

● PSF FRANCE 1942

WM

*file  
secret*

PLAIN

Ottawa,

Dated January 10, 1942

Rec'd 2:18 a.m., 11th

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

7, January 10, 5 p.m.

My 6, January 8, 1 p.m.

Cable from St. Pierre dated January 10 to Canadian press carries another interview with Vice Admiral Huselier in which he is quoted as follows:

"The leader of the occupying force said he did not believe a report from Washington which said that the Free French would withdraw from the islands." "I do not believe" he said "but in case any one still remains in doubt as to my position I am glad to repeat what I have said before 'here we are and here we shall remain'." "I am not looking for any opportunity to withdraw from this position under circumstances that will save us from embarrassment, we did not come here frivolously or without due regard for the seriousness of the step.

"If, for the sake of making the point clear, we should withdraw who could remain the vote in favor

-2- #7, January 10, 5 p.m., from Ottawa.

favor of the Vichy policy of collaboration with the Axis was exactly 14 persons, they of course would remain the others could not expect to live in peace and security after the offense against Vichy which they have committed for their own preservation they should get out too.

"If the Free French naval forces should be driven out then I suggest that the NORMANDIE be sent here to take off the civilian anti-Vichyites, no similar vessel would be sufficient and I am sure the NORMANDIE would be very well received indeed.

"But the embarrassment in that case, I would remind the world, would not be that of the routed Free French forces it would belong properly to those who say they are fighting for democracy elsewhere but who had placed themselves indelibly on record here as against it."

KOFFAT

KLP



*file: confidential*

France Folder  
1-42

EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL POUCH

Vichy, January 12, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

Your personal letters of greetings to the Marshal and to the General arrived today by courier from Lisbon together with oral instructions brought by Mr. Matthews from Washington in regard to certain contingencies.

There is at the present moment no indication that any of the contingencies will arise in the immediate future, but they are a possibility at any time and a definite probability at some time before this changeable political status is stabilized.

It does not seem possible for me personally to see your friend the General without attracting unfavorable attention to him as I am constantly under surveillance and everybody with whom I associate is suspected of something.

We will however arrange to deliver your message and your greetings.

I am sending this acknowledgment of receipt without waiting for any opportunity to make delivery because the courier is leaving at once on his return journey to Lisbon.

Yesterday at a very pleasant "tea" party with some of my Latin American colleagues I received the following information, which may or may not have any substantial basis of truth.

(1) The Brazilian Embassy here has information (probably from the Spanish Ambassador with whom they are on terms of intimate friendship) that General Franco has asked Germany to take no action whatever toward a movement through Spain until after the adjournment of the pending Conference in Rio de Janeiro.

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

(2) The Mexican Minister here, General Aguilar, who was once one of Villa's gun men, and who has together with some faults the virtues of energy and determination, told me that he is not informed as to whether or not it would at the present time be advantageous to the common cause for Mexico to join us in formally declaring war on the Axis, but that if I can unofficially tell him it would be advantageous to the United States he will be happy to use his "considerable influence in Mexico" to induce his country to declare war. I do not know whether or not he has "considerable influence", but I do know that he has courage of his convictions and more than considerable initiative.

He was one time Minister to Japan and he said that declaring Manila on "open city" was an error because, first it would have no deterrent effect on Japanese barbarity and, second Japan will use it to prevent the bombardment of Japanese cities.

He says that the manufacture of war material in Japan is largely accomplished at night in the residences of the workmen and that the destruction of almost any civilian residence in Japan will directly effect the actual production of war material. He said: "In fighting with Japanese savages all previously accepted rules of warfare must be abandoned."

We have distributed an accurate French translation of your message to the Congress to appropriate officials and to Frenchmen who might profit therefrom. The Marshal told me that he read it with much interest.

French papers have published only extracts that are skillfully designed to conceal the certainty of victory that fills the original text. It is hoped however that the news will get around to a lot of people including the Fuhrer.

I hope to arrange to see the Marshal in the next day or two with the purpose of delivering your note addressed to him.

Most respectfully,

*William Leahy* -

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  

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THE SECRETARY

January 13, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I enclose as of interest  
copies of a memorandum and  
despatch regarding certain  
views expressed by General  
Weygand.

*file  
Confidential*

*[Faint, mostly illegible typed text follows, appearing to be the content of the memorandum and despatch mentioned in the cover letter.]*

Department of State

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

December 17, 1941.

A-A  
Mr. Acheson:

A-B  
Mr. Berle:

U  
Mr. Welles:

Under cover of a despatch dated November 18, 1941, Mr. Murphy has forwarded a copy of a memorandum on French policy which General Weygand intended to present to the Council of Ministers on the occasion of his final visit to Vichy. This memorandum, which reveals Weygnad's own views, makes the following points, in summary:

1) After the conclusion of the Franco-German armistice in June 1940, the French Empire was the sole "trump card" remaining to France as a protection against "the abuses which the Reich imposes upon all European peoples".

2) To retain this protection, it was essential to maintain the Empire intact and loyal to the French Government, to guard it against dissident elements, against foreign attack and against German infiltration. Otherwise, France would be as much at the mercy of the conqueror as Poland and Greece. It was with this idea in mind that General Weygand went to Africa, and he asserts that he was successful in maintaining the loyalty of the African Empire.

3) In addition to protecting the Empire, the General also took advantage of an opportunity to conclude an economic accord with the United States. Although German and British opposition prevented this accord from having all the economic results which could have been hoped for, it served an important political purpose in enabling France to retain contact with the United States, "a power which, in any event, will be one of the arbiters of the situation at the end of the war".

4) At

4) At the present time the Germans are not having much success either in the Battle of the Atlantic or in Russia. American intervention becomes more pronounced. The war is likely to be long. Germany this winter will probably be driven to seek control of the Mediterranean in order to organize Europe for conflict of indefinite length. France must continue to preserve her African Empire from German control, since ... "By resisting Germany we might aggravate the conditions of a severe Armistice, but we would leave ourselves the possibility of action which can only improve with time. Opening Africa to Germany means in the last analysis giving to Germany a unique opportunity to be able to continue the war during ten years and to impose without the possibility of any reaction its will upon France."

Wallace Murray

(COPY:LIS:Eu)  
(COMPARED ✓rc)

No. 1000.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Algiers, Algeria, November 18, 1941.

AIRMAIL

Subject: Visit of General Weygand to Vichy.

THE HONORABLE  
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,  
WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to enclose, in original and translation, a copy of a memorandum on the subject of French policy taken by General Weygand to Vichy. He planned to read this statement of his conception of what French general policy should be, with particular regard to French Africa, to the Council of Ministers at Vichy during the course of his present visit.

The Department will find the enclosure, I am sure, an interesting resume of the current views of General Weygand which are shared by some of his associates.

Respectfully yours,

ROBERT D. MURPHY

Robert D. Murphy  
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure:  
Memorandum  
Translation of same

In single copy to the Department  
Copy to Embassy at Vichy

800  
RDM.sdh

(COPY: LIS:Eu)  
(COMPARED VRC)

COPY

NOTE

A l'époque où j'ai pris les fonctions de Délégué Général du Gouvernement en Afrique Française, la situation internationale se trouvait dominée par un fait dont l'importance devait s'avérer capitale pour la conduite de la politique française. Je veux parler de l'échec de l'offensive aérienne allemande contre les Iles Britanniques qui présageait la prolongation du conflit et, sans doute, l'impossibilité pour le Reich de mettre jamais à genoux les puissances anglo-saxonnes.

Dans ces conditions, la position de la France vaincue se valorisait soudainement par le fait que l'Armistice conclu sur ma demande lui avait laissé la garde de son Empire. La France redevenait du coup maîtresse d'un facteur important pour l'issue du conflit et les positions stratégiques sous son contrôle constituaient un atout essentiel dans la situation diplomatique générale. L'importance en était soulignée par l'intérêt que lui portaient soudain les propagandes étrangères.

Ces propagandes, je les ai combattues de tout mon pouvoir.

Le rôle de l'Empire, selon moi, devait être de protéger la Métropole contre les sévices que le Reich impose à tous les peuples de l'Europe. Cette protection ne pouvait s'exercer que si la France gardait intangibles ses territoires. Il fallait que la France les gardât contre la dissidence ou les attaques de l'étranger. C'était mon rôle et je ne crains pas de dire que le loyalisme de l'Afrique Française est aujourd'hui plus fort que jamais.

Il fallait également que la France gardât ses territoires contre les infiltrations allemandes. C'était la tâche du Gouvernement. Tout contrôle du Reich sur notre Empire enlève à la France l'atout que l'Armistice lui a laissé. Il la met à la merci du vainqueur au même titre que la Pologne ou la Grèce.

Au début de l'année en cours, les Etats-Unis nous offraient un accord de ravitaillement qui n'a pas donné tous les résultats économiques que nous pouvions en attendre en raison de l'opposition de la Grande-Bretagne

(saisie

(saisie du SHEHERAZADE, réduction de nos demandes de produits pétroliers) et de l'Allemagne (opposition au départ de nos navires, refus d'accepter les propositions permettant d'augmenter le nombre de nos cargos, opposition au contrôle par les consuls américains de la non-réexportation des produits pétroliers, etc....)

Mais au point de vue politique, cet accord présentait un avantage considérable. La France, grâce à son Empire, restait la seule puissance d'Europe ayant gardé des rapports économiques avec les Etats-Unis. Tant que le contrôle de la France sur ses territoires n'était pas menacé, les anglo-saxons les respectaient.

Ainsi, à la tâche de protection contre le vainqueur que j'avais comprise pour l'Empire, s'ajoutait une autre possibilité: celle de maintenir des contacts économiques et politiques cordiaux avec une puissance qui, en tout état de cause, sera l'un des arbitres de la situation à la fin du conflit.

L'évolution de la situation en 1941 n'a fait que confirmer l'importance grandissante de l'Afrique Française. La bataille de l'Atlantique ne s'achève pas par un succès définitif de l'Allemagne. L'intervention Américaine se précise de plus en plus et aujourd'hui, l'amendement de la loi de neutralité est chose faite. L'Allemagne, par contre, marque des points en Russie. Tout annonce que la bataille de cet hiver sera celle de la Méditerranée, la possession de cette voie maritime étant indispensable à l'Allemagne pour transporter les matières premières de l'Est vers l'Ouest. L'organisation de l'Europe allemande ne peut se faire sans la maîtrise d'une voie de communication maritime, la Méditerranée.

Ouvrir l'Afrique Française à l'Allemagne c'est assurer à celle-ci la possibilité d'organiser le continent. C'est aussi priver la France de la position stratégique clef pour l'issue du conflit. C'est faire courir à cet Empire le risque de devenir le champ de bataille entre les deux antagonistes. C'est aggraver, par notre renoncement, les conditions d'un armistice sévère, mais qui nous laissait des possibilités d'action qui n'ont fait que s'améliorer avec le temps. C'est enfin donner à l'Allemagne une chance unique de pouvoir continuer la guerre pendant dix ans et d'imposer sans possibilité de réaction sa volonté à la France.

Alger, 15 Novembre 1941

TRANSLATION

M E M O R A N D U M

When I undertook the functions of Delegate General of the Government in French Africa, the international situation was dominated by a fact, the importance of which would of necessity be capital in the conduct of French policy. I speak of the failure of the German air offensive against the British Isles which presaged a prolongation of the war and, without doubt, the incapacity of the German Reich to bring the Anglo-Saxon powers to their knees.

Under those circumstances, the position of vanquished France suddenly took on a new value by reason of the fact that the Armistice concluded on my request permitted to France the control of its Empire. With one stroke France again became master of an important factor in the outcome of the war, and the strategic positions in its control became a trump essential in the general diplomatic situation. The importance thereof was emphasized by the general interest which was shown therein by foreign propaganda.

I fought this propaganda to the best of my ability.

In my opinion, the role of the Empire should be the protection of metropolitan France against abuses which the Reich imposes upon all European peoples. This protection cannot be exercised if France does not retain its territories intact. France must guard its territories against dissident movements or foreign attack. That was my role and I do not fear to say that the loyalty of French Africa today is stronger than ever.

It was necessary also that France guard its territories against German infiltration. That was the duty of the Government. Control by the Reich of affairs in our Empire deprives France of the trump which the Armistice left it. Such control places France at the mercy of the conqueror just as in the case of Poland and Greece.

At the beginning of the present year, the United States offered us an economic accord which has not given all the economic results for which we could have hoped because of British opposition (seizure of the SHEHERAZADE, reduction of our requests for petroleum products), and that of Germany (opposition to the departure of our ships, refusal to accept propositions permitting an increase in the number of merchant

ships

ships engaged in this traffic, opposition to the control by American consular officers of the exportation of petroleum products, etc.).

But, from the political point of view, this accord offered an important advantage. France, thanks to its Empire, remained the only European power retaining its economic relations with the United States. As long as French control of its territories was not threatened, the Anglo-Saxons respected it.

Thus, in addition to the duty, as I understood it, of protecting the Empire against the conqueror, there was added a further possibility, that of maintaining cordial economic and political contact with a power which, in any event, will be one of the arbiters of the situation at the end of the war.

The evolution of the situation in 1941 only confirms the growing importance of French Africa. The battle of the Atlantic does not develop into a German success. American intervention is growing more defined, and today the amendment of the Neutrality Act is an accomplished fact. Germany, on the other hand, marks time in Russia. Everything indicates that the battle this winter will be that of the Mediterranean, as the possession of that waterway will be indispensable to Germany for the transport of raw products from East to West. The organization of Germanized Europe is impossible without control of this important maritime highway, the Mediterranean.

To open French Africa to Germany is to assure to the latter the possibility of organizing the continent of Europe. It would also mean that France would be deprived of a strategic position - the key for the final issue of the war. It would cause the Empire to run the risk of becoming a battlefield between the two opponents. By resisting Germany we might aggravate the conditions of a severe Armistice, but we would leave ourselves the possibilities of action which can only improve with time. Opening Africa to Germany means in the last analysis giving to Germany a unique opportunity to be able to continue the war during ten years and to impose without the possibility of any reaction its will upon France.

France Folder  
1-42

OK  
JPK

January 20, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

I think it would be an excellent idea to send this message just as it is.

I have had the message typed up as a telegram just as you drafted it and if you approve, I shall have it sent off forthwith.

G. H.

Published in

Foreign Relations of the United States

1942 Vol 11 (France) Europe

Pages 123 -124

MEMORANDUM FOR THE

DATE JAN - 20 1942  
FROM THE AMERICAN EMBASSY  
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
100-100000-100000

January 20, 1942

AMERICAN EMBASSY,  
VICHY, (FRANCE).

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

The President has asked me to send you the following message:

QUOTE Dear Bill:

Here are some thoughts which you could use if the occasion offered -- either with Marshal Petain or General Weygand.

(1). It is most important for the French Government and the French people to realize that the President of the United States is about the best friend they have; that one of his greatest wishes is to see France reconstituted in the post-war period in accordance with its splendid position in history.

(2). The word 'France' in the mind of the President includes the French Colonial Empire.

(3). The attack on the United States and the declaration of war must make the French Government and people realize that any act on their part either at home or in

the Colonies which would give aid and comfort to the Germans or Italians must, of necessity, help the Germans and hurt the United States. The United States could not, of course, take such a hostile act lying down. That is just common sense which the French should realize.

(4). Now that the United States is in the war, it should be perfectly clear to the French Government and the French people that if Germany or Italy attacked unoccupied France or any of the French Colonies, in any way, the President could not regard acquiescence to such an attack as anything else than playing the German game.

(5). On the other hand, resistance by the French against Germany or Italian attack either in France itself or in any part of the Colonial Empire would be regarded by the President as a normal and natural reaction. Such resistance would have not only the moral support of the United States, but it would also have the physical support of the United States by every possible military and naval assistance we could bring to bear.

-3-

The above seems to me almost like a primer because  
it is wholly logical and wholly simple. F.D.R. UNQUOTE

HULL

S GWR:MA

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 20, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR

CORDELL HULL:

What would you think of my  
sending the enclosed to Leahy?

F.D.R.

January 20, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL LEAHY:

Dear Bill:

Here are some thoughts which you could use if the occasion offered -- either with Marshal Petain or General Weygand.

- (1). It is most important for the French Government and the French people to realize that the President of the United States is about the best friend they have; that one of his greatest wishes is to see France reconstituted in the post-war period in accordance with its splendid position in history.
- (2). The word "France" in the mind of the President includes the French Colonial Empire.
- (3). The attack on the United States and the declaration of war must make the French Government and people realize that any act on their part either at home or in the Colonies which would give aid and comfort to the Germans or Italians must, of necessity, help the Germans and hurt the United States. The United States could not, of course, take such a hostile act lying down. That is just common sense which the French should realize.
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The above seems to me almost like a primer because it is wholly logical and wholly simple.

F.D.R.

TELEGRAM

The White House  
Washington

February 2 1942

*St Pierre-Miquelon Files  
11-42 file  
Confid*

My dear President:

I am sending you in accompanying memorandum a proposal disposing of the St Pierre - Miquelon seizure by the Free French until after the war. I think you will readily grasp all phases of this proposal.

What I am writing you about primarily is the probable repercussions from Vichy when this matter is made public a few days hence, either by the British foreign office or by De Gaulle, regardless of whether privacy is urged by us or not. The Vichy situation is becoming more acute from different angles, and I feel that I should call to your attention the real probabilities of serious deteriorations occurring there in relation to the questions of the French navy, Mediterranean bases, North Africa etc. And yet there is no other course that we can take at this time.

In connection with these probable developments, we are considering recommending to you that Admiral Leahy be called back for conference.

Sincerely yours,

Cordell Hull.

TELEGRAM

The White House  
Washington

February 2 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I refer to your memorandum of January 26 on the subject of the St Pierre-Miquelon occupation.

In view of the fact that certain policies and obligations of this government relating to the war situation were materially affected on both sides of the Atlantic by the unexpected occupation of the St Pierre-Miquelon islands by Free French naval forces on December 24, 1941, this government proceeded, in a spirit of friendly cooperation with the British and Canadian governments, to seek a settlement which could be found acceptable by all concerned. This government suggested a broad basic proposal, a copy of which is hereto attached. This proposal was in line with the policy we have continuously pursued to the present time --- that of holding the Vichy government to its assurances regarding the French fleet, the North African bases, and French colonial possessions.

As you will recall, Prime Minister Churchill agreed in general with you and with me on this suggested proposal, conditional upon his ability to secure the approval of General de Gaulle. It now appears that Prime Minister Churchill was not able to obtain General de Gaulle's accord. The draft formula substituted by Mr. Churchill, referred to in his telegram to you, would not be of assistance to us in holding the Vichy government to its assurances, nor would it appear to be acceptable to that government.

ТЕЛЕГРАМ  
TELEGRAM

The White House  
Washington

--2--

In view of the failure to achieve a general satisfactory settlement which would conform with the policies and obligations of this government on both sides of the Atlantic, and in view of the paramount importance of furthering unity and harmony in the maximum cooperative war effort with Great Britain, Canada, and the other United Nations, I recommend that further negotiations or discussions of the matter be postponed for the period of the war.

C. H.

TELEGRAM

The White House  
Washington

January 8, 1942

SUGGESTED PROPOSAL FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE ST PIERRE-  
MIQUELON SITUATION.

1. The islands are French and will remain French.
2. To avoid any potential threat to the shipping of the governments concerned, the use of the wireless stations on the islands will be subject to the supervision and control by observers appointed by the American and Canadian governments and attached to their respective consulates.
3. The islands shall be neutralized and demilitarized and shall be considered out of the war.
4. The present administrator shall be withdrawn for the period of the war; the appointment of an administrator shall be withheld for the same period, and the administration of the islands shall be left in the hands of the Consultative Council.
5. All armed forces will be withdrawn.
6. The Canadian and American governments agree and undertake to continue economic assistance to the inhabitants of the islands and the respective consuls of those countries will confer with the local authorities as to the nature of the assistance to be given. Arrangements are being made both to continue the supplies from the United States and Canada on which the islands are dependent and to provide the seasonal supply of fish to the French inhabitants of Martinique.

