxiety helps explain a phenomenon most difficult to understand, denunciations. Baudot described those who wrote letters of denunciation as "men and women pushed by hatred and by vengeance or again by the lure of pay for treason".<sup>47</sup> While hatred and vengeance did play a role, this explanation is too simplistic to satisfy me. It makes it easy to categorize those who denounced as spiteful or greedy, not like the rest of them. Dr. Chauvin was allowed to look over the

letters of denunciation in the archives of Tours. Most often they were written "for stupid reasons . . . People wrote to the Germans to denounce their neighbors who had badly camouflaged their lights."<sup>48</sup> Baudot also mentions that the Germans paid little attention to these letters, and threw them out or handed them over to French authorities. That there were so many of such minor importance that the Germans simply threw them out indicates a more complex motivation. They were a manifestation of the constant stress and tremendous anxiety produced by the difficulties of life, by fear of the Germans, and perhaps by a sense of unease that they were not doing anything. Writing a letter could have been a way of taking out these feelings and of performing an action that, while it incurred <sup>no risk</sup> masked self-concern as the concern of a good French citizen. (If the person next door does not camouflage his lights, we may all be killed by a bomb.)

This tension and anxiety also had its lighter manifestations. If the French did nothing else, they did make fun of themselves and everyone else, as in this joke which compares the behavior of parachutists of various nationalities.

The Germans jump from the plane at the first command: "Heraus!".

The English start by taking their tea and marmalade, smoking a cigarette, and then deciding to jump for the King, for His Gracious Majesty. . .

The Italians calmly throw their parachutes into the empty space and don't follow them.

The French complain: "It's always the same ones who get themselves killed. . . Isn't a shame to nominate fathers

for such a job!" Finally, under the insistence of the officer, who calls on their sense of honor, they jump.<sup>49</sup>  
But they don't have parachutes.

This joke could have been inspired by the situation in 1940: the Germans who attacked quickly, the English, who reacted slowly and calmly, the Italians, who entered in word but not in action, and the French, who entered reluctantly only to find themselves unprepared.

Jokes are an excellent indication of the concerns and preoccupations of the population. They were also a form of defense against demoralization and despair, a form of resistance, although still passive resistance, to propaganda, and offered a release of tension. The most frequent jokes were about the food situation, rationing, shortages, and lines. Even Le Cri du Peuple, a fascist newspaper, carried cartoons mocking the situation, but they were usually pretty poor humor. For example, a mother was shown talking to her daughter, saying, "If you had accepted the owner of the spice store on the corner's proposal of marriage, now I wouldn't have to stand in line."<sup>50</sup>  
A street joke about lines was somewhat more sarcastic.

A man to a pregnant woman:  
"Vous l'avez eu sans ticket?"  
Woman's response:  
"Oui, mais quelle queue!"<sup>51</sup>

An extended joke about rationing was Marcel Aymé's The Life Ration (extracts from the diary of Jules Flegmon). It mocks the government's moralizing tone in its efforts to ration. "In order to avoid the risk of serious shortages, and to ensure a high margin of productivity, the Government . . . intends to abolish all unproductive and

useless elements in the population . . . Of course there is no question of actually putting useless mouths to death. The idea is simply to ration their living time. They're to be entitled to so many days of existence a month."<sup>52</sup> The Life Ration also makes fun of the justification of black market buying and the extremes to which it is carried. People do not simply buy enough days to make up a month but exorbitant amounts if they can afford it, such as a man who <sup>bought</sup> 1,967 <sup>black market</sup> days in one month. Eventually the situation reaches the point that life cards are abolished.

Jokes about Germans were also common. Many of them compensate for the inner sense of humiliation felt by the French by showing a subtly superior Frenchman making a fool out of a dumb German, as in this joke:

Every morning a Fritz bought his paper from the same merchant who, knowing that he didn't know our language, said to him with a big smile: "Well, here it is, your daily, grand con!"

The German inquired as to the meaning of this word from a Frenchman who explained to him, "Grand con is the familiar diminutive for Grand Conqueror."

The next day the German responded to the merchant, "No, not grand con, me little con..." and added with a high arm salute, "Hitler, him grand con!"<sup>53</sup>

As for the National Revolution, "Pétain preaches to us a return to the soil. At 85 years of age he could well indeed give the example."<sup>54</sup>

Up to now I have examined various motives for the lack of action, such as respect for Pétain, religiosity, fear of the Germans, and preoccupation with survival.

The simplest explanation should not be forgotten. Not doing anything was the easiest thing to do. Conditions were bad, but not bad enough to push people over the border of inertia. There was a basic political apathy. The issues were complex and often people acted without thinking issues through to their conclusions of considering the larger perspective into which their actions fit. Roger Tounze, a newspaperman in Clermont-Ferrand, when he found out that a Jewish friend of his had been dismissed, "began to get angry, to rebel; (he) started asking some questions . . ."<sup>55</sup> Most of the French did not ask themselves questions, as in the case of Marius Klein, who did not rebel against the persecution of Jewish shopkeepers but placed an ad in the paper stating that he was not Jewish so that he would not get hurt by it.<sup>56</sup>

Not thinking through questions was reinforced by what was central motive for remaining passive. Many French did not see or did not allow themselves to see alternatives. They felt "so isolated, so powerless",<sup>57</sup> as Simone de Beauvoir responded to Sartre's insistence that they act. Their daily lives were difficult and usually preoccupied them and kept them from facing a direct confrontation with difficult issues. Yet they usually proved passive when confrontations did arise. Madame Guinvarch's husband was a policeman in Tours during the war, and the French police were responsible for arresting Jews and resisters. When I asked Madame Guinvarch what her husband did with the French police, she answered,

Oh, yes, they were obliged to be police. Often, when a policeman was told such-and-such a person will be arrested tomorrow morning he tried to warn this person... Sometimes they were too late. The second time, the policeman was forced to... how shall I say?...

She then trailed off and switched back to:

Besides, the French police were under the control of the German police. They were under their control, but they really worked for the French.<sup>58</sup>

Mr. Guinvarch thought of secretly warning people who were to be arrested, but did not consider or rejected the option of refusing, resigning, or joining the resistance. As with most people in this category, the risk was too high. In this case a wife and children depended on his income. This was also true of Mr. Martin, who was drafted into the forced labor program to work in Germany. At this point many young Frenchmen joined the resistance rather than work in Germany, but Mr. Martin had a wife and a child on the way. Politically, his feelings were not strong one way or the other. He did not mind the work in Germany as he ended up with an easy job at the post office. Six months later he was given permission to return to France to see his daughter, at which point he "arranged" to be able to stay, but from the way he talked it seemed to be more for the sake of convenience than from any aversion to working for the Germans.

This blindness to alternatives is also illustrated in the scene from The Sorrow and the Pity where two school-teachers discuss the dismissal of a Jewish colleague..