(end)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
THE SECRETARY

by  
2/2/42  
3:20 pm

Hon. Rudolph Forster

URGENT  
DELIVERY

=====

PSF 2  
France St Pierre-Miquelon  
Fielder



THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

February 2, 1942.

Sincerely yours,

My dear Mr. President:

I am sending you in accompanying memorandum a proposal disposing of the St. Pierre-Miquelon seizure by the Free French until after the war. I think you will readily grasp all phases of this proposal.

What I am writing you about primarily is the probable repercussions from Vichy when this matter is made public a few days hence, either by the British Foreign Office or by DeGaulle, regardless of whether privacy is urged by us or not. The Vichy situation is becoming more acute from different angles, and I feel that I should call to your attention the real probabilities of serious deteriorations occurring there in relation to the questions of the French Navy, Mediterranean bases, North Africa, etc. And yet there is no other course that we can take at this time.

In connection with these probable developments, we are considering recommending to you that Admiral

Leahy

The President,

The White House.



Leahy be called back for conference.

Sincerely yours,

Conrad H. Lee

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1942 Vol. 11 (France) Europe

Pages 669-670

675



General de Gaulle. It now appears that Prime Minister Churchill was not able to obtain General de Gaulle's accord. The draft formula substituted by Mr. Churchill, referred to in his telegram to you, would not be of assistance to us in holding the Vichy Government to its assurances, nor would it appear to be acceptable to that Government.

In view of the failure to achieve a general satisfactory settlement which would conform with the policies and obligations of this Government on both sides of the Atlantic, and in view of the paramount importance of furthering unity and harmony in the maximum cooperative war effort with Great Britain, Canada, and the other United Nations, I recommend that further negotiations or discussions of the matter be postponed for the period of the war.

CH

Published in

Foreign Relations of the United States

part  
of Moffat's telephone conversations  
with Dunn, January 14 -19, 1942.

1942 Vol 11. (France) Europe

Page 663

CLS

January 8, 1942

Suggested proposal for the settlement  
of the St. Pierre-Miquelon situation.

1. The islands are French and will remain French.
2. To avoid any potential threat to the shipping of the Governments concerned, the use of the wireless stations on the islands will be subject to the supervision and control by observers appointed by the American and Canadian Governments and attached to their respective consulates.
3. The islands shall be neutralized and demilitarized and shall be considered out of the war.
4. The present Administrator shall be withdrawn for the period of the war; the appointment of an Administrator shall be withheld for the same period, and the administration of the islands shall be left in the hands of the Consultative Council.
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as to the nature of the assistance to be given. Arrangements are being made both to continue the supplies from the United States and Canada on which the islands are dependent and to provide the seasonal supply of fish to the French inhabitants of Martinique.

No carbon of  
message retained.

France Folder  
SW  
OK  
JPR

February 10, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

With regard to my conversation with you on Sunday concerning our relations with the Vichy Government, I am attaching herewith for your convenient reference telegrams numbers 208 and 214 of February 7 and February 9 from Admiral Leahy concerning the reports that food supplies and munitions had been made available recently by the French authorities to the Axis forces operating in North Africa.

Returned  
to Welles →

I am attaching herewith the draft of your suggested message to Marshal Pétain. I think the statements contained therein constitute one of the last remaining effective cards we have to play and I think the time has now come when it is necessary for a message of this kind to be sent.

Please let me know if it meets with your approval.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

Sumner Welles

Enclosures:  
From Vichy, Nos. 208 and 214.  
Draft telegram.

The President,

The White House.

*France Fildes*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 26, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
TO READ AND RETURN FOR  
MY CONFIDENTIAL FILES.

F. D. R.

Letter to the President from  
Admiral Leahy, dated Jan. 25/42.

France Folder

file  
personal

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

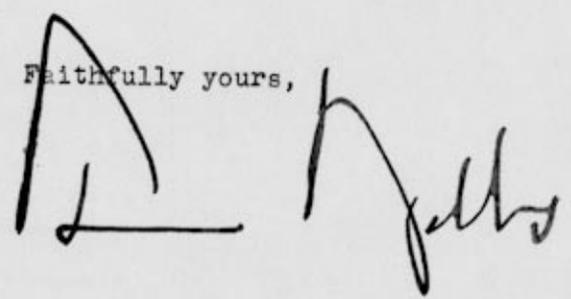
March 3, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

I have read with much interest Admiral Leahy's letter to you of January 25, which you were kind enough to send me with your memorandum of February 26. In accordance with your request, I am returning the letter herewith for your confidential files.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Enc.

The President,  
The White House.



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL POUCH

Vichy, January 25, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

Your oral instructions in regard to the African situation brought to Europe by Mr. Matthews reached us here on January twelfth by officer messenger from Lisbon who brought also your notes addressed to Marshal Pétain and to General Weygand.

On the following day I obtained an interview with the Marshal and delivered to him your note with a French translation thereof which he read aloud to Admiral Darlan who was present as usual and who as usual took charge of the conversation.

The Marshal made no pertinent remark in regard to your note other than that he would bring it to the attention of his Government.

While we hear reports from many sources that Admiral Darlan is weakening in his certainty that Germany will win the war, his conversation with me gives no such indication. At this interview he said that the Lybian campaign had, from the Axis point of view, at worst only reached a stalemate, and that Mr. Churchill will in the near future be replaced as Prime Minister by Major Attlee who is the only person in England acceptable to the Soviet and to British Labor.

On January 15th I sent Mr. Douglas MacArthur, Secretary of Embassy, with your note as an identification to the Riviera with instructions to deliver orally the message brought from you to us by Mr. Matthews.

In view of an assumption that both the General and the American Ambassador are under constant surveillance I did not consider it feasible for me to make the contact myself.

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

On ...

On January twentieth Mr. MacArthur with much skill and diplomacy, and presumably without attracting the attention of the Sûreté, succeeded in making contact with General Weygand in a hotel near Nice where he delivered your written communication and the oral message brought by Matthews.

The General was courteous and agreeable but declined to give any consideration to the possibility of his taking any action in the African problem. He said that he is now a private citizen with no official status, that he is completely loyal to the Marshal, and that if France should be so unfortunate as to lose the services of the Marshal he would under the legally designated successor have no opportunity to render service to the country.

Upon being requested to consider the message from you as personal and confidential to be not divulged to any other person he replied that his loyalty to the Marshal would make it necessary to inform Marshal Pétain which he could and would do without its becoming known to others.

I cannot escape from a belief that it will come to the knowledge of others and that it may be transmitted to the German authorities.

A brief of the General's attitude is that he will have nothing to do with the proposition and that he will not offer a suggestion of any other person who might be interested.

A systematic series of changes in the Army command that is being accomplished in the recent past which includes the removal from Africa of officers who held key positions under Weygand indicates to me a probability that the Army is being packed with a high command that will be amenable to any instructions issued by "Vichy", and that Admiral Darlan's statement to me of his intention to resist invasion of the African colonies by anybody definitely includes Americans.

It appears at the present time that Germany can accomplish its essential needs in French Africa by agreement and without an invasion in force, but there is nothing to indicate that a German military expedition into the colonies would be resisted.

If ...

If any of the "contingencies" enumerated in the oral message brought by Mr. Matthews should be accepted as sufficient cause to give the suggested aid to the colonies it would be wise to have full advance information as to whether the proposed "aid" will be accepted or opposed, and if such aid is sent to Africa it should be in sufficient quantity and quality to accomplish its purpose.

A repetition of Dakar would be destructive of American prestige and extremely discouraging to the one remaining hope of submerged civilization in this part of the world.

Day before yesterday I received from the State Department by cable dated 20 January your message containing thoughts in regard to the Marshal and in regard to France.

I have not since been able to obtain an interview but will do so within the next few days and will convey to the Marshal your thoughts which should stiffen his resistance to Axis demands if anything can have that effect. I have as you know expressed to him as my personal opinion most of the thoughts contained in your note, but now that they come directly from the President they certainly should carry more weight.

Your statement that resistance to Axis attack would have not only the moral support of the United States but would also have every possible military and naval assistance we could bring to bear, should at least discourage the granting of assistance to the enemy. While practically the entire population of France outside of Vichy would look with favor on any positive action that America might take in French territory against the Axis, I wish I could indulge in a reasonable hope that your attitude might bring about effective action by the Marshal in resisting future Axis demands.

We will continue to do our best to cheer him along.

Rumors persist that within the next few weeks Germany will propose to the Marshal and insist upon a readjustment of the relations between the two countries with concessions from both sides.

We succeeded last week after some effort on a reliable source in obtaining information that recent

British ...

British bombings of Brest have obtained useful results as follows.

In spite of the fact that dummies have been constructed to represent the German ships under repair in that harbor, recent bombings have more or less seriously damaged the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, and Prinz Eugen.

On January 15th, Gneisenau is out of service for a long period;

Scharnhorst received two bomb hits forward and is unserviceable for the time being;

Prinz Eugen received one hit that tore thirty yards of its hull plating.

This information was at once reported by cable to the Navy Department.

Hoping that you can manage to unload a sufficient part of the burden on somebody to conserve yourself for the long pull that may be necessary in order to completely destroy the Oriental menace, I remain always,

Most respectfully,

*William S. Leahy*

France Folder

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 11, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE:

Do you think the enclosed needs  
a reply? If not, please return to me  
for my files.

F.D.R.

Letter from Hon. George T. Summerlin,  
State Dept., 3/7/42, to Miss Tully, enclosing  
a letter addressed to the President by  
Marshal Ph. Pétain, Vichy, France, 1/16/42,  
together with a translation of same, in  
acknowledgment of the President's communi-  
cation of 12/27/41.

March 7, 1942

In reply refer to  
PR 740.0011 European War, 1939/19747

My dear Miss Tully:

I am enclosing herewith a letter addressed to the President by Marshal Pétain, together with a translation thereof, in acknowledgment of the President's communication of December 27, 1941, which has been received from the American Embassy at Vichy for transmission to the President.

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE T. SUMMERLAW

Chief of Protocol

Enclosures:

Letter from Marshal Pétain  
to the President, with  
translation.

Miss Grace G. Tully,  
The White House.

France Folder  
1-42

March 25, 1949

My dear Mr. President:

The Minister of Luxembourg has handed me a memorandum relating to the situation in unoccupied France, which I believe you will find of interest.

I attach a translation thereof.

Faithfully yours,

Sumner Welles

Acting Secretary.

Enclosure:  
Translation of  
memorandum as  
stated above.

The President  
The White House.

See Luxembourg Folder for file.

France Folger

file  
personal

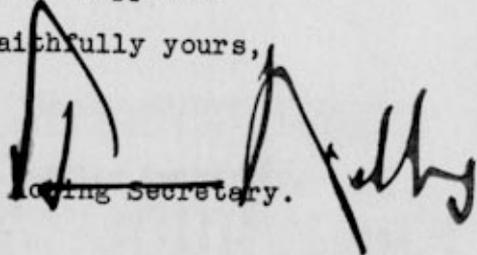
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

March 27. 1942

My dear Mr. President:

In compliance with your request of March 21, 1942, I am returning the letter from Admiral William D. Leahy, together with a suggested draft for your signature, if you approve.

Faithfully yours,

  
Acting Secretary.

Enclosure:  
Letter from Admiral  
William D. Leahy as  
indicated above.

The President

The White House.

Published in

Foreign Relations of the United States

1942 Vol 11 (France) Europe

Pages 136-138



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL POUCH

Vichy, February 20, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

On February 11th we received by cable from the State Department your message to Marshal Pétain in which you informed him of information received in Washington to the effect that an agreement had been made to transport war material to the Axis forces in Lybia by the use of French merchant ships between France and Tunis, and in which you told him that unless official assurance should be given by France that no military aid will go forward to Germany, Italy and Japan, and that French ships will not be used in the furtherance of their acts of aggression in any theater of war wherever it may be, I would be recalled for advice and counsel in a determination of American future policy with regard to the Government of Vichy.

In the forenoon of the next day, February 12th, I delivered to the Marshal a written French translation of your message which he read aloud to Admiral Darlan and M. Rochat who were as usual present at the conference. The Marshal made no other comment than to say that he would give me a written reply.

Admiral Darlan who had made an agreement with Italy, possibly without the knowledge of the Marshal, to send in French ships to Tunis for Rommel's army 200 tons of foodstuffs each week and a total of 500 Italian trucks seemed unusually disturbed by your very positive statement of your reaction thereto.

The Marshal throughout our very brief tense interview was as friendly and considerate as always. Upon my departure he expressed a hope that it will not be necessary for me to depart from France.

On February 16th we received and forwarded by cable to the Department of State a note signed by Darlan in reply to your message to the Marshal.

None ...

The President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

None of the assurances demanded by you in regard to giving assistance to the Axis forces or in regard to the use of French ships in the furtherance of their acts of aggression appear in the Vichy reply to your message, and I am therefore expecting a "recall for consultation".

In view of an opinion previously expressed by Admiral Darlan and entertained by other officials of the Vichy Government that the United States can be depended upon to never take any positive action I consider it would be extremely detrimental to American prestige to fail in this instance to carry out your announced intention to recall the Ambassador for consultation in the determination of future policy with regard to the Government of Vichy.

If in the larger field of view from Washington it would appear advantageous to our war effort for me to continue in the office of Ambassador to France, it would appear from this point of view entirely practicable for me to return after a "consultation", but in my opinion Vichy should not be permitted to believe that your statement in regard to my recall for consultation in the event of failure to receive the requested assurances was a "bluff". Too large a number of the members of the Vichy Government now share a belief with Admiral Darlan that the United States may be always depended upon to take no positive action whatever.

Since receiving the Marshal's reply to your message I have seen a copy of a proposal made by Vichy in January to Japan in regard to the use by Japan of French merchant ships in the Orient. This proposal agrees to charter to Japan about 50,000 tons of the French shipping now in Chinese and Indochinese ports, the ships to be operated under the Japanese flag with Japanese officers and crews, but not to be used for "war purposes". Other French ships will be used under a time charter for commercial purposes between Japanese occupied ports but under the French flag and with French crews.

I was, in reply to a specific question, informed orally by Admiral Darlan on 12 February that arrangements for the chartering of French merchant shipping by Japan had not been completed.

I personally have no doubt that under a threat of Axis pressure Vichy will agree to any use of French shipping that may be demanded.

Since ...

Since the retreat in Libya, the escape of German ships from Brest, and the fall of Singapore, British prestige has fallen to a new low level.

I am sure that French public opinion and I believe that the Marshal himself hopes that an Allied victory will save France from the fate toward which it is moving, but at the present time public opinion and the Marshal have difficulty in believing that the Axis can be defeated.

The local press yesterday reported a statement by General Smuts that there is as yet no reason for taking any action in regard to Madagascar.

This is reassuring to Vichy where there has very naturally been a fear for some time that the Allies might anticipate Japanese action by occupying Madagascar, Mauritius, and Réunion.

From this point of view and particularly in consideration of previous action of Vichy in Indochina it is difficult to understand why these islands, flanking as they do the supply route from anywhere to the Red Sea and now also from Good Hope to the Dutch East Indies, have not long ago been occupied by the Allies.

There must be a sufficient force in South Africa that could be spared for that purpose before it is made difficult by previous enemy action.

While one should have great sympathy for the Marshal in his almost impossible position, and a real affection for the unorganized, inarticulate, depressed people of France, it would appear that the time has already passed when this war for the preservation of our civilization permits of giving further consideration to the pride or sensibilities of defeated France in Madagascar, in Indochina, or elsewhere.

With one and a half million of its young men in German prison camps and with more than half of its continental area occupied by German troops there is not a chance that France can be of any assistance to the Allies or even be of any assistance to itself. It would therefore seem desirable, necessary and essential that French territory be utilized by the Allies wherever it promises advantage to us in the prosecution of our war effort.

Vichy ...

-4-

Vichy would object of course but much of French public opinion would cheer us on.

I am taking advantage of courier departing today to send this hurriedly prepared letter.

Most respectfully,

*William D. Leahy*

Published in

Foreign Relations of the United States

1942 Vol 11 (France) Europe

Page 139

FORM 730  
1945 OCT 11 (110000) GPO  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Dear Bill:

I have given careful consideration to the thoughts expressed in your letter of February 20, particularly as regards your feeling that it would be detrimental to our policy to fail to carry out the expressed intention to recall you for consultation.

I am fully sympathetic and understand the position in which this has placed you. On the other hand, the timing of such a step has now become of paramount military importance. In fact, the joint Staff missions have very definitely urged that we postpone as long as possible any evidence of change in our relations with France and they consider that to hold the fort as far as you are concerned is as important a military task as any other in these days. Consequently, we decided to go ahead and to obtain from the Marshal's Government the utmost assurances possible which would preserve our fundamental objectives. Not only is our presence in France and North Africa the last bridgehead to Europe but it likewise helps to hold the Iberian Peninsula in line.

The military developments of the next few weeks will be of such vital importance that, in the interests of the United Nations, we cannot afford

Admiral William D. Leahy,  
American Ambassador,  
Vichy.

to send  
me I  
have of  
Vichy  
copy

afford to risk any possibility that an abrupt action on our part would lose ground anywhere. The impending Mediterranean drive will be one of the most important of the war and it must be checked by all means possible until the time when the full weight of our rapidly developing production can be felt in the war effort.

I have also taken note of your statements regarding Madagascar and shall refer them to the war council.

I want you to realize that I am fully aware of the problems with which you are confronted but must consider that you are in a vital strategic position. In these critical days we count not only on your presence there as Ambassador but upon your own military knowledge and experience to give us, in so far as possible, estimates of the French position from this point of view.

Should the time come, however, when the conditions of our relations with the Marshal's Government are more stable and your return for consultation would not be made an issue either here or in France, I shall telegraph you to proceed to Washington "for consultation."

With kindest regards to you both,

Very sincerely yours,

Francis F. Fisher

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

March 30, 1942

file  
Confidential

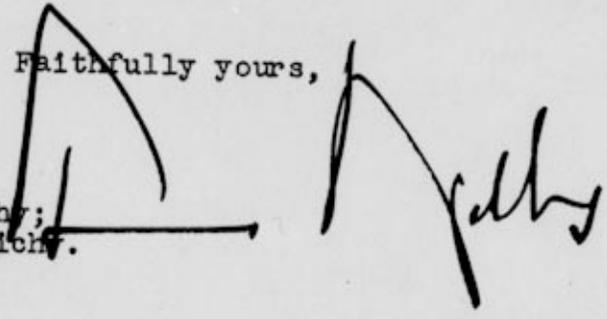
~~SECRET~~

My dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing for your information a copy of a telegram I sent to Admiral Leahy under date of March 27, following my conversation with you on the telephone of that same day. I am also enclosing a copy of the Admiral's reply, dated March 30, 1 p.m., just received by me.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Encs.  
Telegram 214 to Vichy;  
Telegram 466 from Vichy.

The President,  
The White House.

Published in

Foreign Relations of the United States

1942 Vol. 11 (France) Europe

Pages 160-161

CLS

TELEGRAM SENT

PH  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

March 27, 1942

4 p.m.

AMERICAN EMBASSY

VICHY

TRIPLE PRIORITY

214

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ FOR THE AMBASSADOR

Your 451, March 26, 3 p.m.

At any moment at which in your judgment it appears probable that Laval is to return to the French Government, you are requested to obtain immediately an audience with the Marshal and to make, by direction of the President, the following statement to him.

"The Government of the United States has made every effort during recent weeks to adjust, in a friendly spirit various problems which have arisen in its relations with the French Government with due regard for the national interests of the United States and bearing in mind the interests of the French people and their aspirations for the restoration of the integrity and independence of France.

As the

-2-#214, March 27, 4 p.m, to Vichy.