M. Danton: Well, if I may add a word, take the case of Never. I think we tried to find him some private tutoring. The same went for another colleague who had been dismissed. But as you say, it wasn't much; but still I think there was some sympathy. Yes, there was.

When you say, "What could we do?", what do you mean? Ultimately, you could have offered a collective resignation from the lycée, couldn't you?

M. Dionnet: "Well, that was out of the question. You don't have any understanding of teachers...collective resignation, come on!" 59

The risk of such alternatives was too high. Most people lost materially less by accepting the situation with its lesser unpleasantness. However, they did lose self-respect as they ended up making choices they would have preferred not to make. In any similar situation the majority of people can well be expected to act this way. The motives of protecting one's life and family, and avoiding arrest, at times like that, challenges in themselves, are certainly not uniquely French. It takes a tremendous push to overcome most peoples' desire to live their lives normally and leave political matters aside. The larger questions were distant and difficult to perceive in their proper perspective at the time, and matters were confused by the existence of a French state that called on the people to return to normal and accept the occupation. When confronted individually with a choice, by being requisitioned for forced labor or being called upon to arrest a compatriot, many chose to remain passive, not because they were pro-German, but because they had not thought out the ultimate consequences of their actions,



or at least their sense of responsibility to themselves took priority over any sense of collective responsibility for France. It is this which explains the sense of guilt and unease, the defensiveness I encountered, and the creation of the "myth of the Resistance" to which I now turn.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Marcel Ophuls, The Sorrow and the Pity, filmscript transl. Miraille Johnston, (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1972), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Defeat and Beyond: An Anthology of French Wartime Writing, 1940-1945, ed. Germaine Brée and George Bernauer, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p. 148.

<sup>3</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>4</sup>Le Cri du Peuple, 3 January, 1941.

<sup>5</sup>Dr. Chauvin, May 9, 1978, 6, Grand Cedre, St. Avertin, France.

<sup>6</sup>L'Abbé Labaume, May 9, 1978, La Presbytère, Souvigné, France.

<sup>7</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., pp. 164-165.

<sup>8</sup>Jacques Duquesne, Les Catholiques français sous l'occupation, (Paris: Editions Bernard Grasset, 1966), p. 10.

<sup>9</sup>L'Abbé Labaume.

<sup>10</sup>Jacques Duquesne, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>13</sup>Dr. Chauvin.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Madame Fournier, May 10, 1978, St. Cyr, France.

<sup>16</sup>M. Martin, April 28, 1978, 15, Place de la Résistance, Tours, France.

<sup>17</sup>Madame X, April 20, 1978.

<sup>18</sup>Madame Fournier.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Madame X.

<sup>21</sup>Dr. Chauvin.

<sup>22</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., p. 85.

- <sup>23</sup>M. Martin.
- <sup>24</sup>Marcel Baudot, L'Opinion Publique sous l'Occupation, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960), p. 218.
- <sup>25</sup>Madame Fournier.
- <sup>26</sup>Madame Guinvarch, May 8, 1978, rue Rabelais, Tours, France.
- <sup>27</sup>Madame Fournier.
- <sup>28</sup>Madame X.
- <sup>29</sup>Louis Chollet, Les Heures Tragiques: Tours, Juin 1940, (Tours: Chez Arrault et Cie, 1946), p. 120.
- <sup>30</sup>M. Martin.
- <sup>31</sup>Roger Martin du Gard, Correspondence II, (Paris: 1968), p. 272.
- <sup>32</sup>Robert Vivier, L'Indre-et-Loire sous l'occupation allemande, 1940-1944, (Tours: Comité d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, 1965), pp. 11-12.
- <sup>33</sup>M. Martin.
- <sup>34</sup>Marcel Baudot, op. cit., p. 224.
- <sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 224.
- <sup>36</sup>Dr. Chauvin.
- <sup>37</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup>Madame Fournier.
- <sup>39</sup>Madame X.
- <sup>40</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., p. 28.
- <sup>41</sup>Robert O. Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944, (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), pp. 237-238.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 360.
- <sup>43</sup>Alfred Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France, (Paris: Amiot-Dumont, 1946), p. 403.
- <sup>44</sup>Marcel Baudot, op. cit., p. 227.
- <sup>45</sup>La Dépêche du Centre-Ouest, Tours, 7 January, 1941.

- <sup>46</sup>Madame X.
- <sup>47</sup>Marcel Baudot, op. cit., p. 32.
- <sup>48</sup>Dr. Chauvin.
- <sup>49</sup>Jean Galtier-Boissière, Mon Journal pendant l'occupation, (Garas: La Jeune Parque, 1945), pp. 128-129.
- <sup>50</sup>Le Cri du Peuple, 6 January, 1941.
- <sup>51</sup>Jean Galtier-Boissière, op. cit., pp. 58-59.
- <sup>52</sup>Germaine Brée and George Bernauer, op. cit., pp. 172-173.
- <sup>53</sup>Jean Galtier-Boissière, op. cit., pp. 58-59.
- <sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 38.
- <sup>55</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., pp. 23-24.
- <sup>56</sup>Ibid., pp. 77-78.
- <sup>57</sup>Simone de Beauvoir, The Prime of Life, transl. Peter Green, (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1976), p. 381.
- <sup>58</sup>Madame Guinvarch.
- <sup>59</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

## Chapter Three

### The Resistance

From the very start the Resistance was a question of outlook, even more, of character...The Resistance was faithful to all the great principles for which men have lived and, when necessary, died. The Resistance was a refusal to compromise.

Georges Bidault

The choices open to the French people obviously were not limited to collaboration or passivity. Resistance, and by this I mean active opposition to the German Occupiers and the French collaborators, was a third option. Resisters were members of movements or networks that committed acts of sabotage and guerilla warfare, wrote and distributed underground tracts and newspapers, helped escapees, gathered information for the Allies, etc....The Resistance was both an external and an internal phenomenon. Externally, it was launched by General Charles de Gaulle on June 18, 1940, two days after Pétain had asked the Germans for an Armistice, with a now legendary radio announcement.

I, General de Gaulle, now in London, call on all French officers and men who are at present on British soil, or may be in the future, with or without arms; I call on all engineers and workmen from the armaments factories who are at present on British soil, or may be in the future, to get in touch with me.

Whatever happens, the flame of French resistance must not and shall not die.

The movement he launched, called the Free French, consisted primarily of military men, sailors and soldiers from Dunkirk and members of the colonial administration whose fidelity to de Gaulle was complete. Being career soldiers, they had an inaptitude for and a distrust of clandestine warfare and tended to see the struggle in terms of traditional armies. They were wary also of the revolutionary effervescence of the internal Resistance. Within France the Resistance, like collaboration, was hardly a monolithic movement. Groups and networks formed and reformed, were broken up by loss of members. It was rare that a particular network survived all four years or that a movement operated in both zones at the same time. Because of the need for secrecy, often groups were not even aware of each other. The activities of these diverse groups fell into three basic categories. Direct anti-German action involved sabotage, assassination, cutting telephone wires, and other semi-military measures. Aiding de Gaulle involved transmitting information on the Germans to London, printing false papers, setting up routes for crossing the demarcation line or the English Channel. Finally, writing tracts for newspapers or posters was a way of counteracting the constant Vichy propaganda.