As the result of the recent interchange between the two Governments, these problems have been solved and the Government of the United States, as the French Government is aware, is willing to consider the immediate resumption of the trade arrangements previously agreed upon and which had temporarily been held in suspension.

The Government of the United States has no intention whatever of interfering in the purely domestic affairs of the French people.

However, the return to a position of power and authority in the French Government of M. Laval, or the appointment to such position of any other French citizen so notoriously and completely identified with a policy of ~~supine~~ subservience to Germany and so obviously intent upon a course of open "collaboration" with the enemies of the United States, could only be regarded by public opinion in the United States and by the Government of the United States itself as a clear indication that the French people can no longer look to the French Government at Vichy to carry out their own desire to maintain relations of friendship and understanding with the

United States

-3-#214, March 27, 4 p.m., to Vichy.

United States and the American people.

Were M. Laval, or those identified with his policies, to obtain authority within the French Government, the Government of the United States would be unable to believe that the assurances recently given it by the French Government covering the legitimate requirements of the United States would be carried out in good faith either in their letter or in their spirit.

Consequently, were M. Laval or any individual identified with his policy to be called upon to enter the French Government in any controlling position, the United States Government would be obliged to discontinue its existing relations of confidence for our mutual welfare with the French Government at Vichy."

For your personal information, I am sure you will realize that the appointment of Laval or those associated with him, would be unanimously regarded by the American people as a clear sign that German pressure on the Marshal had at last become conclusive. Under such conditions it would be impossible for this Government to maintain diplomatic relations with the French Government at Vichy. I have discussed these issues with the President, who has authorized me to state to you that that represents his own considered convictions.

U:SW:GES

WELLES  
ACTING

Published in

Foreign Relations of the United States

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Page 161

CL 6

AS  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

(Paris)  
Vichy

Dated March 30, 1942

Rec'd 11:14 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY

466, March 30, 1 p.m.

At 11:30 today I delivered to Marshal Petain  
in the presence of Admiral Darlan the statement  
contained in your 214, March 27, 4 p.m.

The Marshal replied that he does not enjoy  
having to make decisions that are personally dis-  
agreeable to him, that the French people do not  
like Laval, and that he is not hurrying toward a  
decision.

Darlan who did not join in the conversation  
remarked privately that a decision might probably  
be made within a week and that in his opinion there  
is only a 20% prospect of Laval's return to the  
cabinet.

I expressed to the Marshal my personal opinion  
that an appointment of Laval to the cabinet would  
probably cause a break in our diplomatic relations.

Upon

-2- #466, March 30, 1 p.m., from (Paris) Vichy

Upon my departure he expressed a hope that I have  
not started to pack my trunks.

LEAHY

HPL

Copy made by FDPL from copy of original furnished by Admiral Leahy

*France - 1942*

COPY of letter from President Roosevelt, Washington, D.C. /undated/ to  
Admiral Leahy:

The White House

Washington

Dear Bill:

I have given careful consideration to the thoughts expressed in your letter of February 20, particularly as regards your feeling that it would be detrimental to our policy to fail to carry out the expressed intention to recall you for consultation.

I am fully sympathetic and understand the position in which this has placed you. On the other hand, the timing of such a step has now become of paramount military importance. In fact, the joint staff missions have very definitely urged that we postpone as long as possible any evidence of change in our relations with France and they consider that to hold the fort as far as you are concerned is as important a military task as any other in these days. Consequently, we decided to go ahead and to obtain from the Marshal's Government the utmost assurances possible which would preserve our fundamental objectives. Not only is our presence in France and North Africa the last bridgehead to Europe but it likewise helps to hold the Iberian Peninsula in line.

The military developments of the next few weeks will be of such vital importance that, in the interests of the United Nations, we cannot afford to risk any possibility that an abrupt action on our part would lose ground anywhere. The impending Mediterranean drive will be one

of the most important of the war and it must be checked by all means possible until the time when the full weight of our rapidly developing production can be felt in the war effort.

I have also taken note of your statements regarding Madagascar and shall refer them to the war council.

I want you to realize that I am fully aware of the problems with which you are confronted but must consider that you are in a vital strategic position. In these critical days we count not only on your presence there as Ambassador but upon your own military knowledge and experience to give us, in so far as possible, estimates of the French position from this point of view.

Should the time come, however, when the conditions of our relations with the Marshal's Government are more stable and your return for consultation would not be made an issue either here or in France, I shall telegraph you to proceed to Washington "for consultation."

With kindest regards to you both,

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Franklin D. Roosevelt

France Folder  
1-42

April 3, 1942.

Dear Bill:

Yours of March tenth has just come. I am saddened by Darlan's outburst to you and I am delighted by your absolutely perfect reply to him. On the whole, I think our rather steady pressure has been successful to date, but I hope the present situation will continue to be no worse than it has been in the past.

As ever yours,

Admiral William D. Leahy,  
American Embassy,  
Vichy, France.

fdr/dj



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL POUCH

Vichy, March 10, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

Since the receipt of requests for official assurances that in the future assistance will not be given to the enemy's military effort, the latest of which arrived by cable on 4 March, the business of diplomacy has been brisk in this area.

We have as yet not received any satisfactory "assurance" in regard to either the provision of supplies to the Axis or to the status of the Caribbean colonies, and we may at best expect an effort by Vichy to evade the specific assurances demanded by America.

The bombing of automobile factories in Paris last week, Renault and Ford, which were working for Germany caused varying reactions among the French people.

Both attacks were very successful in putting the factories out of business for some months. Bombing of the Renault works caused a large number of casualties and 397 deaths among civilians who resided near the factory. Sunday's attack on the Ford factory at Poissy is admitted to have caused no casualties.

Admiral Darlan happened to be in Paris on March 3 when the Renault factory was attacked and upon his return to Vichy with his anti-British mania highly stimulated by the bombing he was shown our latest demands for "assurances" which produced a reaction that we may consider typical under the circumstances.

The following strictly personal letter in Darlan's handwriting, written immediately after his return to Vichy, may be of interest as an evidence of his general attitude and as an illustration of the inadvisability of a Minister of State writing letters when stimulated by anger:

"March ....

The President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.



-2-

"March 8, 1942

Mr. Ambassador:

I permit myself, because of the personal ties of sympathy which exist between us and because of our naval confraternity, to write you in a strictly private manner.

I wish to tell you that the recent notes from the American Government are drawn up in terms of such an unpleasant and unusual character as would justify the non-acceptance of such documents by the French Government.

If we have, however, accepted these notes, it is because we do not wish to give any pretext for breaking off to a Government which, for the past few weeks, has given the impression of looking for a quarrel with the French Government.

I realize that my defeated country is placed in a painful situation; but I did not believe that the Government of a nation which owes its independence in great part to it would take advantage of this fact to treat it with scorn.

I told you, a few months ago, that since June 25, 1940, the British had accumulated error upon error. They have just committed a greater one still which we shall never forgive them.

To murder, for political motives, women, children and old people, is a method of Soviet inspiration. Is England already bolshevized?

Fear is sometimes an ill adviser: Mers-el-Kébir and Boulogne-Billancourt demonstrate this clearly.

I hope that the American Government will not give way to fear.

Believe me, etc.

(signed) F. DARLAN"

My reply (quoted herewith following), in consideration of the apparent desirability of continuing friendly relations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs during the time that you consider it necessary for me to deal

officially ...

officially with him, deliberately ignores the insulting inferences made in his note:

"Vichy, March 9, 1942

Personal

Dear Admiral Darlan:

It is pleasing to receive in your personal note of yesterday a reference to our common naval traditions and the sympathetic personal understanding that have been of so much assistance in our working together for the welfare of France, and this reply is of the same strictly private character as is your note to me.

In evaluating the attitude of my Government in the difficult situation that confronts both of our nations at the present time we must give full consideration to the fact that the United States is now involved in a total war in defense of its existence as a free nation and that this war will be prosecuted until the aggressor nations are completely defeated regardless of the sacrifices that must be made in order to secure a complete victory.

Under such conditions in a life or death war for survival it seems unreasonable to expect the United States to look with complaisance upon the provision by a friendly nation of any assistance whatever to the military effort of the enemy powers.

I am certain that President Roosevelt is desirous of doing everything that is practicable to aid in the restoration of France to its traditional position as a standard of civil liberty, civilization, and culture, and I personally shall continue to indulge in a hope that, whatever results from the present situation, it may be possible for me to have some small part in preserving France and French culture in our distressed world.

With assurances of sympathy in your difficult problems and expressions of personal consideration,

Most sincerely,

(signed) WILLIAM D. LEAHY"

It ...

It is my personal opinion that Vichy should not be permitted to evade the assurances requested in regard to the provision of future aid to the enemy and in regard to the Caribbean islands, which Admiral Darlan will attempt to do.

He understands only positive action and we are informed by some of his subordinates that he still believes that our proposal to recall the Ambassador is a bluff. The advisability may develop of recalling me "for consultation" even if it should be for only a temporary absence from France. It would be definitely disadvantageous to American prestige should we permit the "bluff" to be "called".

Most respectfully,

*William D. Leahy*

1  
P.F. France Folder S.W.  
1-42 Very good  
FBR

April 13, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

I received the end of last week an official protest from the French Government with regard to the appointment by the United States of a Consul General at Brazzaville on the ground that this step on our part was in derogation of the exclusive jurisdiction of the Vichy Government over French territory in all parts of the world.

This seems to me to afford a useful opportunity for us to set forth clearly and publicly our policy towards France. I have prepared a note, which I am enclosing herewith, to be sent to the French Ambassador in reply to his official protest with a view to making the text thereof public after his Government has received it.

It seems to me that this step on our part will have valuable results from the standpoint of propaganda and should do a good deal to counteract German

The President,

The White House.

pressure on unoccupied France which is apparently daily becoming more acute.

I do not, however, wish to send this note without being sure that it meets with your approval since, as you will see, it contains statements with regard to long-range policy.

According to reports of yesterday and of today, the Germans are working up a new crisis of nerves in France and I should like to send this note quickly in order that it can be made public. Will you let me know if it meets with your approval?

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

SUMNER WELLES

Enc.

Enclosure (which is for Welles' signature) returned to him with original of this letter.

# TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM

*PSF, France Folder*  
The White House  
Washington

...  
April 21, 1942.

ADMIRAL WILLIAM D. LEAHY  
VICHY

DEAR BILL:

MY HEART GOES OUT TO YOU IN THE OVERWHELMING LOSS WHICH  
HAS COME TO YOU IN A DIFFICULT AND DISTANT POST OF DUTY, SO FAR  
AWAY FROM THE LEGION OF FRIENDS WHO LOVED MRS. LEAHY DEARLY.  
BUT YOU MUST FIND CONSOLATION IN THE ASSURANCE THAT YOUR FRIENDS  
EVERYWHERE ARE MINDFUL OF YOUR SORROW THOUGH HELPLESS BY WORD  
OR DEED TO MITIGATE THE GRIEF WHICH IS YOURS. MRS. ROOSEVELT  
JOINS ME IN THIS MESSAGE OF DEEPEST SYMPATHY

AFFECTIONATELY,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

May 5, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

As of possible interest  
to you, I wish to refer you  
to the attached memorandum.

CH

*file  
confidential*

*Free France  
Folder  
1-42*



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

April 30, 1942.

MEMORANDUM

When General de Gaulle first raised the standard of French resistance in England in the summer of 1940 and appealed to all Frenchmen to continue the struggle against Germany he assumed command of "Free French" military and naval forces in the British Isles and was recognized by the British Government as the head of a military movement. This status was continued until September 1941, and it was to this military movement of resistance that the Free French colonies and administrators have adhered. In his capacity as a military leader and as a symbol of French resistance he has given his name to the cause which, in this guise, has and still is receiving support from Frenchmen at home and abroad.

In September 1941, following a suggestion of the British Government but going beyond the original British proposal to set up a Council which would have an effective voice in shaping the policy of the movement, General de Gaulle established the French National Committee through a series of decrees issued September 24, which stated among other things, that the National Commissioners who formed the Committee would exercise the

the functions, individual or joint, normally attributed to French Ministers. At the time General de Gaulle emphasized that the Free French had been compelled to improvise a de facto authority which was a sort of interim delegation from the nation which the Free French exercised provisionally and which would be handed back to the representatives of the people as soon as it was possible to constitute this national representation.

The British Government has never recognized the Free French Committee as a Government of France.

When this Committee was given this character the British Government informed General de Gaulle that it regarded the National Committee as representative of Free French interests only and that they would treat with it as the de facto administration of those territories and persons who rallied to it. In this communication the British Foreign Secretary informed General de Gaulle that "His Majesty's Government are prepared to regard the Free French National Committee as representing all Free Frenchmen wherever they may be who rally to the Free French Movement in support of the Allied cause and to treat with the Committee on all questions involving their collaboration with the Free French Movement and with the French overseas territories which place themselves under its authority". The letter continued "in making this communication I should make it clear that His Majesty's Government are not to be regarded as

expressing

expressing any views as to the various constitutional and juridical considerations contained in these enactments. In particular, while His Majesty's Government would be happy to maintain their representation with the Free French Movement they could not accredit a diplomatic representative to you or receive a diplomatic representative accredited by you since this would involve your recognition as head of a sovereign state". Similar declarations have been made by the exiled Governments in London.

It is evident from numerous indications, that the Free French National Commissioners who constitute the Committee and who have undertaken the functions of Ministers are now endeavoring to create the future Government of France and a political character is being sought for the Committee, whereas it is apparent that the main reason for its existence has been to preserve the symbol of French resistance. In this character it has secured the bulk of its adherents. It is questionable whether it would continue to command the support now manifest should it be given primarily a political character as seems intended, as evidenced for example, by General de Gualle's speech of April 1, 1942. This speech can only be interpreted as a demand for complete recognition by the United Nations of the Free French as the leaders and representatives of France of the future. It is, however, clearly evident that  
the

the French people who have rallied to General de Gaulle as the head of a military movement are not prepared to regard him as the future leader of France.

With these manifestations of a political character a serious crisis is apparently developing in the ranks of the movement. Admiral Muselier's abrupt dismissal is only one of a series of incidents which give evidence of internal rivalry. It is apparent that General de Gaulle as leader of the Movement will permit no other expression than his own to be voiced in the Councils of the Committee. There are further signs received from such administrators as General Sice, High Commissioner of French Equatorial Africa, that the political trend of the Committee is repugnant to the fighting forces who apparently feel that the sole objective of the Committee should be to continue the fight for French freedom and to leave politics alone until the day of victory when the people of France shall themselves be free to select a government of their own choosing.

The situation as regards the Free French Delegation in the United States also gives signs of a disintegration which will inevitably ensue if politics is to be the major role of the French National Committee. Whereas the personnel of the Delegation was named by decree of the General, dated December 2, 1942, it is now understood that its composition has been altered leaving its direction and administration entirely in the

the hands of the principal Delegate, M. Adrian Tixier, whose capacities are unquestioned but who, as a former officer of the International Labor Office, represents only one element among Free French inhereents.

TRANSLATION

Bourassol, April 30. [42?]

Dear Mr. Roosevelt:

I do not wish to let Admiral Leahy leave without sending to you by him this message of friendship and gratitude. I have learned, by unmistakable and repeated tokens, of the great interest which you have taken in my personal situation; and I must let you know how precious these indications of your sympathy have been and are to me. It was quite purposely that I remained in France after the armistice, because I believed that it was in France that I could make myself most useful to the cause which I shall never cease to serve. William Bullitt may have told you that, for our last conversation, on the very eve of his departure, touched on this subject. I have never regretted the decision which I took and I believe that events have borne out my expectation. Neither my imprisonment nor the proceedings conducted against me will have been in vain. They helped - no question about it - to reawaken public spirit in France and, most particularly, ~~the consciousness~~ of the working-class. The feeling of solidarity with my person, and with the persecution which I was undergoing for them, a feeling becoming more and more powerful in the mass of French workers, furnished one of the most effective elements in regrouping them. Since the suspension of the proceedings at Riom - most significant in itself - I have, however, wondered whether I have not reached the limit of the results which it was possible for me to attain from the depths of a prison, and I have come to the belief, on my part, that henceforth my task would be carried on better through free activity.

Some two weeks ago I transmitted to your Embassy at Vichy, for you, a hastily made copy of a work which I have thought about for a long time, but on which I had not taken the time to put the finishing touches. You will find in it reflections on problems of French policy and on the modes of material and moral organization of Europe - reflections which will have nothing new in them for you, but which will, perhaps, not be without use for you. They do not have merely the weight of an individual opinion. I am certain, and I can say it with assurance, that I have discovered among my friends and in the popular mass sufficient authority to bring them back into that path which was for so long theirs. It is the effort for

which

which I am most adapted, and that which also seems to me the most necessary.

As to the present state of opinion in France, I do not know whether the information which reaches me will add anything much to the information you have. France has been transformed since June 1940. The military defeat and the armistice plunged it into a stupor similar to that of an operator's anesthesia. It has now again become a living and conscious being. The metamorphosis is complete in the occupied zone; still incomplete in the free zone. Men have again become able to hope, to understand, to judge, they have not yet become entirely capable of acting. The springs which govern the physical conditions of action have not yet recovered all their tension and all their elasticity. But from day to day the improvement is noticeable; the last governmental change, alone, resulted in what is perhaps decisive progress. If freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and discussion were reestablished for only forty-eight hours, or if...hope took on a tangible form...the nation would suddenly rise again, altogether. I do not believe that I am mistaken when I assert that this crisis will not only not have abolished, or even weakened, but on the contrary, will have regenerated the democratic sense and love of liberty in the nation.

I take the liberty of sending Mrs. Roosevelt respectful greetings through you and I beg you to believe in my sentiments of admiration and devotion.

LEON BLUM

TR:AVA:MH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  

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THE SECRETARY

*Francis Folger  
file  
personal*

May 2, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Attached is Memorandum of my conversation with the Free French Representative just returned from London.

C. H.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

*Memorandum of Conversation*

DATE: May 1, 1942.

SUBJECT: FREE FRENCH

PARTICIPANTS: The Secretary of State, Mr. Hull  
Monsieur Tixier, Representative of the Free French  
Mr. Atherton, Acting Chief, Division of European Affairs

COPIES TO:

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\*\*\* 1-1483

M. Tixier called on the Secretary this morning by appointment. The Secretary of State began by expressing pleasure at seeing M. Tixier on his return from his trip, recalling having talked to him last January when M. Tixier was undecided as to what his future plans or position would be until he had clarified his attitude viz-a-viz General de Gaulle in personal conversations.

The Secretary asked M. Tixier, as having been recently in London, what he could tell him as to the progress of the war effort from that angle. M. Tixier replied that he had confined his observations mostly to the French situation and it was on that he wanted to talk. He said, in the first place, that General de Gaulle had been pictured to him as a military leader of the extreme right with Fascist tendencies. He was happy to say that this was not his impression of General de Gaulle but that he is an able military strategist and most cultured man, but because of the limitations under which he must function due to the impossibility of bringing out of France those French elements with whom he would like to surround himself,

he

he was dependant upon the Frenchmen available to form his National Committee rather than those he might wish for.

With some explanation of General de Gaulle's situation in London and the fact he was not entirely a free agent in his association with the British, M. Tixier then stated that while he was there the French labor underground movement representatives, both from unoccupied and occupied France, had come to London to see de Gaulle. These were all men with whom M. Tixier had close association and he knew what they represented in France and the support they needed to continue the moral resistance within France. These men had conferred with de Gaulle on the many and complicated phases of the future and had accepted him, under certain specified conditions, as the chef de résistance Francaise. The conditions which they had imposed and which General de Gaulle had accepted were the same which M. Tixier himself would have imposed for his further collaboration with General de Gaulle, and it was only after the General had accepted all these points that Tixier himself had decided to return to this country to represent de Gaulle in Washington. These points were, in the main, as follows:

(1) A declaration by General de Gaulle that he is the enemy of any regime of personal power; in other words, that he is against dictators.