*In the Northern zone there were four primary movements.*

^ The Libération-Nord, formed by socialists and syndicalists, put out a paper and worked with de Gaulle, as did the Ceux de la Resistance, whose members tended towards the political right. The Organization Civile et

Militaire was made up of soldiers and civil servants who placed themselves in important administrative posts where they were able to gather information useful to the Allies. The Front Nationale, which consisted of the reserves of the Communist Party, was the only movement both political and military that worked simultaneously in both zones. Alongside these were several smaller groups of students and intellectuals. These smaller groups usually did not last long because they were either decimated by the Germans or swallowed into larger movements.

In the South the major movements were: Combat, a group of officers, engineers, and bureaucrats, usually Christian Democrats, who gathered information and wrote tracts, Libération-Sud, a group of syndicalists, socialists, and communists who centered their writings on anti-fascism and worked at mobilizing the masses, which they reproached Combat, a more elitist group, for ignoring, and Franc-Tireur, a group of intellectuals, ~~who were~~ mostly Communists, who at first only published a newspaper, then became an organized sabotage group that worked with de Gaulle and the Allies in London.

Although there were a large number of movements, Henri Michel advises us not to be misled. "Active Resisters were never more than a minority and at the start a tiny minority."<sup>2</sup> Often one person had a multitude of pseudonyms, which also gave a misleading impression of numbers. It is difficult to pin down the exact numbers for the Resistance. Paxton figures that "after the war

some 300,000 Frenchmen received official veteran's status for active Resistance service: 130,000 as deportees and another 170,000 as 'Resistance volunteers.' This brings the total of active Resistance participation at its peak, at least as officially recognized after the war, to about two percent of the adult French population."<sup>3</sup> Brée and Bernauer claim that 30,000 Resisters were executed and 115,000 deported, whereas Michel wrote that 20,000 were shot and 100,000 deported. In any case the numbers disprove the "myth of the Resistance", a myth created after the war as a kind of collective white lie to ease consciences. Since the Resisters proved to be the "good guys" on the right, or winning, side, many who did not resist, even if they did not collaborate, did not wish to admit that they had had neither the foresight nor the courage to resist. They have rewritten their personal and national past until it would appear as if everyone lead a double life and the Resistance was a mass movement. Emile Couladon, called Colonel Gaspar while serving as the head of the Auvergne maquis, remarked with frustration, "The thing which amazes me most when I talk to people who I know very well supported Pétain is . . . they all tell me how they did their share for the Resistance. They've all done one thing or another, there's always something they can think of . . . Sometimes it's quite incredible: 'Well, if you only knew, Monsieur Gaspar, if I told you what I did...' And so I say: out with it, come on, tell me, tell me all about it."<sup>4</sup>



The question of why so few people resisted has been dealt with in the first two chapters. The question now is, why did anyone at all resist? The risks were incredibly high, taking Paxton's figures - over half of the Resisters either lost their lives or were deported. What types of people were willing to take these risks and what motivated them? The Resisters were, as were the collaborators, shaped by their prewar experiences. Chapter One described the division of France during the 1930's into two opposing camps, the conservatives and the fascists on one side and a left wing coalition called the Popular Front on the other. Tensions erupted during the Depression into a virtual civil war, and when Pétain took over in 1940, a large body of the population disillusioned with the Third Republic proved ready to follow him. Jean Guéhenno sensed the role this prewar split played in 1940.

The defeat of France is only one episode of the European Civil War. Beneath the conflict between nations lies a deeper social conflict. Each nation is so sharply divided within itself that some one of the parties that compose it can think that their country's loss is their gain. Thus, for some groups of Frenchmen, the misfortune of France is such a victory as they had no longer dared to hope for. The Republic had lost; therefore, they 5 have won.

In the same way the prewar split paved the path to resistance for some political groups. Certain members of the Popular Front, socialists such as Léon Blum, had already come around to accepting the idea that pacifism in certain cases would have to be sacrificed and that the threat of fascism warranted a fight. After the Armistice labor

unions were outlawed and their members suddenly found themselves members of illegal organizations forced underground to continue. These clandestine labor organizations proved to be a large and important part of the Resistance. The Communists, for different reasons, followed a similar but more round-about path, from joining the Popular Front and calling for a firm stand against fascism in 1935 to denouncing the war as an imperialistic conflict in 1939 (in response to which Prime Minister Daladier declared them illegal and forced them underground) and eventually, with the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, to joining the Resistance in full strength. While they were late in joining, they soon took over the initiative in direct anti-German activities and they lost the highest percentage of their members to execution and deportation.

A large number of those who resisted had been forced underground and were already outcasts of society. They had less to lose by resisting than did the better-off members of society. Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, creator of the movement Libération-Sud, explained,

I'm going to say something nasty about my friends and myself: I think you could only have joined the Resistance if you were maladjusted...It's impossible to imagine a government minister, or a colonel, or an executive becoming a real partisan, a resister; if they're successful in their lives, then they'll be equally successful in dealing with Germans or Englishmen or Russians. 6

People with less of a stake in society resisted, including

a large number of workers. Denis Rake, a British secret agent in France during the war, remembered that

the greatest help I received came from railroad workers and Communists. French workers were terrific, they would do anything, they would give you their last penny if you had no money...But the middle class was scared. Of course they had more to lose and I think in life one takes into account what one has to lose - I had no relatives, I wasn't married. That's why I did that kind of work - what difference did it make after all? 7

Along with the workers, Communists, socialists, and syndicalists, the Resistance included a "particularly high proportion of France's intellectuals and men of letters".<sup>8</sup> Left-wing intellectuals like Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Guéhenno, and Louis Aragon felt called upon to act according to their philosophies. There were several movements which consisted of university students, such as Défense de la France and the Musée de l'Homme, a group created by several young ethnologists, most of whom eventually gave up their lives. Henri Michel saw this among the long-term contributions of the Resistance, that it "asserted and revealed the quality of character in those Frenchmen previously inclined to intellectualism at the expense of practical activity".<sup>9</sup>

As the war continued, the composition of the Resistance changed and expanded to include new outcasts created by the imposition of the Service de Travail Obligatoire, a program of forced labor in Germany. Michel explains this flood of recruits as men who had been too young in 1940 to make a choice. I tend to see them as men who

before 1943 had not been forced to make a choice. In any case, by March, 1944, an estimated 35,000 men<sup>10</sup> had responded to the call of La France.

Make for the mountains!  
By the thousands, young Frenchmen are refusing to leave for Germany. By the thousands, the "deserters" from deportation who tomorrow will be the soldiers of liberation are taking to the mountains of Savoie, the Massif Central, the Jura, and the Var. It is a magnificent stand, an awakening of our people to shout "no" to the Nazi tyrants. 11

The Resistance continued to grow throughout 1943. By 1944, as it became increasingly evident that the end was approaching for Germany, more and more "attentists", often contemptuously referred to by long-term Resisters as "September resisters", joined the Resistance. Because de Gaulle was essentially a conservative, another interesting turnabout occurred. "As the time of liberation approached, bringing the prospect of serious disorders and indeed the possibility of civil war, the same conservative social forces that had established and supported the Vichy regime . . . , rested upon the General their hopes of avoiding anarchy after the occupier's departure."<sup>12</sup>

Yet the core of the Resistance remained those people on the other end of the political spectrum from the collaborators, those who were persecuted and had little to lose, undoubtedly an important catalyst in their willingness to resist. However, the idealistic and moral nature of the Resistance must not be overlooked. As Michel points out, the Resistance was an army of volunteers,

and such an army needs to feel that it is fighting for a just cause.<sup>13</sup> The Vichy press constantly referred to them as bandits and terrorists and called on true Frenchmen to follow the Vichy leaders, who were serving France's best interests. The Resistance had to devalue this propaganda to keep up its own morale and to let people inside and outside of France know that there was another France that did not support Vichy policies. "Pétain is not France", wrote Jean Guéhenno. "Pétain and Laval do not speak for us. Their word is not binding on us and is powerless to dishonor us."<sup>14</sup>

Patriotism was the foremost motivation. From de Gaulle to the Communists, all resisters shouted, "Vive la France". "Our country is in mortal peril, let us all fight to save her",<sup>15</sup> wrote de Gaulle. In a moving letter to his parents, Henri Fertet, sixteen years old and condemned to death for Resistance activity, wrote, "What more honorable death could I have? I am dying voluntarily for my country . . . Just the same, it is hard to die. Vive la France."<sup>16</sup>

However, patriotism alone is not enough to explain the decision to resist. Even the collaborators claimed to be patriotic and saw themselves as serving France's interests by preserving the colonial empire, avoiding total occupation, building a European economic bloc with Germany at the center, and in general making the best of a bad situation. Those who remained passive may have loved their country, yet they were to a certain extent

pacified by Vichy propaganda and, in any case, were unwilling to fight and risk their lives for France, especially when a struggle against the Germans seemed hopeless.

The decision to resist went beyond patriotism, or perhaps it was patriotism of a different nature. First of all, to resist meant not to lose hope. Débu-Bridel, better known for his pseudonym Vercors, wrote,

Three months ago I longed for death.  
And I was not alone in this. As far  
as we could see, before us stretched  
only a foul abyss...How strange all  
that seems today when we have so many  
reasons for hope...But hope and hope-  
lessness are neither reasoning nor 17  
reasonable states.

The hope of the Resistance contrasts so sharply with the defeatism of the collaborators because the resisters thought differently about France's situation. Their hope was inspired by looking beyond France to what they saw as the larger global perspective. The defeat of 1940 was not definitive, as General de Gaulle so clearly put it,

France has lost a Battle!  
But France has not lost the War! 18

The way he saw it, "nothing is lost because this war is a world war. In the free universe, tremendous forces <sup>have not yet made themselves felt. Someday</sup> ~~will~~

*these forces will* crush the enemy." 19 Jean Guéhenno agreed that "the only valid measure of the disaster must be on a world scale. On the world scale, France is not beaten." 20

Resisters, with very few exceptions, were anti-fascist, and thus conceding to work with Germany was unthinkable.

able. They were also a mixture of Left Republicans to Communists, and so were willing to work with the Russians and the Anglo-Americans. Although the relationship between de Gaulle and the Allies was often stormy, he never doubted the importance they would play in liberating France. "We are acting in close cooperation with our Allies and particularly with the British Empire."<sup>21</sup> Rather than condemning England for having deserted France at Dunkirk, he commended England for "having faced Fate alone, with magnificent courage, in the darkest hour".<sup>22</sup> To the United States, he said, "What makes a great nation is not only vast resources, but also the courage to pledge all its power and to accept every sacrifice in the service of an ideal. You Americans are doing just that, for you are waging war".<sup>23</sup> Finally, the entry of the Soviet Union in 1941, which the Collaborators used to strengthen their assertion that Germany was a rampart against bolshevism, was seen by the Resistance as a great event. "Suffering France is with suffering Russia. Fighting France is with fighting Russia."<sup>24</sup>

Resistance ideology ran counter to nazism, but Resistance writings often played more on the traditional Germanophobia and on the humiliation France was suffering under the German occupation. France had been reduced to one-third of her size, Alsace had been completely taken over, inflation and shortages resulted from German requisitions, French soldiers remained in Prisoner-of-War camps, and after 1943 Frenchmen were forced into labor service,

deported, and repressed.

"It wasn't enough to see the Germans in Paris - there had to be Frenchmen to thank them",<sup>25</sup> wrote Père Duchesne. To the Resistance the worst humiliation came not from the Germans but from those Frenchmen ready to sacrifice France's honor by allowing the Germans to plunder France without protest. They saw through the Vichy gamble and knew that accepting defeat did not mean the end of France's suffering and trouble. The Germans were occupiers, not partners, and even if the best that could be done was to bargain with Germany to save what was left, the Vichy leaders were a disappointment because they could not accomplish what they had promised. De Gaulle accused the Vichy leaders of having "capitulated, yielding to panic, forgetting honor, delivering the land over to servitude".<sup>26</sup> Jean Paulhan wrote of Vichy leaders, "they are a lot of swine",<sup>27</sup> and France D'Abord described Laval as "the old jerk from Vichy with the Auvergnat, black teeth, white tie and all".<sup>28</sup> Resisters were aware that they were fighting Vichy as well as Germany. Défense de la France, an underground paper put out by university students, pointed out that France could not, without losing its honor, evade the "dreadful duty of war . . . The viels have fallen. The truth that Pétain had hoped to conceal stands out: to fight means freedom, to cringe means slavery."<sup>29</sup>