(2) That General de Gaulle declares the internal resistance of France is organized by the democratic people of France and that General de Gaulle realizes if he wishes to represent all elements of French resistance, both external and internal, he must be prepared to be fully cooperative with the restoration of a democratic France at the earliest possible moment.

M. Tixier concluded with a statement that General de Gaulle was also willing to declare that his power was only provisional and that after the war, if he is in such a position of power, he will not hesitate to return that power to the French people and call a national assembly along established lines to decide the future of France.

The Secretary said that he was very interested in all the statements that M. Tixier had brought forth and then went on at some length to define the assistance

that

that this country had given to all Frenchmen resisting aggression throughout the world and specified with some insistence the particular aid that had been given to Free French territorial possessions the world over. M. Tixier listened with some attention but immediately brought up the point that if this was the policy of the American Government, why then had there never been any official statement by the President or the Secretary in which by name encouragement had been given to General de Gaulle personally or to the Free French Movement under General de Gaulle. This question had indeed been raised by those French labor members who had come to London recently.

The Secretary said the world over there were elements asking this Government to specify certain causes or individuals. The Secretary said our aspect must continue to be the broadest possible encouragement to all and every element resisting aggression and at the moment, since the war was in progress, this was taking the military phase. M. Tixier then went on to say that this declaration of General de Gaulle had not been made and that the timing of it was dependent on his conversations in Washington.

At this point the Secretary was interrupted for his press conference. On his return he said that he would like to go back to the last statement made by M. Tixier because he did not understand it, or if he had correctly heard M. Tixier, it seemed to him that the two subjects were not clearly related. M. Tixier said, in explanation, after repeating his statement a gain, that, naturally, General de Gaulle would be influenced as to how much weight the American Government gave to the acceptance by the labor syndicates in France of General de Gaulle as a leader. He was not willing to pursue the further point, however, that General de Gaulle in accepting to become the national leader of French resistance had thereby undertaken to issue this statement as agreed with the labor syndicates.

M. Tixier said to the Secretary: "You have always referred to the military assistance given to us. I would like to have you refer to the Free French Movement as the French Movement of Resistance." The Secretary then asked M. Tixier to define his point and whether it entailed asking further recognition because, in the latter case,

the

the Secretary pointed out that, as regards the cooperation and agreements between the British and Free French, he had had no information from the Free French themselves and only a very bare outline from the British; therefore, the point raised by M. Tixier was suddenly produced and would require further background which the Secretary must have in mind when he brought up all the points and discussed them with the President. Meanwhile, he could assure M. Tixier that both the President and himself were most intensely sympathetic to this resistance of the Free French Movement and, indeed, the President's statement of day before yesterday in his radio address could hardly be more heartening to any group in the world than to the French people themselves. He felt that French morale would benefit by it and the allegation of M. Tixier that French labor had inquired as to the attitude of this Government towards Free French elements resisting aggression was certainly fully and completely answered by the President's statement.

The Secretary then went on again to stress that he was interested in every effort of the Free French, both military and otherwise, in the resistance of aggression and while he had reports from his American sources as to what was going on in those colonial territories under Free French control, he had had little information from the Free French themselves, which he felt was important in view of the fact that he wished to pursue every avenue in which this country could be of assistance to the Free French Movement in its resistance to aggression. He then invited M. Tixier to come back at any time and stated that in his press conference he had informed correspondents that he was discussing the foreign situation with M. Tixier as indeed he would with any distinguished foreigner.

In the very first moments of the conversation the Secretary made reference to today's New York Times' article on the front page which M. Tixier denied all knowledge of, and the Secretary said, without blaming anyone, that there undoubtedly had been some ill founded speculation and such illusionary estimates were of no value to the end we all had in view.

A suggestion not used PSF France  
May 31 1942

Citizens of France, my French friends:

Your days are long and anxious. Your nights often are full of terror. Your suffering, however, is only part of the hideous nightmare into which a handful of reckless megalomaniacs have plunged the whole world. Their defeat - decisive, overwhelming, final - will end the nightmare. You will awaken free again, just as we will awaken still free, still confident that we can find the way to enjoy God's blessings of health and honest work and family devotion and love of country in a world which is not part free, part slave, but where all men can live and work and cherish their dear ones without discrimination and without fear.

France  
Folder

The struggle for that freedom goes on across the plains and the wide oceans of the world. The men of the United Nations of free peoples fight along your coasts and often in the skies above your fields and villages against the same foe who oppresses you. The sailors and fliers of England, in comradeship with many Dutch and Poles and Norwegians and other ancient and sturdy peoples of Europe, are now being joined by the advance guard of American fliers and soldiers and sailors who have left their peaceful occupations to come once again to Europe in the cause of freedom.

All those who after two and a half long years keep up the struggle, all those who like our American boys are only just beginning to make their strength and daring and skill count in that struggle, are your friends. They are your friends not only because they have learnt over many years of comradeship to love you and respect you but because their foes are your foes.

The troops that occupy your houses and commandeer your railways and seize the fruits of your labor and the produce of your farms are our foes.

The secret police that lurk in the corner to spy on you - those slimy agents of the Gestapo - are our foes.

The German officers whose firing squads secretly shoot Frenchmen in batches of six or twenty or a hundred for no other reason than that they are Frenchmen who will not bow the knee to them - those German officers are our foes.

The Nazi party chiefs who deliberately order these seizures, these executions, because they wish to weaken you by starvation, extirpate your

sense of being French, and reduce you the more easily to economic and political slavery, are our foes.

All your foes, open and hidden, are our foes, and we have pledged our honor and our might to defeat them. I say to you, in calm confidence and with a full sense of responsibility, that we Americans have never yet been defeated when we have deliberately assumed the risks of war, and I say to you as a man who knows the American people and who is empowered to speak for them, that we and our allies of the United Nations will again be victorious. Our enemies, not we, will be defeated.

The stubborn war in which we have now enlisted is, as I have already said, being fought in part in the air above the soil of France and along your coasts. It is also, of course, being fought in the far reaches of the Pacific and in the Middle East and in Scandinavia and in the Balkans and in the North Sea and the Arctic. On the other side of Germany, the Russians defend their homes bravely and take a terrible toll of German troops and materiel.

We did not seek war any more than you Frenchmen sought it. Like you, too, we at first saw the true proportions of the Nazi menace only dimly. The daily preoccupations of our normal life, of earning our daily bread and providing for our children, combined with our own deep love of peace to make many of us hesitate to believe that supposedly civilized men in the twentieth century would dare plunge the world back into barbarism and universal war. Like you, many in the United States hoped that the Nazis and the Fascists and the Japanese war lords would not dare attack us. Like you, we have been attacked.

And so we are gathering together the might of America. It is approaching full flood. With truly marvellous speed we have turned our enormous productive resources from the arts of peace to the grim purposes of war. Our airplanes are rolling out of our factories in Michigan and California and New York and Maryland. So vast is the number that we are justified today in undertaking to train our pilots, not by the hundreds, not by the thousands, but by the hundred thousand. In our shipyards on

two long coasts, and on the shores of our great lakes, the vessels we need are taking shape, and already each day - every day - an increasing number of them are being launched; and as each takes to the water the keel of another is laid. They include not merely destroyers and swift cruisers and mighty aircraft carriers and battleships, but hundreds and hundreds of cargo ships and transports and tankers - all kinds and sizes of vessels - the ships required to transport American soldiers to many battlefields, actual and potential - the ships required to keep them supplied with arms to fight the Germans and the Japanese - the ships which, once the war has been won, will hasten to Europe with the food and medicines and clothing which you and the other peoples of Europe need so grievously after these years under the Nazi heel.

Our armies, like our vast reservoirs of materiel, grow week by week - strong young men that you would rejoice to see, bronzed and toughened by their months of rigorous training, cheerful and confident and courageous, and asking only that the flow of the most perfect equipment which any army of the world has ever seen shall come to them with doubled and redoubled vigor from the shops and factories and mines of our vast continent. On the plains of Texas, on the wide stretches of Montana, in the cantonments of Georgia and Massachusetts and Alabama and New Jersey, they have been learning the art and science of war. As they learn, they teach new thousands, new millions, just as their fathers who were your comrades in 1917 and 1918 did. And like their fathers they will, when their hour comes, pour with inexorable power across whatever seas are necessary, command whatever stretches of the air are needed, join the battle wherever it can be fought most effectively and to the speediest conclusion, in order to put down once again into the dust the arrogant men who torment you and the other peoples of Europe.

I speak to you, people of France, as the elected President of a Republic of free men who have long been your friends. Why should I not speak to you? Comrades in the war that gave our nation its birth of freedom, comrades in the war that two decades ago succeeded in breaking the savage fury of the

German invaders and in driving them back off your soil, who could have a better right to exchange words of cheer, of friendship, of affection than you and I in these hard days?

We Americans know that it was not of their free choice that the people of France accepted defeat at the hands of a mighty and unscrupulous foe. We know that - with notorious exceptions - they did so in desperation and sadness and only because they were led to believe that further resistance was vain.

We know that behind the curtain of calm which the Nazi censors and the Gestapo have drawn between you and us there continue to be, in every corner of France, repeated and gallant efforts to help us.

We know that thousands of your young men have sought ways of escaping from the prison which is France in order to continue the fight for freedom abroad as our allies.

We know that under the surface you Frenchmen and French women are the same passionate patriots, the same children of liberty, that all the world has recognized you to be in centuries past.

Listen, French men and French women. Listen to an American friend. Listen to what I say to you from the White House at Washington. I make you a promise. I bring you cause for cheer in the midst of your misfortunes, your hunger, your sadness.

The fight we are fighting will be won. As to that we have pledged our honor and all our might. We will not falter on the way. Rough and dangerous stretches of road lie ahead. We shall surmount them. We shall beat the arrogant and cruel Nazis and their little Fascist servants just as we shall beat the treacherous Japanese. We shall beat them entirely and utterly and conclusively.

But the victory will not be ours alone. It also will be a victory for you, for you men and women of France, on whom the Germans visited so much of their first military fury and whom they still divide and torment. When we and our comrades win the victory, that victory will restore to France, as to the other conquered and oppressed nations of Europe, her lovely countryside and her ancient cities, her share of the world's good things,

her right to maintain her cherished civilization and to develop it as her people freely decide. France will again know grandeur and glory, and Frenchmen will again walk their country lanes and their streets as free men in a world saved from misery and slavery.

Hold up your heads, my French friends. The world of free men is on the march. The slave legions who oppress you cannot stop us. Our victory will be your victory. We know that at heart you are with us. I speak to you in hope and in confidence. Like you in France, I and my fellow-countrymen say in America: "Vive la liberté! Vive la vrai France!"

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
THE SECRETARY

*file  
Confidential*

June 29, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I wish to call your attention to the attached cable from Vichy

CH

France Folder

PH  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

(Paris)  
Vichy

Dated June 27, 1942

Rec'd 11:23 a.m., 28th.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

930, June 27, 7 p.m.

We feel that the Department may wish to draw to the attention of our propaganda services the advisability of suspending at least temporarily the featuring in shortwave broadcasts to Europe of General de Gaulle as the person about whom the French peoples aspirations for liberation now center.

(We have reference as a concrete example to last night's commentary following the news in English at 10 p.m. local time over WLWO 19 meter band based on an editorial in the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE which was delivered as representing the way the American people feel.)

The prestige of Britain throughout France is at zero and unfavorable comment on the contrast between the resistance at Sebastopol and the capitulation of Tobruk is heard on all sides.

While the

-2-#930, June 27, 7 p.m., from (Paris) Vichy.

While the hope of the French people for liberation grows greater every day their reaction toward the delicate morale question of dissidence has always been mixed. The mistrust of the Vichy Government following Laval's speech should not be interpreted as a general swing toward de Gaulle. In the minds of the French the Gaullist movement is based on England paid by England and shares in the ups and downs of British prestige in France. The symbol of liberation for the French masses is represented by the military power of the United States and the traditional fair play of American statesmen in not attempting to impose a government on France.

The French reaction to broadcasts such as the one under reference is, therefore, one of disappointment at what is regarded as a lack of discernment in French affairs.

REPEATED TO LONDON.

TUCK

WSB

PSF; France

Copy made by FIBL from copy of original furnished by Admiral Leahy

COPY of letter from President Roosevelt, Washington, July 20, 1942,  
to Admiral Leahy:

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 20, 1942

My dear Admiral:

In calling you to active duty as Chief of Staff to the  
Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army and Navy, I accept  
your resignation as Ambassador to France.

In so doing I want you to know first of all of my great  
satisfaction in the way in which you have carried out an extremely  
difficult task at an extremely difficult time, and second, that  
there has been such good agreement in our national policy in respect  
to France during your Ambassadorship.

In the words of the Navy -- "well done."

Always sincerely your friend,

/s/ Franklin D. Roosevelt



*file*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

*France Folder  
1-42*

August 4, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Referring again to your suggestion that Tuck at Vichy endeavor to ascertain Darlan's position with respect to the reported possibility of turning over French submarines to the Germans, I call your attention to telegram from Vichy no. 1117, July 31, 7 p.m., a copy of which is hereto attached.

Any further data received on this subject will be communicated to you at once.

*CH*

It is recalled to say that the notion of French submarines as well as the presence of German crews in London is purely imaginary.

WMB

GRAY

(Paris)  
Vichy

Dated July 31, 1942

Rec'd 8:27 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

1117, July 31, 7 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

Embassy's 1099, July 28, 5 p.m.

Under the headlines "A denial of the Admiralty. None of our submarines will be delivered to Germany!" The newspapers of unoccupied France publish the following front page article today. "An important British newspaper has just published information according to which 1000 German officers and sailors are supposed to be at the present time in Toulon and Ville Franche for the purpose of commissioning 20 to 30 French submarines which would be delivered to Germany at an early date. The French Admiralty has never taken the trouble up to this date to denounce imaginary news which is spread daily by foreign raids concerning our Navy. If today it breaks this silence it is because of the widespread diffusion of this newspaper.

It is needless to say that the cession of French submarines as well as the presence of German crews in Toulon is purely imaginary".

KLP

TUCK



PMW  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

(Paris)  
Vichy

Dated July 31, 1942

Rec'd 8:35 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

1117, July 31, 7 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

We have still been unable to obtain any con-  
firmation of the reported visit of a German naval  
commission to Toulon on July 14. A responsible  
friendly official of the Second Bureau of the  
Navy stated to us categorically that no such visit  
was ever made and that France has no intention of  
turning over any of her naval vessels to Germany.  
Concerning the report that the naval vessels at  
Toulon were taking on supplies of fuel and munitions,  
he stated that in view of France's position, these  
ships are now at all times kept in a state of readiness  
with full stocks of fuel and munitions.

(END OF MESSAGE)

TUCK

NK

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 27, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE  
SECRETARY OF STATE:

I am concerned by this report from Bern in regard to Darlan turning over some French submarines to Germany. What would you think of a polite inquiry in regard to this report?

F.D.R.

Dispatch from Bern, July 25 from Harrison re above. No. 3431.

D. J. B.

Letter from Lord Halifax to the  
President, dated Sept. 19, 1942,  
in re de Gaulle's coming over here,  
sent to Under Secretary Welles for  
recommendation.

G. G. T.



PERSONAL AND ~~SECRET~~

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

19th September 1942.

Dear Mr. President,

I mentioned privately to Eden what you said to me on September 10th about de Gaulle, and about the possible utility of inviting him to pay a visit to this country.

I have now had a reply from him, of which I enclose a copy.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. President,

Very sincerely yours,

*Halifax*

DECLASSIFIED

By Authority of British

Govt. telegram, 1-12-72

By RHP Date FEB 8 1972

The Honourable  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, D.C.

DECLASSIFIED

By Authority of British

Gov't. telegram, 1-12-72

By RHP Date FEB 8 1972

~~HIGH SECRET~~

Copy of telegram received from the Foreign Office  
dated September 17th, 1942.

The President's object is presumably to keep relations between the United States and de Gaulle steady during preparation and execution of Torch. It would, however, take more than a contingent invitation to Washington to keep the General quiet if he got wind of what is afoot. Once Torch starts we must face a major crisis in relations between both our Governments and de Gaulle. Whole Fighting French movement will bitterly resent being kept out of operation and of subsequent administration of the country.

Torch will, of course, change the whole picture as regards France, the French Empire and the Fighting French movement in ways which cannot be present<sup>at</sup> be foreseen. If the Americans manage to bring local French forces, and possibly also leaders from France, over to our side, the importance of the Fighting French movement will diminish and de Gaulle may find it necessary to join up with new and larger body of dissident Frenchmen. If the President can influence him in this direction so much the better.

You may wish to inform the President of the foregoing, though we should see no harm if he were to issue an invitation to de Gaulle in the form he suggested - i.e. making it clear that the invitation carried no commitments but that mutual discussions might be helpful. We should not, however, wish ~~to~~<sup>the</sup> General to go to Washington in the immediate future since we  
/want

want to reach agreement with him about Levantine States and Madagascar and discussion of these questions is bound to take some time.

I have mentioned the matter to Winant, who is inclined to advise against the invitation on the ground that if de Gaulle visited Washington at the time the United States is trying to consolidate North Africa the effect upon French leaders there may be bad.

PSF France Folder



*File Personal*

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

October 3, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

I am returning to you herewith the letter addressed to you by Edouard Herriot which you sent back to me with your memorandum of September 30.

Since Monsieur Herriot's letter to you was in reply to the message which you sent him, it does not seem to me that any further letter from you is required, at least not at this time.

Believe me

Faithfully yours

Enc.

The President,  
The White House.

Châzelguyon (Puy de Dôme)

Chambre des Députés

le 31 août

1942

Cabinet du Président Mon cher Président,

Dans quelques heures, par la volonté de nos maîtres actuels, j'aurai cessé mes fonctions de Président de la Chambre Française des Députés. Je desiré que mon dernier acte, à ce titre, soit un hommage pour cette noble personne, pour le libre peuple des Etats Unis, pour vos alliés qui sont aussi les nôtres.

Vous m'avez fait demander, il y a quelque temps, par votre excellent Ambassadeur, M. l'Amiral Lechy, de vous rejoindre. J'ai senti vivement l'honneur de cette invitation. Si j'ai hésité, si j'hésite encore à m'y rendre, c'est que le pauvre peuple français, martyrisé de toute façon, a besoin, dans son désarroi, de conserver les quelques chefs qui sont demeurés s'innocents. En le quittant, sans pouvoir lui donner la raison de mon départ, puisque tout moyen d'exprimer notre pensée vous est interdit, alors que les propagandes les plus hostiles peuvent s'exercer contre nous, je craindrais le soupçon de vouloir éviter le danger, de fuir les souffrances auxquelles nous sommes tous assésés.

Les événements peuvent changer et m'imposer d'autres résolutions que je vous ferai connaître. Quoi qu'il advienne, mon cher Président, comptez sur mon patriotisme, mon entière fidélité, sur mon serrement absolu.

Je vous prie d'agréer, avec mes hommages pour Madame Roosevelt et mes vœux pour toute votre famille, l'expression de mon respectueux et profond attachement

Etterno!

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anche

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LE GENERAL DE GAULLE.

10-6-42  
PSF France folder  
4. CARLTON GARDENS, S.W.1.

WHITENALL 2444.

LE 194

6 October 1942

Monsieur le Président,

851.01  
M. André Philip vous remettra cette lettre. Il vous exposera la condition où se trouvait la France quand il l'a quittée. Aux informations qu'il vous apportera sur le développement et la cohésion des groupes de résistance français et, d'une manière générale, sur l'état d'esprit du pays, je désire ajouter ceci:

Vous avez suivi l'évolution morale et politique de la France depuis 1918.

851.01/400-3/6

11/18/43  
P. G. D. A. B.