Freedom was among the fundamental principles that could not be sacrificed under any circumstances. The Resisters were ready to fight and die for their principles,



and even for smaller, seemingly "insignificant things like a song, a snap of the fingers, a smile".<sup>30</sup> Whether or not the struggle ended in victory, the protest had to be made. "You can squeeze a bee in your hand until it smothers", wrote Paulhan. "It will not smother without having stung you. It stings in vain, you say. Yes, it is in vain. But if it did not sting you, there would long ago have been no more bees."<sup>31</sup> In choosing freedom for humanity, and in having the courage to face possible death for their choice, resisters felt a renewed sense of personal freedom. Although they were hounded and persecuted, Marcel Fouch-Degliame, the editor of Combat, remembered feeling free from "the problems of everyday life in the same sense that, being outside organized society, all of society's objectives did not affect us very much".<sup>32</sup> Beyond that, Sartre felt that "we have never been so free as under the German occupation. We have lost every right, and above all the right of speech. . . . Because of this we were free. Since the Nazi venom penetrated our very thoughts, every true thought was a victory."<sup>33</sup> For Sartre, each individual resister had chosen, had decided what values were truly important to him, and the choice was genuine since it could always be expressed in terms of "better death than . . . "<sup>34</sup> Guéhenno agreed with Sartre that the Germans, "a tyrannical power, by attributing so much to our thoughts, obliges us to recognize how untoward and irrepressible they are. It gives us back to ourselves . . . Now they (our thoughts)

are going to begin to cost us something. That is good."<sup>35</sup>

Another fundamental principle was the defense of human dignity. For this reason, the deportations of the Jews aroused disgust and outrage. It was at this point that the official Catholic Church protested, in an address of the Cardinals and Archbishops of the Occupied Zone, to Marshal Pétain. "Profoundly moved by what is reported about the massive arrests of Jews carried out last week, and about the harsh treatment that was inflicted upon them, particularly at the Vélodrome d'Hiver, we can not suppress our conscience's outcry. It is in the name of humanity and Christian principles that our voices rise to protest for the imprescriptible rights of the human person."<sup>36</sup> The Cahiers de Témoignage Chrétien, a group formed to help Jewish children escape to Switzerland, put out a tract entitled, "France, Take Heed of Losing Your Soul". It warned Frenchmen about the insidious process beginning with the seduction of nazism as a rampart against bolshevism and a force for order, leading to a compromise by collaboration and ending with the total perversion and destruction of Christian values. It called upon the Christians of France to be prepared to suffer. "We will not stop opposing the triumph of Nazi principles whatever form they are clothed in . . . If some of the stones that hit Jesus touch us, don't be surprised. It proves we are with him. But above all, let us not join, let us never join, to save ourselves, with those who throw the stones."<sup>37</sup>

Those who resisted on moral grounds saw that the first step in the destruction of morality was allowing oneself to be compromised by allowing evil without protest. Défense de la France wrote, "To accept in silence the wrong that had been done you may be a sign of greatness of soul or of saintliness. But to allow evil to be done without protest . . . in the name of Christian charity or humaneness, is vile and hypocritical weakness."<sup>38</sup> As for Christian<sup>charity</sup>, the Radio Vatican reminded France in 1941, "There are times when one must not cede - when justice dominates charity because the charity that sacrifices justice is a bad charity."<sup>39</sup>

These principles even justified social disorder. To the collaborators, disorder and "terrorism" were the highest evil to be avoided at all costs, a primary motive for collaborating and for aiding the Germans in the repression of the Resistance. Marcel Fouch-Degliame, the editor of Combat, knew that "in general the establishment considered us extremely dangerous individuals. Really, they thought we were going to send France through fire and blood with ill-considered actions."<sup>40</sup> Most internal Resisters did not consider social disorder the highest evil, but felt rather that the loss of freedom, the humiliation of their country and its compromise to Nazi principles and policies justified disobedience and in some cases, killing.

Up to now I have spoken of the Resistance as a whole, and while there were broad areas of consensus and a simi-

larity of outlook, conflict and disagreement arose within the Resistance over both the means and the ends of their actions. All Resisters agreed that their primary concern and the immediate goal of all their actions was the liberation of France, but they disagreed as to the best way to go about this. Essentially, the split was between the external and the internal Resistance. Within France, the Resistance wished to "create a certain psychological climate around the Germans, to keep them in partial terror all the time, cutting telegraph wires and waiting for the Allies to land so we could blow up everything."<sup>41</sup>

In this group, the Communists were undoubtedly a "magnetic pole", as Jacques Duclos, the leader of the Communist Party during the occupation, put it. "We were fighters, whereas there were a lot of talkers."<sup>42</sup> Those who believed in direct immediate action wanted not only to terrorize the Germans, they also felt it was important for morale to keep themselves active. "Resistance is permanent guerilla warfare. Three guys intercepting a German convoy in a road, throwing three grenades, firing their machine guns, and disappearing into the countryside. And that was the only way, not only for training fighters, but for keeping them."<sup>43</sup>

De Gaulle and his followers, on the other hand, felt the price paid was too high, especially after the incidents in Nantes and Bordeaux, where over a hundred hostages were shot in retaliation for the assassination of a German officer. De Gaulle, in response to this inci-

dent, allowed that "it is both right and natural that Germans should be killed by Frenchmen . . . But there are tactics in war . . . My orders to those in occupied territory are, for the moment, not to kill Germans, for the good reason that it is too easy for the enemy to retaliate."<sup>44</sup>

This conflict over means led to a certain amount of distrust and tension. Jacques Duclos felt that "orders like that should not be obeyed".<sup>45</sup> The disagreement over aims created even more disaccord, particularly among the various political tendencies within the Resistance. All Resisters agreed that after the Liberation France would need radical reforms, that victory would not be complete without a renewed France. However, nobody, republicans included, wanted a return to the Third Republic. Le Populaire denied any claim that the Third Republic should be resuscitated after the war. "It gave itself up voluntarily to death."<sup>46</sup> Libération-Nord had "no tenderness for the scandalous pre-war assemblies that, one night, out of stupeur and shame, abandoned the Fatherland and the Republic to play the game of defeat's adventurers."<sup>47</sup> Philippe Vianny not only felt that the Third Republic had abdicated its powers, but that "France does not want any more 'miserables' . . . France needs new men."<sup>48</sup> Even Léon Blum wrote to de Gaulle that although the new French state should be a democracy, he did not want the restoration of prewar institutions. "Nothing could be further removed from our thoughts."<sup>49</sup>

Yet, unlike the collaborators, they did not condemn

the Republic for the defeat. "We will not admit", wrote Jean Gu  henno, "that France for these last fifty years has been so ugly and ignoble."<sup>50</sup> De Gaulle, in a Christmas message to the children of France, reassured them that "the enemy and his friends say that France deserved to be beaten. But the French nation is made up of your Fathers and Mothers, your brothers and sisters, and you, children, know very well they were not to blame."<sup>51</sup>

While all resisters believed that France would have to be rebuilt after the war, and that they would avoid returning the constitution or institutions of the Third Republic, sharp disagreement arose over exactly what form France should take after the war. It certainly would be unacceptable that "the terrible ordeal should leave standing a social and moral regime that played against the nation".<sup>52</sup> The Free French of the Interior, while admitting the need for reform, wanted to put off even discussion of aims until after the Liberation. "When a house is burning, that is not the time to reset the faulty foundation. First it is necessary to put out the fire that threatens to devour everything."<sup>53</sup>

De Gaulle set out his aims as three articles. Article One, to wage war, was the most important. Yet he also realized that "we cannot remain indifferent to the destiny which can and should be hers in the sphere of domestic politics . . . . Without any shadow of a doubt, when France emerges from her terrible ordeal, we shall witness a tremendous national revival. Need I say that

the Free French, of all people, could never wish to oppose such a transformation."<sup>54</sup> However, Article Two dealing with the transformation was rather vague. "The people must be allowed to choose for themselves as soon as circumstances make it possible to say freely what they want and what they will not tolerate."<sup>55</sup> The only other goals were Honor and Country, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and Article Three, Liberation, meaning not only the defeat of the enemy but also the establishment of conditions in which Frenchmen could live, work, and act in dignity and security.