Vous savez qu'ayant supporté le poids principal de la dernière guerre, elle en est sortie épuisée. Elle a senti profondément que l'état d'infériorité relative qui en résultait pour elle l'exposait à un grave péril. Elle a cru à la nécessité d'une coopération alliée pour compenser cette infériorité et réaliser l'équilibre des forces.

Vous n'ignorez pas dans quelles conditions cette coopération lui a manqué. Or, c'est principalement le doute où la France se trouvait, quant au soutien réel qu'elle pourrait trouver contre l'adversaire de la veille et du lendemain, qui a été à l'origine de la politique ondoyante et de la mauvaise stratégie d'où est sortie notre défaite. Les erreurs intérieures que nous avons commises, les divisions et les abus qui contrariaient le jeu de nos institutions, ne sont que des causes accessoires à côté de ce fait capital. La France vaincue a donc le sentiment profond de l'humiliation qui lui a été infligée et de l'injustice du sort qu'elle a subi. C'est pourquoi il

faut qu'avant la fin de cette guerre la France reprenne sa place dans le combat et qu'en attendant elle n'ait pas l'impression qu'elle l'ait jamais entièrement abandonné. Il faut qu'elle ait conscience d'être l'un des pays dont l'effort aura amené la victoire. Ceci est important pour la guerre et essentiel pour l'après-guerre.

Si la France, fût-elle libérée par la victoire des démocraties, se faisait à elle-même l'effet d'une nation-vaincue, il serait fort à craindre que son amertume, son humiliation, ses divisions, loin de l'orienter vers les démocraties, l'inciteraient à s'ouvrir à d'autres influences. Vous devinez lesquelles. Ce n'est pas-là un péril imaginaire, car la structure sociale de notre pays va se trouver plus ou moins ébranlée par les privations et les spoliations. J'ajoute que la haine de l'Allemand, actuellement très violente parce que l'Allemand est présent et vainqueur, s'atténuera beaucoup vis-à-vis de l'Allemand absent et vaincu. Nous avons vu cela et indépendamment de la Troisième République, je

déjà après 1918. En tous cas, quelque inspiration qu'accepte une France qui serait jetée dans une situation révolutionnaire, la reconstruction européenne et même l'organisation mondiale de la paix, s'en trouveraient dangereusement faussées. Il faut donc que la victoire réconcilie la France avec elle-même et avec ses amis, ce qui n'est pas possible si elle n'y participe pas.

Voilà pourquoi si l'effort de la France combattante se limitait à grossir de quelques bataillons les forces du parti de la liberté ou même à rallier une partie de l'Empire français, cet effort serait, en lui-même, presque négligeable en face du problème essentiel: remettre la France, toute entière, dans la guerre.

Vous me direz: "Pourquoi vous êtes-vous assigné ce but? Et à quel titre y êtes-vous fondé?"

Il est vrai que je me suis trouvé, au moment de l'armistice de Vichy, dans une situation proprement inouïe. Appartenant au dernier Gouvernement régulier et indépendant de la Troisième République, je

déclarai tout haut vouloir maintenir la France dans la guerre. Le Gouvernement qui s'était emparé du pouvoir dans le désespoir et la panique de la nation ordonnait: "Cessez le combat!" En France, et hors de France, les corps élus, les représentants du Gouvernement, les Présidents des Assemblées se résignaient ou gardaient le silence. Si le Président de la République, si le Parlement et ses chefs, avaient appelé le pays à continuer la lutte, je n'aurais même pas pensé à parler au pays ou en son nom. Mais ils ne l'ont pas fait. Nul autre ne s'est présenté qui ait entraîné un groupe ou un territoire français. Des hommes politiques, des chefs militaires considérables, se sont trouvés, à tels ou tels moments, libres de parler et d'agir, par exemple en Afrique du Nord. Ils n'ont pas montré, un seul moment, soit la conviction, soit la confiance en leur mandat, suffisantes pour faire la guerre. Qu'il s'agisse-là d'une faillite de l'élite, cela n'est pas contestable. Dans son esprit, le peuple français en a, d'ailleurs, déjà

tiré la conclusion. Quoiqu'il en soit, j'étais seul. Fallait-il me taire?

C'est pourquoi j'ai entrepris l'action qui me semblait nécessaire pour que la France n'abandonnât pas la lutte et pour appeler, en France et hors de France, tous les Français à continuer le combat. Est-ce à dire que mes compagnons et moi nous soyons posés, à aucun moment, comme le Gouvernement de la France? En aucune manière. Au contraire, nous nous sommes tenus et proclamés comme une autorité essentiellement provisoire, responsable devant la future représentation nationale et appliquant les lois de la Troisième République.

Je n'étais pas un homme politique. Toute ma vie j'étais resté strictement enfermé dans ma spécialité. Quand, avant la guerre, j'essayais d'intéresser à mes idées des hommes politiques, c'était pour les amener à réaliser, pour le pays, un objet militaire. De même, au moment de l'armistice de Vichy, c'est d'abord sous une forme militaire que j'ai fait appel au pays. Mais, du fait que des

éléments de plus en plus nombreux ont répondu, que des territoires se sont joints ou ont été joints à la France Combattante et que nous étions toujours seuls à agir d'une manière organisée, nous avons vu venir à nous des responsabilités plus larges. Nous avons vu se créer en France une sorte de mystique dont nous sommes le centre et qui unit, peu à peu, tous les éléments de résistance. C'est ainsi que nous sommes, par la force des choses, devenus une entité morale française. Cette réalité nous crée des devoirs que nous sentons peser lourdement sur nous et auxquels nous considérons que nous ne pourrions nous soustraire sans forfaiture à l'égard du pays et sans trahison vis-à-vis des espérances que place en nous le peuple de France.

On nous dit que nous n'avons pas à faire de la politique. Si l'on entend par là qu'il ne nous appartient pas de prendre parti dans les luttes partisans de jadis ou de dicter un jour les institutions du pays, nous n'avons nul besoin de telles recommandations, car c'est notre principe même de nous abstenir

de telles prétentions. Mais nous ne reculons pas devant le mot "politique" s'il s'agit de rassembler, non point seulement quelques troupes, mais bien la nation française dans la guerre, ou s'il s'agit de traiter avec nos alliés des intérêts de la France en même temps que nous les défendons, pour la France, contre l'ennemi. En effet, ces intérêts, qui donc, sauf nous-mêmes, pourrait les représenter? Ou bien, faut-il que la France soit muette pour ce qui la concerne? Ou bien, faut-il que ses affaires soient traitées avec les Nations Unies par les gens de Vichy dans la mesure et sous la forme que M. Hitler juge convenables? Il n'est pas question de défiance de notre part vis-à-vis de nos alliés, mais bien des trois faits suivants qui dominent et commandent nos personnes: seuls des Français peuvent être juges des intérêts français; le peuple français est naturellement convaincu que, parmi nos alliés, nous parlons pour lui comme nous combattons pour lui à leurs côtés; dans leurs malheurs, les Français sont extrêmement sensibles à ce qu'il advient de leur Empire et toute réalisation contre lui l'union nationale.

apparence d'abus commis à cet égard par un allié est exploitée par l'ennemi et par Vichy d'une manière dangereuse quant au sentiment national.

Parce que des circonstances sans précédent dans notre Histoire nous ont assigné cette tâche, est-ce à dire que nous pensions imposer à la France un pouvoir personnel, comme quelques-uns le murmurent parfois à l'étranger? Si nous nourrissions des sentiments assez bas pour chercher à escroquer le peuple français de sa liberté future, nous ferions preuve d'une ignorance singulière de notre propre peuple. Le peuple français est, par nature, le plus opposé au pouvoir personnel. A aucun moment il n'eût été facile de lui en imposer un. Mais, demain, après l'expérience odieuse de pouvoir personnel faite par Pétain grâce à la connivence des Allemands et à l'oppression intérieure, et après la longue et dure contrainte de l'invasion, qui donc aurait l'absurdité d'imaginer qu'on pût établir et maintenir, en France, un pouvoir personnel? Quelques services qu'il ait pu rendre dans le passé, le rêveur qui tenterait cela réaliserait contre lui l'unanimité nationale.

Il est, d'ailleurs, remarquable que nous ne soyons taxés par personne en France d'aspirer à la dictature. Je ne fais pas seulement allusion au fait que des hommes tels que M. Jouhaux, Président de la Confédération Générale du Travail, M. Edouard Herriot, Chef du parti radical, M. Léon Blum, Chef du parti socialiste, les chefs même du parti communiste, se sont mis à notre disposition et nous ont fait savoir que nous pouvions compter sur eux dans notre effort, dont ils approuvent, sans réserve, la tendance et les buts. Mais, chez nos adversaires mêmes, non seulement ceux de Vichy, mais aussi les Doriot et les Déat, nous n'avons été, à aucun moment, accusés de viser à la dictature. Ils nous reprochent d'être des mercenaires à la solde des démocraties. Ils ne nous ont jamais reproché de vouloir instaurer en France un pouvoir personnel et anti-démocratique.

Je me permets de vous dire, Monsieur le Président, que dans cette guerre immense qui exige la coopération et l'union de tout ce qui lutte contre les mêmes ennemis, la sagesse et la justice imposent que la

France combattante soit réellement et puissamment aidée. Or, indépendamment de l'appui moral et matériel que les alliés peuvent nous donner, et sans que nous demandions aucunement à être reconnus comme le Gouvernement de la France, nous estimons nécessaire d'être abordés chaque fois qu'il s'agit soit des intérêts généraux de la France, soit de la participation française à la guerre, soit de l'administration des territoires français que le développement de la guerre met graduellement en mesure de reprendre le combat et qui n'ont pu se rallier spontanément à nous.

Votre nom et votre personne ont, en France, un prestige immense et incontesté. La France sait qu'elle peut compter sur votre amitié. Mais enfin, dans votre dialogue avec elle, qui peut être votre interlocuteur? Est-ce la France d'hier? Les hommes qui en furent les plus représentatifs me font dire qu'ils se confondent avec nous. Est-ce la France de Vichy? Peut-être pensez-vous que ses Chefs pourraient, un jour, reprendre les armes à nos côtés. Hélas! je ne le crois pas. Mais, en admettant que cela fût possible,

il existe actuellement une certitude, c'est qu'ils collaborent avec Hitler. Dans vos dialogues avec eux, il y a toujours ce tiers présent. Est-ce la France de demain? Comment savoir où elle réside tant qu'elle n'aura pas désigné ses chefs par une Assemblée librement constituée? En attendant, ne faut-il pas que la nation française ait, cependant, la preuve qu'elle n'a pas quitté le camp des alliés et qu'elle y est politiquement présente, comme elle l'est, malgré tout et par nous, militairement et territorialement? On me dit que des personnes de votre entourage craindraient qu'en reconnaissant notre existence vous compromettiez la possibilité que certains éléments, notamment militaires, qui dépendent actuellement du Gouvernement de Vichy, rentrent bientôt dans la guerre. Mais, croyez-vous que ce soit en ignorant les Français qui combattent, en les laissant se décourager dans l'isolement que vous attirerez les autres dans le combat? D'autre part, quel danger comporterait, pour la France, le fait que ses alliés provoqueraient sa propre division en favorisant la

formation de plusieurs tronçons rivaux, les uns neutralisés avec l'accord des alliés eux-mêmes, les autres luttant dispersés pour la même patrie! Enfin, plus de deux ans de cruelles expériences n'ont-ils pas montré que tout élément qui se sépare de Vichy est amené, soit à rejoindre la France combattante, soit à figurer individuellement comme isolé sans importance? Le peuple français, dans sa situation terrible voit naturellement très simple. Pour lui, il n'y a de choix qu'entre le combat et la capitulation. Pour lui, le combat c'est naturellement la France combattante et son instinct exige la concentration autour de ceux dans lesquels il voit le symbole même de son effort. C'est là, d'ailleurs, la raison profonde qui, malgré les difficultés incroyables dans lesquelles la France combattante vit et lutte depuis plus de deux ans, a maintenu et accru sa cohésion.

Malgré la capitulation et l'armistice, la France garde, dans le monde, une puissance qu'il n'est pas possible de négliger. Il s'agit de savoir comment elle retournera au combat dans le camp des nations

unies en sauvegardant à la fois sa sensibilité et son unité. Parmi les problèmes de la guerre, celui-là est l'un des plus importants. C'est pourquoi je vous demande d'accepter l'idée d'un examen général et direct des relations entre les Etats-Unis et la France combattante. Quelle que doive être la forme d'un pareil examen, je ne crois pas qu'il y ait une autre manière d'aborder franchement un problème dont je sens profondément que, dans l'intérêt de la cause sacrée pour laquelle nous combattons, il doit être résolu.

Je vous prie de bien vouloir agréer, Monsieur le Président, les assurances de ma haute considération.

*P. de Laney.*

Son Excellence  
Monsieur Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
Président des Etats-Unis d'Amérique.

*file*

TRANSLATION OF LETTER OF OCTOBER 6, 1942,  
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT BY GENERAL DE GAULLE.

General de Gaulle

4 Carlton Gardens, S.W.1  
Whitehall 5444

October 6, 1942.

Mr. President:

Mr. André Philip will hand this letter to you. He will give to you an account of the situation as it was in France at the time he left that country. I take this opportunity to add something to the reports which he will give you with regard to the development of the groups of French resistance and their cohesion, and also, in a general way, with regard to the state of mind of the country.

You are familiar with the moral and political evolution of France in the period since 1918. You know that France came out of the last war, in which she bore the heaviest burden, completely exhausted. The country felt deeply that the resultant state of relative inferiority exposed it to a grave danger. France believed in the necessity of allied cooperation in order to counteract that inferiority and to create an equilibrium of power.

You will remember in what circumstances that cooperation failed to materialize. It was, in fact, principally  
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the uncertainty with which France was faced as to the amount of real support which she might be able to count on against the recent and the future enemy which caused the wavering policy and bad strategy which were responsible for our defeat. The mistakes in internal policy, the factional differences, and the abuses which thwarted the operation of our institutions, are only accessory factors to this main fact.

A vanquished France therefore was deeply sensitive to the humiliation which she had suffered and to the injustice of the fate to which she had been subjected. For this reason it is necessary that before the end of the present war France should resume her place as a combatant, and that meanwhile she should not have the impression that at any time she has been entirely abandoned. She must feel that she is one of the countries contributing to the victory. This is important during the war and essential for the post-war period.

If France, liberated by the victory of the democracies, should feel herself to be a defeated nation, there is good reason to fear that her bitterness, her humiliation, her factional differences, far from leading her toward the democracies, would give an impetus toward giving way to other influences. You will surely see what I have in mind... This is no imaginary danger, since the social structure of

our

country will have been shattered, more or less, by poverty and enemy exploitation. I should like to add that the hatred toward the German, now very violent because the German is present and the master, will abate to a great degree when the German is absent and defeated. We experienced that already, after 1918. In any case, whatever may be the source of inspiration accepted by a France thrust into a revolutionary situation, European reconstruction and even the organization of world peace will be dangerously prejudiced (faussé) thereby. The victory, therefore, must reconcile France with herself and with her friends, which will not be possible unless she can participate in the victory.

For these reasons, if the effort of the Fighting French is to be limited to increasing by some battalions the forces in the cause of liberty, or even to rallying a part of the French empire, this effort would be in itself almost negligible in view of the essential problem, which is to put France, as an entity, again into the war.

You may ask me, why have you taken on this task, and by what authority?

It is true that at the time of the Vichy armistice I found myself in an extraordinary situation. As a member of the last regular and independent Government of the

Third

Third Republic I took a strong position for keeping France in the war. The Government which came into power in the hour of the nation's despair and panic, however, gave the order to withdraw. The elected representatives, the agents of the Government, the Presidents of the Chambers, either resigned or remained silent, whether they were in France or abroad. If the President of the Republic, or the Parliament and its leaders, had called on the country to continue the struggle, I should not have thought of appealing to the country or speaking in its name. But they did not do it. No one else came forward who might have had the support of any group or of any French territory. There were political leaders and military men of considerable importance who at one time or another were free to speak or to act, in North Africa, for example. Not once did they show either the conviction or the faith in their mandate which would have been necessary for continuing the war. There is no doubt that we were faced with the complete failure of our leading classes. The French

people

people moreover did not fail to draw the conclusion. Whatever the circumstances may have been, I was alone. Ought I to have kept silent?

Thus I began the activity which seemed necessary to make sure that France should not give up, and that all Frenchmen, at home or abroad, should be called to continue the struggle. In no sense is this to be taken to mean that I or my colleagues ever presented ourselves as the Government of France. On the contrary we proclaimed our position as an authority essentially provisional, responsible to the future national authorities, and administering the laws of the Third Republic.

I was

I was not a political leader. All my life I had kept strictly within my profession. It is true that before the war I had tried to interest the political leaders in some of my ideas, but it was only to bring to realization some military project for the benefit of the country. Likewise at the time of the Vichy armistice it was primarily along military lines that I appealed to the country. When we observed, however, that larger and larger groups responded, that whole territories adhered or were joined to the Fighting French, and that we alone were in a position to act with any form of organization, we saw that larger responsibilities had fallen to us. We have seen in France the growth of a sort of mystical conception directed toward us, and bit by bit uniting all the elements of resistance. Thus we have become, by force of circumstance, a French moral entity. This has created for us duties for which we feel deeply responsible and which we could not avoid without betraying the respect of the country and the hopes placed in us by the French people.

We are told that we should not engage in political activity. If this means that we ought not to take up the former party controversies or dictate the form of government of the country, we need no such advice, because as a matter of principle we abstain from any such pretensions. But we do not hesitate before the word "politics" if it

means

means to rally not only a few troops but the whole French nation in the war, or if it means to deal with our Allies on matters concerning the interests of France at the same time that we defend those interests against the enemy. Who, except ourselves, could represent those interests? Or should France remain silent in matters concerning her affairs? Or should these affairs be discussed with the United Nations by the Vichy people in the manner and form that Hitler may judge appropriate? It is not a question of our self-assertion toward our Allies but consideration of the three following factors which has determined our attitude: Only Frenchmen can be the judge of their national interests; the French people are convinced that when treating with the Allies we speak for the nation just as we fight for its interests at the side of our Allies; in their misfortunes the French people have become extremely sensitive to the fate of their empire, and any appearance of abuse of these interests on the part of any ally is exploited by the enemy and by Vichy in a manner dangerous to the national sensibilities.

Since circumstances unprecedented in our history have given us this task, can we think of imposing upon France some regime of personal power, as some people, chiefly abroad, are suggesting? To have such vile feelings as to want to cheat the French people of their future liberty

would

would be to prove our complete ignorance of our own people. The French nation is in character the most deeply opposed to a regime of personal power. It has never been easy to impose such power, but now, after the odious experience of the personal regime of Petain which has been possible because of the connivance of the Germans and because of the oppressions in the administration, and after the long and heavy burden of the invasion, who would be absurd enough to imagine that he could establish and maintain a regime of personal power in France? The dreamer who would try that, whatever services he may have rendered to the country in the past, would find the whole nation ranged against him.

It is worth noting, moreover, that no one in France has accused us of aspiring to dictatorship. Let me refer to the fact that men like Mr. Jouhaux, President of the General Federation of Labor, Mr. Edouard Herriot, Leader of the Radical Party, Mr. Leon Blum, Leader of the Socialist Party, even the leaders of the Communist Party, have placed themselves at our disposition, and have informed us that we can count on them in our work, of which they unreservedly approve both the direction and the aims. Even among our adversaries, not only the Vichy people but also those like Doriot and Déat, there has been no one to accuse us of wanting a dictatorship. They reproach us with being  
mercenaries

mercenaries paid by the democracies, but they have never reproached us with trying to set up a personal and anti-democratic power in France.

Let me say, Mr. President, that in this immense war which demands the cooperation and unity of every element fighting against the same enemies, wisdom and justice demand that the Fighting French receive real and powerful aid. But apart from the moral and material support which the Allies can give us, and without demanding that we be recognized as the Government of France, we consider that it is necessary that we be consulted (abordé) each time there is question either of the general interests of France, or of French participation in the war, or of the administration of those French territories which the developments of the war may gradually place in a position where they can again take part in it,-- territories which have not been able spontaneously to join with us.