The goals of both the internal and external Free French were vague because they were a secondary<sup>concern</sup> and because the Free French, in general career military men, were somewhat wary of the internal resistance's radicalism which was beyond their control. Among the more radical members of the Resistance disagreements arose over France's future. Most resisters agreed on political democracy based on universal suffrage, freedom of speech, press, and assembly, women's franchise, the inviolability of the home, and secrecy of correspondence, respect for the human person, and equality before the law. The primary source of conflict was France's economic future. The more radical movements, such as La Voix du Nord, called for action against the powerful capitalists who ran France without concern for the workers and sacrificed the nation's good for their narrow self-interests. La Revue Libre claimed that Hitler had dealt capitalism its

death blow and called for the destruction of its last vestiges. Franc-Tireur, a Communist paper, called for a constitutional affirmation of each individual's right to a part of the national income, the socialization of public services including banks and insurance, planned production, and social discipline imposed by a strong state.

Then there were those still on the Left, socialists and syndicalists, who still spoke of liberation from capitalist exploitation, yet did not call for the system's destruction but rather for its transformation. Libérer et Fédérer and Libération were both opposed to the centralization called for by the more radical resisters. Rather, they preferred economic and political life based on small units, communes or federations, that would govern themselves. Finally, in the Left-Center, were those who called for a continuation of the Revolution of 1798, more Equality, more Liberty, and more Fraternity. The Mouvement Unie de la Résistance (MUR), asserted that "the Resistance will not become an anticapitalist movement",<sup>56</sup> a decision only the people could make only after the Liberation.

The tension that had existed since the Thirties between the Socialists and the Communists erupted after the Socialists published a lengthy tract setting out their specific aims for postwar France. The Communists then put out detailed critique of the Socialist program, denouncing its vagueness and its failure to recognize that none of their aims, a decent wage for all, rational-



ized production, could be accomplished without liquidating trusts. The Socialists then published a defense of their original program, continuing a by now familiar quarrel.

Although this dissention was always just under the surface (anyone who carefully read the various tracts could discern that the groups had contradictory aims), open arguing like this was unusual, especially since the Communists did their best not to alarm their fellow resisters and stressed the unity needed to carry on the struggle. The Conseil National de la Résistance was formed to unite the various tendencies so as to coordinate their activities as the Liberation approached. A list of the groups it finally did include indicates the difficulty of the task: the Mouvement de Libération Nationale (included Combat, Franc-Tireur, Libération, France Au Combat, Défense de la France, Lorraine, and Résistance), La Front Nationale, L'Organisation Civile et Militaire, Libération-Nord, Ceux de la Résistance, La Confédération Générale de Travail, la Confédération Française de Travailleurs Chrétiens, le Parti Communiste, le Parti Socialiste, le Parti Républicaine-Radicale et Radicale-Socialiste, le Parti Démocrate Populaire, l'Alliance Démocratique, and the Fédération Républicaine.

In March, 1944, they were able to publish a common program of political democracy, liberty, suffrage, and also set out various economic goals: the eviction of large economic feudalities from the direction of the

economy, rational economic organization which would assure the subordination of particular interests to the general interest, the intensification of national production according to a plan drawn up by the state in consultation with representatives of production, a return to the nation of the monopolized means of production, the fruits of common work, energy sources, and underground resources, insurance companies and large banks, the development of agricultural and trade co-operatives, the right of access to management of industry to qualified workers and their participation in economic direction, social security, the reconstitution of unions and syndicates, a minimum wage, and allocations for the victims of fascist terror.<sup>57</sup>

The goals were fairly general and left out how these changes were to be accomplished, yet considering the range of movements included and the variety of opinions among them, this program represented a miracle of compromise. While this union was not likely to survive past the Liberation, all resisters of whatever political or religious tendency agreed on "this single idea that made it possible for us all to work with each other in spite of everything, we were all agreed on getting rid of Germany and nazism."<sup>58</sup> The similarities among them overrode their differences. More importantly, they all knew, while they believed liberation alone was not enough, that fighting among themselves would only lead to their own destruction. Labaume, a Catholic priest and resister, described the situation as "a river in torrent, where there are

pebbles, pieces of wood, paper, all of that, yet they all flow in the same direction even though they are not the same. And it was a bit like that."<sup>59</sup> Another attenuating factor in the disputes was that the rank-and-file membership of each group cut across party affiliations. Those who strongly wanted to act joined whatever movement they found and stuck with it, pretty much ignoring the quarrels of their leaders. Most resisters did not even differentiate between the English services and those of the Free French.

A final unifying factor was the symbol of de Gaulle. Every Resistance<sup>movement</sup> eventually adopted de Gaulle as their ultimate leader because they realized his symbolic importance. Léon Blum in 1942 wrote, "I believe, for myself, entirely and firmly in the integrity and the loyalty of the General. I trust in him."<sup>60</sup> Combat described him as "the one who refused to lay down his arms, the one who saved honor and kept his word, the one whose example gave the French the confidence and the energy that animated them, the one who represents fighting France, eternal France."<sup>61</sup> The Socialists agreed. "For us, General de Gaulle is the natural and necessary symbol of the Resistance and the Liberation."<sup>62</sup> Libération-Sud was also for de Gaulle, "not for reasons of clan or interest but because he knew how to create in France the union of French patriots against the foreign invasion."<sup>63</sup> Because de Gaulle was "the rock in the tempest upon which all French contradictions dashed themselves into a Least

Common Denominator",<sup>64</sup> he represented a new force in French politics. He was able to unite not only the Resistance but eventually drew the support of conservative social forces that saw in him hope for avoiding anarchy. De Gaulle was a legend, a miracle man, able to insure France a place in the Allied Camp and to keep the internal contradictions and quarrels from destroying France.

Overcoming these internal fragmentations, even temporarily, was one significant achievement of the Resistance, a movement whose accomplishments are difficult to measure. Their military contributions, how much they were able to slow down the Germans, the importance of the information they sent to the Allies, to what extent they diverted German divisions during D-Day, were really of minor importance. In these terms the war ran its course without the Resistance having much effect. Their papers and tracts were more significant as they let people within and outside of France know there was active opposition to the Germans and to Vichy, and also to some extent counteracted the ubiquitous collaborationist and fascist propaganda. Yet even their papers reached, according to Paxton, not more than ten percent of the population. The Resistance did bequeath to France important post-war leaders, allowed France to be represented as an Allied power, and to set up her own provisional government. Finally, the Resistance changed the lives of those who participated in it; they left with a sense of dignity and self-worth. That they kept hope alive proved to be

a legacy for the future. The Resistance's most profound impact was this moral significance. It proved that there were people ready to fight and even die to save France, to preserve liberty, to protest for the respect of human dignity, and even for "a song, a snap of the fingers, a smile".

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Charles de Gaulle, The Speeches of General de Gaulle, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup>Henri Michel, Histoire de la Résistance en France, Que Sais-je? 429. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950), p. 37.

<sup>3</sup>Robert O. Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944, (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), pp. 294-5.

<sup>4</sup>Marcel Ophuls, The Sorrow and the Pity, filmscript trans. Miraille Johnston, (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1972), p. 109.

<sup>5</sup>A. J. Liebling, ed., The Republic of Silence, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1947), p. 160.

<sup>6</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 104-105.

<sup>8</sup>Germaine Brée and George Bernauer, eds., Defeat and Beyond: An Anthology of French Wartime Writing, 1940-1945, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p. 197.

<sup>9</sup>Henri Michel, "The Psychology of the French Resister", The Journal of Contemporary History, V, no. 3, (1970), p. 175.

<sup>10</sup>Germaine Brée and George Bernauer, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>11</sup>A. J. Liebling, op. cit., pp. 214-215.

<sup>12</sup>Henri Michel, "The Psychology of the French Resister", p. 174.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 159.

<sup>14</sup>A. J. Liebling, op. cit., p. 159.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 385-386.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 159.

- <sup>21</sup>Charles de Gaulle, op. cit., p. 98.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 98.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 140.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 125-126.
- <sup>25</sup>A. J. Liebling, op. cit., p. 368.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 94.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 183.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 272.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 30430.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 184.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 184.
- <sup>32</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., p. 19.
- <sup>33</sup>Germaine Brée and George Bernauer, op. cit., p. 331.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 332.
- <sup>35</sup>A. J. Liebling, op. cit., p. 165.
- <sup>36</sup>De la Résistance à la Révolution: Anthologie de la Presse clandestine française, (Neuchâtel: Editions de la Baconnière, 1945), p. 51.
- <sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 40.
- <sup>38</sup>A. J. Liebling, op. cit., p. 431.
- <sup>39</sup>De la Résistance à la Révolution, p. 40.
- <sup>40</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., p. 121.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 113.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 119.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 123.
- <sup>44</sup>Charles de Gaulle, op. cit., p. 87.
- <sup>45</sup>Marcel Ophuls, op. cit., p. 123.
- <sup>46</sup>Henri Michel et Boris Mirkine-Guetzévitch, Les Idées Politiques et Sociales de la Résistance, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), pp. 82-83.

- <sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 81.
- <sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 83.
- <sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 82.
- <sup>50</sup>A. J. Liebling, op. cit., p. 165.
- <sup>51</sup>Charles de Gaulle, op. cit., p. 113.
- <sup>52</sup>Henri Michel and Boris Mirkine-Guetzevitch, op. cit., p. 141.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 5.
- <sup>54</sup>Charles de Gaulle, op. cit., pp. 98-100.
- <sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 101.
- <sup>56</sup>Henri Michel and Boris Mirkine-Guetzevitch, op. cit., p. 146.
- <sup>57</sup>Ibid., pp. 216-217.
- <sup>58</sup>L'Abbé Labaume, Tours, France, May 9, 1978.
- <sup>59</sup>L'Abbé Labaume.
- <sup>60</sup>Henri Michel and Boris Mirkine-Guetzevitch, op. cit., p. 124.
- <sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 125.
- <sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 125.
- <sup>63</sup>Ibid., pp. 127-128.
- <sup>64</sup>Henri Michel, "The Psychology of the French Resister", p. 174.
- <sup>65</sup>Robert O. Paxton, op. cit., p. 295.



## CONCLUSION

The French responded to the Occupation of France in three ways. The collaborators, traditional rightists, decided that France's best option was to work with the Germans, to make the best of the situation and perhaps even to profit from it by becoming Germany's partner in a European bloc. Because France had been defeated and occupied by Germany, a certain amount of collaboration was inevitable. Yet French collaboration went far beyond this minimum. Collaborators intended to make use of the defeat to remake France, and were able to go as far as they did in this respect only because they were not opposed by the majority of the French people. These people chose not to become actively involved and simply allowed events to run their course. Because of the existence of a French state whose legitimacy derived from the French Constituent Assembly, rather than from appointment by the Germans, the majority of the people were led into complicity with programs and policies, in particular deportation, of which they would never have approved under normal circumstances. But the French people as a whole were not held responsible for their nation's crimes. They denied any association with the collaborators and identified, rather, with the Resisters. This third group refused to accept the defeat, and considered that the rebuilding of France could only happen after the Liberation from German occupation. They considered working

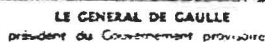
with Germany under any circumstances a compromise of France's honor.

By identifying only with the Resistance, the French peoples' selective rewriting of their own and their nation's past has prevented them from examining what amounted to their passive collaboration. Though we may find this an unattractive way of dealing with such a demoralizing and disordered time, it has been the French peoples' way of putting the war behind them and being able to look toward the future. Recent scholarship has attempted to recapture the true nature of events, but the French people's real catharsis has not yet occurred.

La France  
a perdu une ba-  
taille, elle n'a  
pas perdu la  
guerre ».

VENREDI 1<sup>er</sup> ET SAMEDI 2 SEPTEMBRE 1944

LE GOUVERNEMENT  
PROVISOIRE  
DE LA REPUBLIQUE  
FRANCAISE  
REJOINT PARIS

[illegible]

## A NOS LECTEURS

Depuis quatre ans la presse française était musclée. Aujourd'hui nous sommes revenus sous le régime de la liberté. Une tribune libre est mise à la disposition des membres du Comité départemental de libération. C'est « La Nouvelle République du Centre-Ouest » dont nous avons le plaisir et la joie de présenter le premier numéro à la population de la région.

Baroness, 187 — Pendant  
soute la portière d'hiver, depuis  
l'acier jusqu'à la poutre, une  
laine ou le plus grand des  
isolateurs. Barre et pour des  
lignes de la poutre, une barre  
de fer.

Le premier ministre a refusé de donner un avis sur la proposition de loi. Il a déclaré qu'il s'agit d'une question de politique intérieure et qu'il ne faut pas se prononcer sur elle.

TOURS, cité martyre, capitale traditionnelle de la FRANCE aux heures d'adversités de son histoire nationale, est enfin délivrée de quatre années de souffrance et d'oppression. Bientôt la Touraine sera libérée tout entière.