Your name and your personality have an enormous prestige in France. France knows that she can count on your friendship. But in your conversations with France, with whom can you speak? Is it the France of yesterday? The men who were the most representative authorize me to say that they are with us. Is it the France of Vichy? Perhaps you think that its leaders might some day take up

arms

arms at our side. I regret to say I cannot believe it; but if such a thing were possible, one thing is certain - today they are collaborating with Hitler, and in your conversations with them he is always present as a third party. Is it the France of tomorrow? How can we know what that is, until the leaders can be chosen by a freely constituted assembly? Meanwhile has not the French nation proved that it has not deserted the camp of the Allies, and that the nation is politically carrying on, in spite of everything, through the agency of our organization, both in a military and in a territorial sense?

I have been told that persons who have access to you (de votre entourage) may be fearful lest in recognizing our existence one would prejudice the chances that certain elements, particularly of a military character, now attached to the Vichy Government, might again take part in the war. But do you believe that by ignoring those Frenchmen who are fighting, and by leaving them in a discouraging isolation, you would attract others for war service? Think of the risk to France, on the other hand, in the fact that her allies seem to be promoting the disintegration of the country by favoring the formation of several rival factions, some of them neutralized

by

by agreement with the Allies themselves, and others trying to fight separately, but for the same cause. After all, have not the two years of bitter experience demonstrated that every element which separated itself from Vichy either found its way to the Fighting French or, if left apart, remained in ineffectual isolation? In the tragic situation in which the French people have been placed they see things very simply. They see that their only choice is between war and capitulation. If the choice is to be war, then it means naturally the Fighting French, and the national instinct rallies them around those in whom they see the symbol of their war effort. In this we have the real explanation of the fact that in spite of the extreme difficulties under which the Fighting French have kept going in the last two years, they have held fast and gained in solidarity. .

Notwithstanding the capitulation and the armistice, France still represents a power in the world which must not be ignored. We must find a way for her to return as a participant in the war along with the United Nations while preserving both her susceptibilities and her unity. This is one of the most important problems of the war,

and

and it is for this reason that I ask you to agree to undertake a general and direct examination of the relations between the United States and the Fighting French. Whatever may be the procedure to this end, I believe there is no other way of approaching with complete openness of mind a problem for which I feel with deep conviction, because of the sacred cause for which we are fighting, there must be found a solution.

Accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my high consideration.

His Excellency,

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America.



AMERICAN RED CROSS  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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pres mail*

CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE

October 9, 1942

THE WHITE HOUSE

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RECEIVED

Memorandum for The President

From the Chairman of the American Red Cross

Attached is a confidential memorandum concerning anti-Jewish measures in occupied France which, I am sure, will be of interest to you in case you have not already received information on the subject.

The source of this information is well known to us and is a very superior person.

*HO*

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COPY

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS  
IN FRANCE

France folder  
1-42

Headquarters:  
1, Rue Beauvau  
Marseille

Memorandum

To: Mr. Sparrow

Marseille

From: Mr. Bell

August 7, 1942 - 3:00 pm

Melle de Hurtado, Directrice du Service Social de la Seine, 6 rue de Berri, Paris, called today to give you a report on the latest rounding up of the foreign Jews in Paris.

This visit was at the request of Mme Gillet, with whom Melle de Hurtado is associated since she also works with the French Red Cross and as you will note, has her office at the same address as Mme Gillet.

Melle de Hurtado's verbal account of this affair was most vivid - covering principally the following points:-

Some 15,000 women and children have so far been taken, plus about 3,000 men. The small proportion of men is accounted for by the fact that they had been previously taken or had fled.

As they were rounded up they were centralized in the circus of the Velodrome d'Hiver, where as many as 8,000 were assembled for as long as 7 days under most adverse conditions - no bedding or other facilities other than straw to sleep on and inadequate sanitary provisions.

From this point they were placed in camps where as many as 4,500 have been crowded into camps ordinarily accommodating 1,500. Here again the same terrible conditions exist, the only thing provided being straw for sleeping.

Children over two years of age, and up to about 12, are taken from the parents and placed in separate camps.

The parents are taken from the camps and herded into freight cars - 42 to each car - and sent to an unknown destination in Germany. They are locked in the cars for the duration of the voyage of three days and nights. They are accompanied by children of age 13 and above. Girls and boys of 15 and 16 picked up are sent along without their parents.

With the children over 2 remaining in camps in France, one Jewish woman for each 15 children remains to care for them.

When picked up these people had no time to prepare their affairs or to carry with them the necessary toilette articles.

Everything is taken from them down to personal items including wedding rings. Also little items that might be used in any way as weapons, such as needles, mirrors, etc.

All the work of rounding up has been done by French Police. The Germans appear only in the background in civilian dress watching the proceedings.

Many of the French police have attempted to resign but their resignation have been refused and they are forced to continue with the unpleasant work.

At the freight cars the German authorities take over and their treatment becomes worse. Melle de Hurtado cited an incident here. A French Red Cross worker attempted to pass a jug of water to those in one of the wagons. This was jerked from her hands by a German officer and thrown away with the remark "What are you trying to do for these dogs."

All the proceedings have been undertaken with an obvious lack of preparation and organization.

The French Red Cross have been doing everything they could to provide medical assistance and any comfort articles for the victims among which are included the ill, the very young and the very old. This assistance is entirely unofficial - they are for the most permitted to continue but have been requested by the prefet for the Seine not to wear the Red Cross insignia. They, therefore, appear in their uniforms without the insignia.

The Secours National is providing some food and milk.

The question was asked of Melle Hurtado as to what preparation had been made to properly identify the children taken from the parents in the anticipation of their rejoining the families at some future date. The answer was that some attempt was being made by the police, and also by the French Red Cross, but that the entire matter was in a state of chaos.

As to the future of these children, nothing official is known but two stories have so far been advanced:

- 1) They will rejoin their parents later.
- 2) They will remain in France to be eventually adopted by French Jewish families.

In reply to a question as to the destination and purpose of sending the parents to Germany, she was unable to furnish a solution. It was suggested that possibly it was to supply workers. Melle de Hurtado doubted this since the subjects include all ages in various states of health and the majority of them would be useless for this purpose.

The victims include the German, Polish and Russian Jews. Those from Hungary and Roumania have so far been spared.

Melle de Hurtado said that stories of family suicides and children being thrown from windows to their death, and other sensational stories have been exaggerated. Such things have happened but were not nearly as common as these stories would have you believe.

Nevertheless, she said that it was terrible enough without all the sensationalism, and that the whole affair was indescribably brutal and unbelievable in this present day. She has worked among these people for some time, pointed out their faults in a matter of fact way, and did not seem to be an emotional person, but her story was told at times with effort as she fought back the tears.

/s/ Leslie C. Bell

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

October 27, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

Monsieur André Philip, who recently fled from France to become a member of General de Gaulle's National Committee in London, has recently arrived in Washington.

Monsieur Philip tells me that he has had the opportunity of talking with you in past years and, if that is correct, you know his background.

He was brought to see me by Monsieur Adrien Tixier, representative in this country of General de Gaulle, and I have had two long and interesting conversations with him.

He has handed me a letter addressed to you by General de Gaulle which I am transmitting to you herewith, together with a copy of a translation made for the files of the Department.

Monsieur Philip has asked if you will receive him, and I have told him that I would transmit his request

The President,

The White House.

PSF  
France folder  
FW 351.01/400-3/6

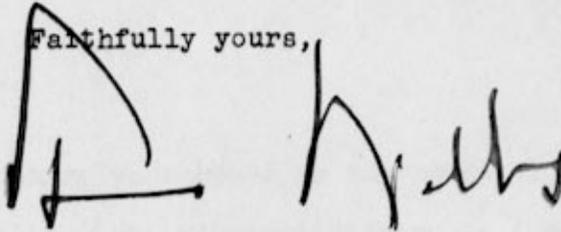
PS/DAB

to you. Will you let me know what your wishes may be?

If you decide to see him, may I have an opportunity  
of talking with you before you receive Monsieur Philip?

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. H. H. H.", written in dark ink.

Enc.

PSF France

(TRANSLATION)

DELEGATION OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
IN THE UNITED STATES

Washington, D.C.

October 31, 1942.

  
Mr. Minister:

I have the honor to forward to you herewith, on behalf of Mr. André Philip, two letters addressed to President Roosevelt by the chiefs of the two principal organizations of French internal resistance: "Libération" and "Combat". I should be very grateful to you if you would be good enough to transmit these two letters to President Roosevelt.

Please accept (etc.)

A. TIXIER

The Honorable Sumner Welles,  
Under Secretary of State,  
Department of State,  
Washington, D.C.

TR:AVA:DVA

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. letter, 2-5-73  
By RT. Date APR 10 1973

(TRANSLATION)

October 7, 1942.

Mr. President:

Whatever may be the value of the reports which reach the State Department concerning public opinion in France, they are necessarily incomplete and fragmentary. Collected most often by members of the diplomatic corps, they are only the reflection of but a part of the nation, and in the present state of affairs in France, of the part which can least claim to represent it.

The evolution of mentalities is now so rapid, the currents of opinion subject to influence which are sometimes so subtle, that there is danger of their not being completely understood by foreign observers.

As for two years I have been closely associated with the inner life of the nation and as, in order to organize resistance in France, I have approached all social classes, all political parties, it has seemed to me necessary, for a better understanding in American circles, to outline for you a sketch of the evolution in mentality as it appears to me. My chief concern in writing this letter will be to remain most strictly objective.

It is impossible to understand the present situation and the will of the French nation without going back to the events of June 1940.

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In a few weeks, fortifications which people had learned to consider impregnable were pierced or turned, the army which it considered invincible was reduced to surrender, three-fifths of the country occupied by the enemy. An unprecedented calamity in our history fell upon a people in no way prepared for it. This frightful catastrophe gave a terrible blow to the very great majority of the French and plunged them into a state of psychological distress, of mental lethargy which made it impossible for them at the time to measure either the tragic mistake of the Armistice or the real political significance of the change in Government.

Marshal Pétain, the new Chief of State, crowned by all his past military glory, whose political views were known to only a small number of initiates, had the advantage of huge popularity with all classes of the nation. For proof, I need only the manifestations of a delirious popular enthusiasm which marked his first visits to the large French cities.

In the confusion of minds and of men, the people threw the responsibility for their misfortune on their former political leaders. They gave their absolute confidence to one whose past should be a guarantee of his future attitude. They believed him the best qualified to get the most out of a  
gravely

gravely compromised situation.

At this time, the attitude taken by General de Gaulle seemed to the majority only a proof of exceptional courage, but without military or political significance.

Also, as a whole, and paradoxical as it may appear, the people were at one and the same time "Pétiniste" and "Gaulliste". They hoped and believed that the action of General de Gaulle outside the national territory and that of the Marshal within the mother country would converge and that the two would be directed against Germany, with respect to which their feelings had not changed. So it is that the Légion des Combattants was, upon its institution, considered by many as a sort of black Reichswehr, a camouflaged semi-military formation, which would still have its rôle to play in the war.

It was the incidents at Mers-el-Kébir which, for the first time, showed the French people the antagonism between the Marshal's policy and that of General de Gaulle. It must, furthermore, be recognized, that at that period, the prestige of the Chief of State was so great that, on that occasion, the population as a whole condemned the British action.

These, however, were the incidents which gradually led to the separation of the nation into two blocs: the first, and

and at the time the less important, for which everything is good provided that it is directed against Germany; and the second, for which adherence and obedience to the Marshal had to be the sole watchword.

It is from this moment that there may be dated what may be called a "Petainism for action", that is, the grouping in numerous formations of Frenchmen who did not only line up behind the Marshal, but who further took it as their task to fight all those who did not adopt their attitude.

From this moment, French spiritual unity was shaken; the bourgeoisie as a whole entered the Marshal's ranks, while the popular classes began to manifest an instinctive aversion for them.

The MONTOIRE interview in October 1940, the announcement by the Marshal himself of the policy of collaboration with Germany, caused in any case complete stupefaction and, often great indignation. The majority of the country, whether or not grouped behind the Marshal, had remained anti-German; as a consequence, they were anti-collaborationist. But while the opponents saw in this change the beginning of a policy of criminal surrender, the others wished to see therein only an adroit maneuver by which the Marshal would "ease out" the Germans. They recalled on that occasion his words: "Honor obliges us to undertake

take

take nothing against our former Allies."

This part of public opinion seemed to receive confirmation of its interpretation when, on December 13, 1940, Mr. Laval, known for his sympathies with the German authorities, was turned out of the Government. The Marshal's popularity, by that time threatened, returned to its full strength; at that precise moment, he had the nation behind him.

Laval's departure, added to a relative contradiction between the Government's words and actions, reinforced the thesis of the famous double play. The Marshal became in the eyes of a part of public opinion a new Stresemann, whose dupes were the Germans. Belief in this myth of the double play pushed strong roots to the depths of the nation and even to this day it has rare, but incurable, adherents. It is true that those who, whether sincerely or not, were attached to it, found in it both the explanation and the excuse for their passivity.

The events which followed succeeded one after another in undermining in the country the myth of the double play. Gaullism, in which the people, and particularly those in the occupied zone, recognized a rare moral courage, was coarsely attacked by official propaganda, its leaders condemned to death and their property seized. The English,  
whom

whom France persisted in considering its allies, were daily attacked and calumniated by an unrestrained press. All undertakings of the Axis powers were favored and those of the Allies hindered. The cession of Indo-China to Japan, the Syrian affair, the supplying of Rommel's army in Cyrenaica, the operation of our factories for the benefit of the Reich, were stigmatized by opinion as crimes against the French nation.

It was clearly evident that if the hidden intentions of the Government were pure (though there was nothing to allow such an assertion), its actions were equivalent to constant surrenders, to most serious renunciations. Its weakness vis-à-vis German demands daily took France farther along the road of capitulations and dishonor. An increasing number of Frenchmen then drew away from the Marshal.

It was then that he began to be attacked, no longer only in his policy, but even in his person. People began secretly to recall his past errors, his opinion as to the uselessness of the fortifications just at the point where the Germans had pierced them, his views as to the slight efficacy of aviation in the war to come, his thorough-going pessimism illustrated by his wish to request an armistice in March 1918.

In

In parallel fashion, General de Gaulle's prestige increased in proportion as the growing length of the war made it possible to consider the Armistice as a criminal mistake. The refusal of the leader of the Free French Forces to submit to the "inevitable" was no longer considered merely as a courageous act of high moral worth, but also as the proof of great political and strategic clear-sightedness.

The working class was the first intuitively to understand the still confused aspects of the problem and to range itself in an increasingly refractory opposition, while the bourgeois class as a whole, from sentiment even more than from reason, retained its confidence in the Marshal.

The people needs to place its hope and its faith in a man. If you, Mr. President, for America, Mr. Churchill for Great Britain, and Mr. Stalin for the USSR, symbolize the will to fight of your great countries, the Marshal could no longer fill that rôle for resisting France. That is when the star of General de Gaulle brightened on the horizon, while that of the Marshal diminished. People were insensibly becoming Gaullist.

However, the speeches of French statesmen like their actions, daily brought new proofs of an increasing subjection

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to Germany. It was no longer only actions of foreign policy which wounded the popular will, but also those of domestic policy. By a phenomenon of osmosis which encountered no obstacle but, on the contrary, extraordinary complaisance, there was substituted for the regime of liberty to which the people were attached a regime of oppression, the resemblance of which to the Nazi regime could not fail to strike the masses.

First came the establishment of the "regime of reprisals". The reactionary circles believed that the moment had come to take their revenge for the days of the Popular Front and the great fear it had caused them. In the smallest villages, as well as in the large cities, the conduct of public affairs, promoted by the zeal of the Legionnaires, passed to the hands of a minority which, most often, did not have the confidence of the people and which, instead of practicing a policy of reconciliation, strengthened past antagonisms.

It was then that the Government had a measure of its growing unpopularity. Following the logical curve of its evolution, it defended itself by instituting further police measures and redoubling a self-propaganda, measures which further heightened the barrier which henceforth separated it from the nation.

Even the domain of the spirit, that dearest to the

French

French, was, in its turn, violated. The Hitlerian New Order was landed in the press, over the radio, in the schools. Freedom to write, freedom of opinion, freedom of thought, disappeared one after the other. Anti-Semitic persecutions began. Christian consciences, enlightened by some eminent priests, gradually drew away from the temporal power and entered more and more into the opposition.

In the economic field, contrary to the formal assurances of the Chief of State, the omnipotence of the trusts received its definitive confirmation by the creation of Committees of Organization. In their turn, small and average employers entered the resistance.

The word "Republic", which symbolized all the freedoms in the nation's eyes, was stricken from the vocabulary and effaced from the fronts of our monuments. A heavy atmosphere of distrust and delation weighed upon the country. Thenceforth, the opposition united in its ranks all social classes, all political tendencies, all confessions. Vichy was thenceforth for France only a docile instrument in German hands. From that time on, the people vowed the same hatred to the German Reich and to the French regime. In public opinion, the military problem  
of

of the liberation of the territory was indissolubly linked with the political problem of overturning the Vichy dictatorship and the restoration of all its freedoms.

That is the reason why General de Gaulle, a military symbol of the will to liberation, became, without having so sought, by the very force of events and the will of public opinion, the symbol of complete internal, as well as foreign, liberation.

Is there any need of telling you, Mr. President, that the last straw was placed with Mr. Laval's attainment of power? France had forgotten neither the equivocal machinations of the pre-war period, nor the circumstances under which he had been dismissed, fifteen months earlier, by the Marshal. His return showed in striking fashion the impotence of the Chief of State whose prestige, in the eyes of the people, was no longer useful except to help German designs.

Mr. Laval had the strange merit of dissipating all doubts: "I desire a German victory," he cried on June 22, 1942. At a stroke, he ranged in the opposition an important part of the middle classes whose eyes were then finally opened.

The inhuman anti-Semitic persecutions, the forced recruiting of labor for German factories, the propaganda carried

carried on even in the very heart of the army for enlistments in the anti-bolshevik legion, the Marshal's congratulations to Chancellor Hitler after the Dieppe raid, the pitiless police repressions, are sufficient evidence to prove that Vichy - not only by its words, but by its acts - is giving its complete assistance to its German masters. The huge majority of the nation disowns the Government and no longer distinguishes the Chief of State from it.

The noblest words and symbols have been prostituted in shady equivocations. Honor, dignity, work, fatherland, flag, have become means of sacrilegious propaganda in the hands of those who govern us for the sake of their criminal designs.

Thus, the French are no longer distinguishable by their attachment to the flag which the vilest claim, but by their attachment to the color bearer. France has two of them: Pétain and de Gaulle. She has chosen de Gaulle. There are but two Frances now: Pétain's, which turned traitor after having shamefully submitted, and de Gaulle's, which wages war. There is no longer an intermediate position. Such, Mr. President, is my country's opinion.

I am, myself, a soldier whom the drama being lived by my country launched without preparation into resistance. The evolution which I have so briefly retraced for you was

my

my own, just as it was that of my fellow-countrymen. I had no a priori preference, either for a political tendency or for this or that man, when in June 1940, I had to stop fighting. Though I unsuccessfully tried to continue the fight by joining General de Gaulle, I nevertheless believed in Marshal Pétain. I believed in the double play and I even believed in a real human and social national revolution. Like all other Frenchmen, I was cruelly disappointed, odiously deceived. My thinking is not personal; I share in the great current of opinion which, like a tidal wave, is submerging all Frenchmen and drawing them with it. It is on this ground that my opinion should have value and weight in your eyes.

France now has unity and will. They may be defined thus: there is no longer political opposition in France. The pre-war parties are dead and even those who fought in them do not wish to see them set up again. The miracle has been accomplished. Resistance, whether organized or not, gathers together men coming from all political horizons, from all social classes, and they fight together like brothers.

France's misfortune has remade its unity. For it, a Government which is the result of a coup d'état, trampling on its most sacred rights, betraying its elementary  
duties

duties, cannot speak in its name. For France, Vichy is Hitler.

All France recognizes in General de Gaulle the symbol of the will to fight and the last representative of the legal government of the Republic. Vichy's betrayal has made inseparable for Frenchmen the problem of liberation and that of revolution. General de Gaulle is the depository of that double will.

Only the army, perhaps, partly escapes that unanimous will. Officers whose patriotic sense is not involved, but only their political sense, share in the popular will to liberation, but in the majority they have not understood the will to revolution. Enemies of the Government, they still remain attached to the Marshal's person. However, the army cannot be considered, either by France or by its Allies, as a foreign body in the country, as having a will of its own. It cannot and must not have any will but that of the nation. Any attempt which should seek either to withdraw it from the current of a unanimous public opinion or a fortiori to set it against such current, would be contrary to elementary democratic principles and would be doomed to failure. The army cannot be a fief in the Republic. Unquestionably, doubts have been expressed as to General de Gaulle's political views. Even before they  
were

were formulated, the leader of the Fighting French Forces made a public and solemn promise to surrender the authority, after the war, to the French people. On that account, the most representative men in Republican France, men like Mr. Herriot, Mr. Léon Blum, Mr. Jouhaux, Mr. Jeanneney, as well as the movements of resistance, the present expression of the nation, after having signed the manifesto which the General promulgated, recognized him as military and political head and ranged themselves behind him.

The fighting United Nations must heed the voice of suffering France which, tomorrow, will be fighting on their side. This voice is the voice of General de Gaulle. Such is the will of the French nation. The material and moral interests of France must be defended; they will not be defended at Vichy, but at London, by the head of the Fighting French Forces.

Mr. President, it is in the name of the "Combat" Movement that I write to you. This movement of resistance, which extends to the free zone, the occupied zone and North Africa, and whose men are already fighting and dying for freedom, for our common freedom, have more than 50,000 Frenchmen organized, ready to take up their arms again. Several hundred thousand of my fellow-countrymen are active in its propaganda groups. It is their message

which

- 15 -

which I transmit to you. I ask you to hear their voice.

Please believe, Mr. President, the assurance of my  
deeply respectful sentiments.

CHIEF OF THE "COMBAT" MOVEMENT

TR:AVA:DVA

Le 7 octobre 1942.



Monsieur le Président,

75  
NOV-5 1942

Quelle que soit la valeur des informations qui parviennent au State Department sur l'opinion en France, elles sont nécessairement incomplètes et fragmentaires. Recueillies le plus souvent par des personnalités du Corps Diplomatique, elles ne sont le reflet que d'une partie seulement de la nation, et dans l'état actuel des choses en France, de la partie qui peut le moins prétendre à la personnifier.

L'évolution des esprits est maintenant si rapide, les courants d'opinion soumis à des influences parfois si subtiles qu'ils risquent de ne pas être complètement saisis par des observateurs étrangers.

Méfié depuis deux ans à la vie intime de la nation, ayant approché pour l'organisation de la résistance en France toutes les classes sociales, tous les partis politiques, il m'a paru nécessaire, pour la meilleure compréhension des milieux américains, de vous brosser un tableau de l'évolution des esprits telle qu'elle m'apparaît. Mon souci principal dans la rédaction de cette lettre sera de rester sur le terrain de la plus stricte objectivité.

Il est impossible de comprendre l'état actuel et la volonté de la nation française si on ne remonte aux événements de juin 1940.

En quelques semaines, les fortifications que le peuple avait appris à considérer comme imprenables, furent percées ou tournées, l'armée qu'il considérait comme invincible fut réduite à merci, les trois cinquièmes du pays occupé par l'ennemi. Une calamité sans précédent dans notre histoire s'abattait sur un peuple que rien n'y avait préparé. Cette effroyable catastrophe porta un coup terrible à la très grande majorité des Français et les plongea dans un état de détresse psychologique, de léthargie cérébrale qui ne leur permit de mesurer à ce moment ni la tragique erreur de l'Armistice, ni la signification politique réelle du changement de gouvernement.

Le Maréchal PETAIN, nouveau Chef de l'Etat, auréolé de toute sa gloire militaire passée, et dont les vues politiques n'étaient connues que d'un petit nombre d'initiés, bénéficia d'une immense popularité auprès de toutes les classes de la nation. Je n'en veux pour preuve que les manifestations d'un enthousiasme populaire délirant qui marquèrent ses premiers déplacements dans les grandes villes françaises.

Dans le désarroi des esprits et des hommes, le peuple rejetait sur ses anciens chefs politiques la responsabilité de son malheur. Il donnait sa confiance absolue à celui dont le passé devait être garant de l'attitude future. Il le croyait le plus qualifié pour tirer le meilleur parti d'une situation gravement compromise.

A ce moment, l'attitude prise par le Général de GAULLE n'apparaissait à la majorité que comme une preuve d'un courage exceptionnel, mais sans portée militaire ou politique.

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Aussi, dans son ensemble, et si paradoxal que cela puisse sembler, le peuple était à la fois "Pétiniste et Gaulliste". Il espérait et croyait que l'action du Général de GAULLE, hors du territoire national et celle du Maréchal sur le sol métropolitain, seraient convergentes et toutes deux dirigées contre l'Allemagne, à l'égard de laquelle ses sentiments n'avaient pas changé. C'est ainsi que la Légion des Combattants fut, à sa création, considérée par beaucoup comme une sorte de Reichswehr noire, une formation paramilitaire camouflée qui aurait encore son rôle à jouer dans la guerre.

Ce furent les incidents de Mers-el-Kébir qui, pour la première fois, illustrèrent aux yeux du peuple français l'antagonisme qui opposait la politique du Maréchal à celle du Général de GAULLE. Il faut bien reconnaître, d'ailleurs, qu'à cette époque le prestige du Chef de l'Etat était si puissant qu'en l'occurrence la population dans son ensemble condamnait l'action britannique.

Ce furent, néanmoins, ces incidents qui amorcèrent la séparation de la nation en deux blocs: le premier, et à l'époque le moins important pour lequel tout est bon pourvu qu'il soit dirigé contre l'Allemagne, le second pour qui l'attachement et l'obéissance au Maréchal devaient être l'unique mot d'ordre.

C'est de ce moment que date ce que pourrait appeler le "Pétinisme d'action", c'est-à-dire le rassemblement en nombreuses formations de Français qui, non-seulement, se groupaient derrière le Maréchal, mais encore prenaient pour tâche de combattre tous ceux qui n'adoptaient pas leur attitude.

Dès ce moment, l'unité spirituelle française était ébranlée; la bourgeoisie dans son ensemble s'incorporait dans les formations du Maréchal, cependant que les classes populaires commencent à leur manifester une instinctive aversion.

L'entrevue de MONTAIGNE, en octobre 1940, l'annonce par le Maréchal lui-même de la politique de la collaboration avec l'Allemagne, causa toujours une immense stupéfaction, souvent une grande indignation. La majorité du pays, groupée ou non derrière le Maréchal, était demeurée anti-allemande, par voie de conséquences, elle était anti-collaborationniste; mais, tandis que les opposants virent dans ce changement le début d'une politique d'abandon criminel, les autres ne voulurent y voir qu'une adroite manœuvre par laquelle le Maréchal "roulerait" les Allemands. Ils rappelaient à cette occasion ses paroles: "L'honneur nous commande de ne rien entreprendre contre nos anciens Alliés".

Cette partie de l'opinion sembla recevoir confirmation de son interprétation, lorsque, le 13 décembre 1940, Monsieur LAVAL, connu pour ses sympathies avec les Autorités Allemandes, fut chassé du Gouvernement, la popularité du Maréchal, déjà menacée, reprit toute sa force; à ce moment précis, il avait la nation derrière lui.

Le départ de LAVAL, joint à une contradiction relative entre les paroles et les actes du Gouvernement, renforcèrent le thème du fameux double jeu. Le Maréchal passait aux yeux d'une partie de l'opinion pour un nouveau Stresemann dont les Allemands seraient les dupes. La croyance à ce mythe du double jeu poussa des racines solides au plus profond de la nation et même à ce jour, elle conserve de rares, mais incurables adeptes. Il est vrai que ceux qui, sincèrement ou non, y étaient attachés, y trouvaient tout à la fois l'explication et l'excuse à leur passivité.

Les événements qui suivirent vinrent, l'un après l'autre, saper dans le pays le mythe du double jeu. Le Gaullisme, auquel le peuple, et particulièrement celui de la zone occupée, reconnaissait

un rare courage moral, était grossièrement attaqué par la propagande officielle, ses chefs condamnés à mort et leurs biens séquestrés. Les Anglais, que la France persévérait à considérer comme ses alliés, étaient journellement attaqués et injuriés par la presse déchaînée. Toutes les entreprises des puissances de l'Axe étaient favorisées et celles des Alliés entravées. La cession de l'Indochine au Japon, l'affaire de Syrie, le ravitaillement de l'armée ROMMEL en Cyrénaïque, le travail de nos usines au bénéfice du Reich, furent stigmatisés par l'opinion comme des crimes contre la nation française.

Il apparaissait nettement que si les intentions cachées du Gouvernement étaient pures (encore que rien ne permit de l'affirmer), ses actes équivalaient à de perpétuels abandons, aux renoncements les plus graves. Sa faiblesse vis-à-vis des exigences allemandes entraînait chaque jour la France davantage dans la voie des capitulations et du déshonneur. Un nombre croissant de Français se détachèrent alors du Maréchal.

C'est à ce moment qu'il commença à être attaqué, non plus seulement dans sa politique, mais encore dans sa personne. Sous le manteau, on rappelait ses erreurs passées, son opinion sur l'inutilité des fortifications précisément au point où les Allemands firent leur percée, son jugement sur le peu d'efficacité de l'aviation dans la guerre à venir, son pessimisme fonceur illustré par sa volonté de demander l'armistice en mars 1918.

Parallèlement, le prestige du Général de GAULLE augmenta au fur et à mesure que la durée croissante de la guerre permettait de considérer l'Armistice comme une criminelle erreur. Le refus du Chef des FORCES FRANÇAISES LIBRES à se soumettre à "l'inévitable" n'était plus considéré seulement comme un acte courageux d'une haute valeur morale, mais aussi comme la preuve d'une grande clairvoyance politique et stratégique.

La classe ouvrière fut la première à saisir intuitivement les données encore confuses du problème et à se ranger dans une opposition de plus en plus irréductible, cependant que la classe bourgeoise dans son ensemble, par sentiment encore plus que par raison, maintenait sa confiance au Maréchal.

Le peuple a besoin de fixer son espoir et sa foi en un homme. Si vous, Monsieur le Président, pour l'Amérique, Monsieur CHURCHILL pour la Grande-Bretagne, et Monsieur STALINE pour l'U.R.S.S., symbolisez la volonté de lutte de vos grands pays, le Maréchal ne pouvait plus remplir ce rôle pour la France résistante. C'est alors que l'étoile du Général de GAULLE grandit à l'horizon, en même temps que celle du Maréchal diminuait. Insensiblement, la population devenait gaulliste.

Cependant, les discours des hommes d'Etat Français, comme leurs actes, apportaient chaque jour des preuves nouvelles d'un asservissement croissant à l'Allemagne. Ce n'était plus seulement les actes de politique extérieure qui heurtaient la volonté populaire, mais aussi ceux de politique intérieure. Par un phénomène d'osmose qui ne rencontrait aucun obstacle, mais au contraire de singulières complaisances, au régime de liberté auquel le peuple était attaché se substituait un régime d'oppression dont la ressemblance avec le régime nazi ne pouvait manquer de frapper les masses.

Ce fut d'abord l'instauration du "régime du ressentiment". Les milieux réactionnaires crurent le moment venu de prendre leur revanche sur les jours du Front Populaire et la grande peur qu'ils en avaient eue. Dans les plus petits villages, comme dans les grandes villes, la gestion des affaires publiques, secondée par le zèle des Légionnaires passa aux mains d'une minorité qui, le plus souvent, n'avait pas la confiance de la population, et qui, au lieu de pratiquer une politique d'apaisement, renforça les antagonismes passés.

C'est alors que le Gouvernement mesura son impopularité grandissante. Suivant la courbe logique de son évolution, il se défendit par le renforcement des mesures policières et le redoublement d'une self-propagande, lesquels élargirent encore le fossé qui, désormais, le séparait de la nation.

Le domaine spirituel lui-même, le plus cher aux Français, fut à son tour violé. L'Ordre Nouveau Hitlérien était prôné dans la presse, la radio, les écoles. La liberté d'écrire, la liberté d'opinion, la liberté de penser, disparurent l'une après l'autre. Les persécutions anti-sémites commençaient. Les consciences chrétiennes, éclairées par quelques prêtres éminents, se détachèrent graduellement du pouvoir temporel et entrèrent progressivement dans l'opposition.

Dans le domaine économique, contrairement aux assurances formelles du Chef de l'Etat, l'omnipotence des trusts reçut sa consécration définitive par la création des Comités d'Organisation. A leur tour, petits et moyens patrons entrèrent dans la résistance.

Le mot "REPUBLIQUE" qui, aux yeux de la nation, symbolisait toutes les libertés, fut rayé du vocabulaire et effacé des frontispices de nos monuments. Une lourde atmosphère de méfiance et de délation s'appesantit sur le pays. Dès lors, l'opposition unissait dans ses rangs toutes les classes sociales, toutes les tendances politiques, toutes les confessions. VICHY n'était plus pour la France qu'un instrument éoile entre les mains allemandes. La population, désormais, vouait la même haine au Reich allemand et au régime français. Devant l'opinion, le problème militaire de la libération du territoire était indissolublement lié au problème politique du renversement de la dictature vichyssoise et à la restauration de toutes ses libertés.

C'est la raison pour laquelle le Général de GAULLE, symbole militaire de la volonté de libération, devenait, sans l'avoir cherché, par la force même des événements et la volonté de l'opinion, le symbole de la libération totale intérieure autant qu'extérieure.

Est-il besoin de vous dire, Monsieur le Président, que le comble à l'exaspération fut mis par l'arrivée au pouvoir de Monsieur LAVAL? La France n'avait oublié ni les louches machinations de l'avant-guerre, ni les conditions dans lesquelles il avait été chassé, quinze mois plus tôt, par le Maréchal. Son retour illustrait de façon éolante l'impuissance du Chef de l'Etat dont, aux yeux du peuple, le prestige ne servait plus qu'à favoriser les desseins allemands.

Monsieur LAVAL eut le rare mérite de dissiper toutes les équivoques: "Je souhaite la victoire allemande", s'écriait-il le 22 juin 1942. D'un coup, il rangeait dans l'opposition une importante partie des classes moyennes dont les yeux étaient alors définitivement ouverts.

Les inhumaines persécutions anti-sémites, le recrutement forcé de la main d'oeuvre pour les usines allemandes, la propagande faite jusqu'au coeur même de l'armée pour les engagements dans la Région anti-bolchevique, les félicitations du Maréchal au Chancelier HITLER après le raid de Dieppe, l'impitoyable répression policière, sont autant de témoignages prouvant que VICHY, non plus seulement par ses paroles, mais par ses actes, apporte toute son aide à ses maîtres allemands. L'immense majorité de la nation rejette le Gouvernement et ne s'empare plus de lui le Chef de l'Etat.

Les mots et les symboles les plus nobles ont été prostitués en de louches équivoques. L'honneur, la dignité, le travail, la patrie

le drapeau, sont devenus des moyens de propagande sacrilège aux mains de ceux qui nous gouvernent pour voiler leurs desseins criminels.

Aussi, les Français ne se distinguent-ils plus par leur attachement au drapeau dont les plus vils se réclament, mais par leur attachement au porte-drapeau. La France en connaît deux: PÉTAIN et de GAULLE. Elle a choisi de GAULLE. Il n'y a plus que deux France: celle de PÉTAIN qui trahit après s'être honteusement soumise, celle de de GAULLE qui fait la guerre. Il n'est plus de position intermédiaire. Telle est, Monsieur le Président, l'opinion de mon pays.

Je suis moi-même un militaire que le drame vécu par ma patrie a lancé sans préparation dans la résistance. L'évolution que je vous ai brièvement retracée dut la mienne comme celle de mes compatriotes. Je n'avais aucune préférence a priori, ni pour une tendance politique, ni pour tel ou tel homme, lorsqu'en juin 1940, je dus cesser de me battre. Si j'ai tenté sans succès de continuer la lutte en rejoignant le Général de GAULLE, j'ai cru, néanmoins, au Maréchal PÉTAIN, j'ai cru au double jeu, j'ai cru même à une véritable révolution nationale humaine et sociale. Comme tous les autres Français, j'ai été cruellement déçu, odieusement trompé. Ma pensée n'est pas personnelle, je participe au grand courant d'opinion qui, comme une marée, submerge tous les Français et les entraîne à sa suite. C'est à ce titre que mon opinion à vos yeux doit avoir une valeur et un poids.

La France a maintenant une unité et une volonté. On peut les définir ainsi; il n'existe plus en France d'oppositions politiques. Les partis de l'avant-guerre sont morts et ceux-là même qui y militaient ne veulent pas de leur reconstitution. Le miracle s'est accompli. La résistance, organisée ou non, rassemble des hommes venus de tous les horizons politiques, de toutes les classes sociales, et qui fraternellement combattent.

Le malheur de la France a refait son unité. Pour elle, un gouvernement issu d'un coup d'état, foulant aux pieds ses droits les plus sacrés, trahissant ses devoirs élémentaires, ne saurait parler en son nom. Pour la France, VICHY c'est HITLER.

La France toute entière se reconnaît dans le Général de GAULLE, symbole de sa volonté de lutte et dernier représentant du gouvernement légal de la République. La trahison de VICHY a rendu inséparables pour les Français le problème de la libération et celui de la révolution. Le Général de GAULLE est dépositaire de cette double volonté.

Seule, peut-être, l'armée échappe-t-elle partiellement à cette volonté unanime. Les officiers dont le sens patriotique n'est pas en cause, mais seulement le sens politique, participent à la volonté populaire de la libération, mais dans leur majorité, ils n'ont pas saisi sa volonté de révolution. Ennemis du Gouvernement, ils restent encore attachés à la personne du Maréchal. Cependant, l'armée ne peut être considérée, ni par la France, ni par ses alliés, comme un corps étranger dans le pays, comme ayant une volonté propre. Elle ne peut et doit avoir de volonté que celle de la nation. Toute tentative qui viserait soit à la soustraire au courant d'opinion unanime, soit a fortiori à l'y opposer, serait contraire aux principes démocratiques élémentaires et serait vouée à l'échec. L'armée ne peut être un fier dans la République. Sans doute, des craintes ont-elles été émises quant aux vues politiques du Général de GAULLE. Avant même que d'être formulées, le Chef des FORCES FRANÇAISES COMBATTANTES a pris l'engagement public et solennel de rendre la parole, après la guerre, au peuple français. Pour cette raison, les hommes les plus représen-

tatifs de la France Républicaine, tels que MM. HERRIOT, Léon BLUM, JOUHAUX, JEANNERET, ainsi que les mouvements de résistance, expression actuelle de la nation, après avoir souscrit au manifeste que le Général a promulgué, l'ont reconnu comme chef militaire et politique et se sont rangés derrière lui.

Les nations unies qui combattent doivent entendre la voix de la France qui souffre et qui, demain, à leurs côtés, se battra. Cette voix, c'est celle du Général de GAULLE. Telle est la volonté de la nation française. Les intérêts matériels et moraux de la France doivent être défendus; ils ne le seront pas à VICHY, mais à Londres par le Chef des FORCES FRANÇAISES COMBATTANTES.