L'esprit de la résistance a vaincu la trahison. Qu'hommage soit rendu aux morts, aux déportés, aux prisonniers, aux absents, à toutes les victimes d'une Allemagne déshonorée et cruelle.

Une République nouvelle, conçue dans la douleur, se recrée dans l'espérance d'un avenir

l'assura à partir d'aujourd'hui, l'administration du département d'Indre-et-Loire innove de la confiance de mes camarades de la Résistance et du Gouvernement, de la République, que proude le Général de Gaulle, chef populaire de la patrie française. Je suis convaincu que cette confiance et de remplir une mission, celle de donner l'absolu de maintenir l'ordre et la discipline, sans garantir d'une liberté retrouvée au prix de tant de sacrifices et de souffrances.

Cette liberté disciplinaire est le témoignage de notre dignité française et humaine, de notre passion de fraternelle égalité, inspirée par le sentiment de notre grandeur.

La Touraine sera digne de ses traditions : je compte sur elle avec la foi du croyant dans les destinées éternelles de la Patrie.

Vive la Cause !      Vive la République !      Vive la France !  
Le Printemps : Robert VIVIER

TOURS est libérée ! mais la guerre continue. La plus grande discipline est nécessaire. Nous demandons à tous de faire confiance aux hommes que le Gouvernement de la République a chargés de l'Administration de la Ville et du Département.

Nous comprenons l'enthousiasme qu'a manifesté la Population après quatre années d'oppression. Mais nous devons aujourd'hui faire un pressant appel à la sagesse pour qu'elle observe strictement les mesures suivantes :

- On observe strictement les mesures suivantes :
1. Maintien du couvre-feu de 22 h à 5 heures jusqu'à nouvel ordre ;
  2. En raison des possibilités de bombardement :
    - a) éviter tout attroupement ;
    - b) aux premières explosions s'agiter les bras ;
  3. Les F.F.I. en liaison avec la Police et la Gendarmerie. **TOUS MUNIS DU BRASSARD OFFICIEL**, ont reçu des instructions formelles pour exprimer toute tourmente de passage et de ordre ;
  4. Le port de **TOUT BRASSARD** autre que le brassard officiel est formellement interdit ;
  5. Les dispositions existantes, en ce qui concerne le Ravitaillement, restent en vigueur jusqu'à décision ultérieure ;
  6. Toutes les entreprises privées doivent continuer leur activité ou la reprendre immédiatement ;
  7. Pour des raisons de ravitaillement, le retour des habitants restés ne devra se faire conformément aux avis qui seront donnés par les Autorités.

Vive de Gaulle !                      Vive la République !                      Vive la France !  
Le préfet : R. VIVIER                      Le maire : Jean MEUNIER

Paris, 12 mai. — Suite du mouvement Nord-Ouest de la France : les Allemands ont pris toute l'extension du sud en pleine déroute. Les troupes alliées ont fait 12 heures et ont atteint

## LA FRONTIERE ITALIENNE

**LE MOT D'ORDRE :**

« Le ravitaillement  
des agglomérations parisiennes »

## 120 RAMPES

de lancement de torpilles  
volantes aux mains des Alliés.  
En outre, par ce bon heu-  
reux matin, les Allemands  
ont envoyé contre le sud de la  
Grande mer un certain nom-  
bre de torpilles volantes qui  
ont causé quelques dégâts et  
quelques victimes.

Les troupes de lancement de  
torpilles volantes ne peuvent  
plus opérer en raison de  
l'absence des Alliés entre la  
mer et la montagne.

**LES TROUPES  
DU MARÉCHAL TITO  
PROGRESSENT AU NORD  
DE BELGRADE**

Enfin, les nouvelles troupes du maréchal Tito s'avancent au nord de Belgrade.

Depuis 1942, trois policiers préparaient la libération de la capitale

Le lendemain, les élèves de 3<sup>e</sup> ont rejoint à la gare de Flers les 100 réfugiés de la région de Metz. Ils ont été accueillis par les membres du conseil municipal de Flers, par les habitants de la ville, par les membres de la paroisse. Les réfugiés ont été répartis dans les familles de la ville. Les réfugiés ont été répartis dans les familles de la ville. Les réfugiés ont été répartis dans les familles de la ville.

At the time of the investigation, the defendant was in the custody of the St. Louis Police Department. The defendant was arrested on a warrant issued by the St. Louis Police Department on 10/10/68. The defendant was arrested on a warrant issued by the St. Louis Police Department on 10/10/68. The defendant was arrested on a warrant issued by the St. Louis Police Department on 10/10/68.

U.S. representatives in parliament  
are not members of the House  
of Representatives. They are  
members of the Senate.

LE GENERAL  
MONTGOMERY  
NOMME  
MARÉCHAL

Washington, 1<sup>er</sup> — Le général Montgomery, commandant en chef des forces interarmées, vient d'être nommé maréchal.

LES FORCES ALLIEES  
SONT EN AVANCE  
DE CINQ JOURS  
SUR LEUR HORAIRE

Confes, 17. — Au cours d'une conférence de presse, le général commandant les forces alliées a fait connaître que les Allemands étaient en avance de 30 jours dans l'occupation du pays qui avait été classé dans l'Allemagne. La victoire de la région de Caracalla est prévue pour le 15 mai. Chaque matin de terrain dans la Caen vers 10 kilomètres gagnés ailleurs.

La décision allemande de rester en Normandie a particulièrement couru aux Allemands.

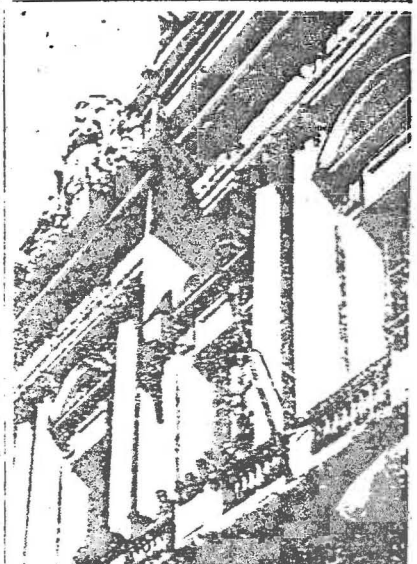
### Les pertes allemandes depuis le 6 juin

Londres, 17. — Les pertes allemandes s'élevaient maintenant à plus de 600.000 hommes, entre le 6 juin et le 31 mai. Les Allemands ont perdus en outre 35.000 avions, 1.000 chars, 20.000 canons et 250 caïques.

Les Alliés ont saisi 300 milliers de guerre allemands de toutes catégories.

**LE MOT D'ORDRE :**

« Le ravitaillement des régions dévastées et des agglomérations parisiennes et tourangelles doit être assuré à tout prix ».



Le drapeau nicaraguois flotte sur l'Hôtel de V...

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