Monsieur le Président, c'est au nom du Mouvement "COMBAT" que je m'adresse à vous. Ce mouvement de résistance, qui s'étend à la zone libre, à la zone occupée et à l'Afrique du Nord, et dont les hommes déjà combattent et meurent pour la liberté, pour notre liberté commune, groupe plus de 50.000 Français encadrés, prêts à reprendre les armes. Dans ses formations de propagande militent plusieurs centaines de milliers de mes compatriotes. C'est leur message que je vous transmets. Je vous demande d'entendre leur voix.

Croyez, Monsieur le Président, à l'expression de mes sentiments profondément respectueux.

LE CHEF DU MOUVEMENT "COMBAT".

Le 9 octobre 1942.

Monsieur le Président,

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Voilà 27 mois, quelques hommes arrachaient le pouvoir à des gouvernements dont le caractère n'était pas à la hauteur de l'épreuve subie par la France.

Ces hommes, dont les chefs de file étaient PETAÏN, LAVAL, WENGAND, prophètes du malheur, dont seul le malheur pouvait combler les passions partisans, décidaient de renoncer à la lutte, d'accepter la défaite comme une pénitence que le peuple français aurait méritée, et de signer un armistice déshonorant.

Cependant, un homme, presque seul, quittait la France rendue aux ennemis, décidait de poursuivre la lutte, et déclarait:

"La France a perdu une bataille,  
mais la France n'a pas perdu la guerre".

La France, d'abord consternée, stupéfaite, n'entendait pas sa voix; dans la confusion qui régnait alors, ses alliés ne lui donnaient pas tous les moyens de se faire entendre.

Parallèlement, au cours de ce deuxième semestre de 1940, quelques hommes, sans aucun contact avec la France Libre, décidaient de ne pas accepter la capitulation. Pèlerins de l'idée de résistance, ils parcoururent le pays pour n'y trouver que désarroi et confusion.

Une grande partie de la population s'abandonnait au fatalisme, tandis que les nouveaux maîtres prêchaient la Révolution Nationale et la pénitence, s'appuyant sur une bourgeoisie et un patronat, abérés par leur attachement à des privilèges de classes qu'ils avaient cru menacés par les mouvements sociaux de 1936, et enclins à préférer l'Ordre nouveau, fût-il d'inspiration germanique, aux risques d'une révolution française après la victoire.

En décembre 1940, un premier petit groupe de résistance était mis sur pied. Il s'agissait de quelques dizaines d'hommes. Leurs chefs n'avaient pas d'illusion sur le Chef de l'Etat, dont le défaitisme nous paraissait éclatant. Mais les espoirs que le Maréchal PETAÏN suscitait chez certains, la passivité de la population française, nous incitèrent à une sorte de neutralité en matière de politique intérieure.

Nous commençâmes la lutte contre les doctrines totalitaires et contre les collaborateurs les plus apparents du germanisme. Dès notre première action, la police fut sur nos traces et des nôtres furent arrêtés. Il fallut nous recueillir, nous remettre à un travail plus sérieux de structure et faire l'apprentissage de la clandestinité. "LIBERATION" naissait en zone occupée et en zone non-occupée. L'idée de résistance faisait son chemin. D'autres groupes se constituaient. La presse clandestine faisait son apparition.

Au cours de l'été 1941, "LIBERATION", constatant qu'une grande partie de la classe ouvrière était hostile à la collaboration et au régime de VICHY, établit ses premiers contacts avec les dirigeants de la C.G.T. Visiblement, la France cherchait un symbole de résistance

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et souhaitait l'unité. Bien qu'il fut vilipendé par la propagande de la Révolution Nationale, le nom du Général de GAULLE trouvait un crédit de plus en plus grand parmi les dirigeants ouvriers - non ralliés à VICHY - et auprès des intellectuels.

Aussi, au cours de conversations qui eurent lieu en septembre 1941 entre les chefs des mouvements de résistance, "LIBERATION" posa le problème de l'unité de la résistance française, constatant pour son compte, qu'il n'y avait pas d'autre symbole possible que la FRANCE LIBRE et son chef, le Général de GAULLE.

Ce ne fut pourtant qu'au mois de juin 1942 que "LIBERATION" put prendre contact avec les agents du Général de GAULLE.

Le premier trimestre 1942 fut décisif pour l'unité française. Les uns après les autres, les groupements de résistance se rallièrent à la cause. L'opinion française de zone non-occupée et de zone occupée se tournait vers le Général de GAULLE. Seuls, les milieux de VICHY, l'armée des nouveaux fonctionnaires, une partie de la bourgeoisie, une partie des cadres militaires, restaient réfractaires.

Depuis, le mouvement n'a fait que s'affirmer. Outre les trois principaux groupements de résistance en zone libre - "COMBAT", "LIBERATION", "FRANC-TIREUR" qui font 90% de la résistance organisée-, outre la résistance de zone occupée, les plus notoires dirigeants syndicalistes choisissent cette voie et militent avec "LIBERATION". Et le Parti Socialiste, lui-même, qui se réorganisait et dont le Comité d'Action Socialiste s'était adressé à "LIBERATION" pour faire reparaitre "LE POPULAIRE", demandait à ses militants de joindre les groupes de résistance.

En juin 1942, sans y être invité par quiconque, le signataire de cette lettre, réussissait à gagner l'ANGLETERRE.

Nous ne connaissions à "LIBERATION" que la mystique de la lutte, et j'ignorais les difficultés dans lesquelles la FRANCE LIBRE se débattait auprès de ses Alliés.

Ayant fait depuis des mois notre examen de conscience, et notre choix, je venais dire aux Britanniques ce que j'avais constaté au cours de milliers de kilomètres de voyage: la foi de la FRANCE dans le chef qu'elle se choisit, la certitude que ce chef n'a pas d'ambition personnelle, qu'il respecterait les principes démocratiques, qu'il rendrait au pays l'exercice de ses libertés une fois la Victoire accomplie, et qu'il ne pourrait maintenir son prestige qu'autant qu'il tiendrait les engagements qu'il avait pris solennellement.

Je venais dire aussi que tout affaiblissement de la résistance unitaire provoquerait un affaiblissement du potentiel allié, et qu'il n'y avait, désormais, plus en FRANCE que deux voies possibles: la voie de l'abandon et des attermolements successifs, PETAÏN; la voie de la résistance, de GAULLE... Enfin, que tous les hommes que pourraient jouer secrètement VICHY, si étoilés fussent-ils, ne serviraient qu'à disperser la nouvelle puissance française, en compromettant l'unité.

En juin 1942, avant de retourner en France, je suis venu, Monsieur le Président, passer quelques jours dans votre pays, pour exposer ces faits à certains membres de votre Gouvernement. Après

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bien des déceptions, nous avons cru voir alors la situation s'éclaircir et les Etats-Unis faire un pas vers la reconnaissance, non pas d'un régime politique (nous demandons un régime de guerre en attendant la libération), mais d'une unité de la FRANCE COMBATTANTE.

Après mon court séjour aux Etats-Unis, je suis retourné passer trois mois en France où j'ai pu constater que la résistance française se développe chaque jour et confirme son attachement au Général de Gaulle. Mais, revenu en Angleterre pour quelques semaines, je vois que la FRANCE COMBATTANTE n'a pas trouvé auprès des Nations Unies la place qui lui est due, et que le jour peut venir où vous ferez appel à la résistance française sans lui avoir accordé les droits les plus élémentaires.

La France qui, par bonheur, l'ignore, peut en concevoir au jour de l'Armistice une amertume dont les conséquences sur le destin européen seraient incalculables.

Les raisons de cet état de choses paraissent les suivantes: comme il y a eu chez les Alliés une tendance à jouer certains éléments de VICHY contre les éléments sains de la Nation, il semble y avoir aujourd'hui une tendance à jouer l'armée de l'Armistice contre la Nation Française. Pourtant, il ne peut y avoir, dans ce cas, que deux hypothèses:

- ou bien, l'Armée de l'Armistice se joindra aux combattants, à temps, et dans le cadre de la nouvelle unité, et les Alliés n'y pourront trouver que profit,

- ou bien, elle se réservera, jusqu'à la dernière heure, pour mener un jeu trouble au profit de la Révolution Nationale qui a vendu la France. La partie se jouera alors entre l'Armée de l'Armistice et la Nation Française. Et nous croyons, à "LIBERATION", que celle-ci brisera celle-là.

J'ai su, Monsieur le Président, que depuis mon voyage aux Etats-Unis des voix françaises s'étaient élevées pour infirmer l'exposé que j'avais fait dans ce sens et pour minimiser la résistance française.

Permettez-moi de vous dire que ces voix ont perdu tout contact avec la France, et que les hommes qui vous parlent ainsi, et qui sont blâmés par leurs meilleurs amis, sont partis trop loin et trop vite pour être aussi qualifiés que nous. Comme nos écrits à "LIBERATION" démentent leurs accusations de néo-nationalisme, le ralliement de tous les mouvements de résistance au Général de GAULLE vient démentir leurs affirmations du seul ralliement de "LIBERATION".

Ne pensez-vous pas, Monsieur le Président, que l'homme qui vous présentera ce message, socialiste attaché à tous les principes de liberté que vous avez définis, combattant de la première heure auprès de "LIBERATION", est plus qualifié pour vous parler de la France et de sa résistance qu'aucun des hommes demeurés en Amérique pendant notre calvaire ?

Monsieur le Président, peu de noms connaissent en France une popularité égale à la vôtre, mais cette popularité est attachée aux grandes idées de liberté pour la défense desquelles le Général de GAULLE présente les garanties que ne présenteront jamais des hommes comme PETAIN, WEYGAND, ou GIRAUD.

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On a admis chez nous, pour des raisons de tactique, aujourd'hui périmées, la position du Gouvernement Américain vis-à-vis de VICHY. Mais on continue, dans la défense des nations unies et de la civilisation, à joindre votre nom au nom du Général de GAULLE; et ce serait amener la plus grande déception et la plus grande amertume au coeur des Français que de devoir les dissocier un jour.

Croyez, Monsieur le Président, à l'expression de ma très haute considération,

LE CHEF DU MOUVEMENT "LIBERATION."

[TRANSLATION]

DELEGATION OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
IN THE UNITED STATES

Washington, D.C.,

October 31, 1942.

Mr. Minister:

I have the honor to forward to you herewith, on the most secret basis, a report which has just been transmitted to me by General de Gaulle.

I am personally acquainted with Mr. Joseph Bondas who, over the last twenty years, regularly participated in the sessions of the International Labor Office at Geneva, and I can assure you that the Belgian labor union leader is a very responsible person whose statements deserve the most complete credit.

Please accept [etc.]

A. TIXIER

The Honorable

Sumner Welles,

Under Secretary of State,

Department of State,

Washington, D.C.

TR:AVA:JMC

[TRANSLATION]

Washington, D. C.,

October 31, 1942.

~~SECRET~~

ATTITUDE OF MR. LEON JOUHAUX  
WITH REGARD TO GENERAL DE GAULLE

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Mr. Joseph Bondas, Secretary General of the Belgian General Federation of Labor, arrived in London quite recently. He crossed France and had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Léon Jouhaux, Secretary General of the French General Federation of Labor.

Mr. Bondas asked Mr. Jouhaux the following question: "Is General de Gaulle followed by an important section of French opinion?"

Here is Jouhaux' reply: "General de Gaulle has 90 percent of the French behind him. For France, upon liberation, there can be no other Government possible but that of General de Gaulle. The workers would support such a Government."

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. letter, 2-5-73

RT Date APR 10 1973

TR:AVA:JMC

PSF: France

for Louis C  
3-42

PERSONAL

November 10, 1942.

Dear Eve:-

I am really happy at getting your telegram. May I tell you that I am glad you liked my straight-forward French.

I tried an experiment. Bill Bullitt and some of the State Department people said that my message was wholly contrary to French usage -- no beautiful phrases, noratory -- and that the French people had always been accustomed to the old-fashioned flowery appeal. I thought, however, that I ought to be myself and that the French people would understand my normal simplicity better than if I did something which was not a part of me.

I hope it will succeed.

The operations are going well and I only hope that the Germans will not attempt to move south from the occupied area. We can console ourselves with the thought that even if they should do this France will not be essentially worse off than today.

Always sincerely,

Miss Eve Curie,  
c/o Colston Leigh,  
521 Fifth Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.

11/10/42

AUDREY

Miss Curie's telegram to the President was sent to the State Department in error - Betty is going to call them and ask to have it returned. When it comes back we'll give it to you to complete this file.

TOI

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

11/11/42

Mr. Bonsted,

Believe this is  
what you want?

Shapley

DIVISION OF  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PSF: France EU

State

The White House  
Washington

WB8 96 NL 7 EXTRA

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LUBBOCK TEX NOV 8 1942

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT

WHITE HOUSE

I WAS SO MOVED MISTER PRESIDENT TO HEAR YOU ADDRESS MY  
COMPATRIOTS IN SUCH BEAUTIFUL AND STRAIGHT FORWARD FRENCH  
WORDS STOP SINCE THE 1940 ARMISTICE SO MANY OF US HAVE  
BEEN WORKING FOR THE HOUR THAT HAS NOW COME WHICH OUGHT  
TO UNITE ONCE AGAIN THE AMERICANS AND THE FRENCH AGAINST  
THEIR COMMON ENEMIES STOP I PRAY THAT MY PEOPLE WILL  
UNDERSTAND YOU AND FOLLOW YOUR LEADERSHIP IN THIS ALL  
IMPORTANT AFRICAN OFFENSIVE WHICH IS THE FIRST STEP

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
NOV 1 1942  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PSF: France 1

WB8/2

TOWARD THE LIBERATION OF FRANCE STOP PLEASE ACCEPT MY  
DEVOTED WISHES

EVE CURIE CARE COLSTON LEIGH 521 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEWYORK.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*File  
Personal*

November 12, 1942

TO GIVE TO THE PRESIDENT WHEN  
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
BRINGS IN MR. TIXIER.

Franu folder  
1-42

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

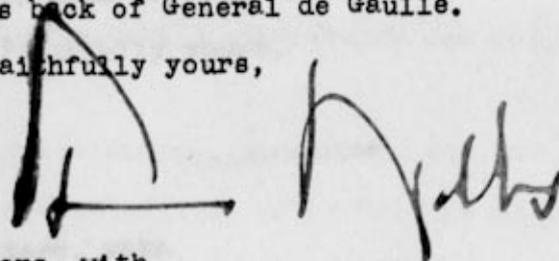
November 10. 1942

My dear Mr. President:

In compliance with the request of Mr. Adrien Tixier, head of the Delegation in the United States of the French National Committee, I am enclosing two letters, and translations thereof, addressed to you by the leaders of the French resistance groups, Combat and Libération.

I also enclose a translation of a memorandum, likewise from Mr. Tixier, which purports to give it as Mr. Léon Jouhaux' opinion that ninety per cent of French opinion is back of General de Gaulle.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosures:

1. Two letters, with translations.
2. Memorandum.

The President,  
The White House.

(TRANSLATION)

October 9, 1942.

Mr. President:

It is now 27 months since a few men wrested the power from rulers whose capacity was not equal to the test to which France was subjected.

These men, the leaders of whom were Pétain, Laval, Weygand, prophets of misfortune, whose partisan passions could only be overcome by misfortune, decided to give up the struggle and accept defeat as a penance which the French people had deserved and to sign a shameful armistice.

However, one man, almost alone, left a France given over to the enemy, decided to continue the struggle and declared:

"France has lost a battle, but France has not lost the war."

France, at first dismayed, stupefied, did not hear his voice; in the confusion then reigning, its allies did not give it all means of making itself heard.

Similarly, during that second half of 1940, a few men, having no contact with Free France, decided not to accept the capitulation. Pilgrims of the idea of resistance, they traversed the country and found there only confusion and consternation.

A large

A large part of the population had given in to fatalism, while the new masters preached the national revolution and penance, supported by a bourgeoisie and an employer-class which were led into error by their attachment to the class privileges which they had believed menaced by the social movements of 1936 and were inclined to prefer the New Order, even if of Germanic inspiration, to the risks of a French revolution after the victory.

In December 1940, a first small group for resistance was established. It involved a few dozen men. Their leaders had no illusions as to the Chief of State, whose defeatism seemed to us to be strikingly evident. But the hopes which Marshal Pétain aroused among certain persons, the passivity of the French population, caused us to follow a sort of neutrality on the subject of domestic policy.

We began the struggle against the totalitarian doctrines and against the most obvious collaborators of Germanism. From the moment of our first activity, the police were on our traces and our people were arrested. We had to collect our forces, get to work more seriously on organization and learn how to act in secret. LIBERATION was born in the occupied and the unoccupied zone. The idea of resistance made its way. Other groups were formed. The clandestine press made its appearance.

During

During the summer of 1941, LIBERATION, seeing that a great part of the working class was opposed to collaboration and to the Vichy régime, established its first contacts with the leaders of the General Federation of Labor. France was visibly seeking a symbol of resistance and longed for unity. Although it was vilified by the propaganda of the National Revolution, the name of General de Gaulle attained greater and greater credit among the labor leaders - not supporting Vichy - and with the intellectuals.

Also, in the course of conversations which took place in September 1941 among the leaders of the resistance movements, LIBERATION posed the problem of the unity of French resistance, stating for its own account that there was no other possible symbol than Free France and its leader, General de Gaulle.

It was, however, only in the month of June 1942 that LIBERATION was able to get in touch with the agents of General de Gaulle.

The first quarter of 1942 was decisive for French unity. One after the other, resisting groups rallied to the cause. French opinion in the unoccupied zone and in the occupied zone turned toward General de Gaulle. Only Vichy quarters, the army of new functionaries, a part of the bourgeoisie, a part of the military officers, remained refractory.

refractory.

Subsequently, the movement has constantly grown stronger. In addition to the three principal groups of resistance in the free zone - COMBAT, LIBERATION, FRANC-TIREUR, which constitute 90 per cent of the organized resistance - in addition to the resistance in the occupied zone, the best known labor leaders are choosing this path and are fighting with LIBERATION. And the Socialist Party itself, which was being reorganized and the Committee on Socialist Action of which had approached LIBERATION to have "Le Populaire" reappear, asked its militants to join the resistance groups.

In June 1942, without having been invited by anyone, the signer of this letter managed to reach England.

We in LIBERATION knew only the mystical force of the struggle, and I was unaware of the difficulties which Free France was encountering with its Allies .

Having six months previously examined our conscience and made our choice, I came to tell the British what I had learned in the course of thousands of kilometers of travelling: the faith of France in the chief which it had chosen, the certainty that this chief had no personal ambition, that he would respect democratic principles, that he would return to the country the exercise of its liberties

once

once victory had been achieved, and that he could maintain his prestige only to the extent that he kept the promises which he had solemnly made.

I came also to say that any weakening in the unitary resistance would result in a weakening of the allied potential and that in France there were thenceforth only two possible paths: the path of surrender and successive compromises, Pétain; the path of resistance, de Gaulle. Finally, that everyone who might secretly play Vichy, no matter how brilliant they were, would only serve to disperse the new French power by endangering unity.

In June 1942, before returning to France, I came, Mr. President, to spend a few days in your country, to lay these facts before certain members of your Government. After many disappointments, we believed that we then saw the situation clearing up and the United States taking a step toward recognition, not of a political regime (we ask a war regime while awaiting liberation), but of the unity of Fighting France.

After my short stay in the United States, I returned to spend three months in France, where I was able to verify the fact that French resistance is daily increasing and confirming its adherence to General de Gaulle. But, back in England for a few weeks, I see that Fighting France has

not

not found among the United Nations the place which is due it and that the day may come when you will appeal to French resistance without having granted it the most elementary rights.

France which, fortunately, is unaware of the fact, may, when an armistice is signed, conceive on that account a bitterness the consequences of which on Europe's destiny would be incalculable.

The reasons for this state of affairs seem to be the following: as there has been a tendency among the Allies to play certain Vichy elements against the sound elements of the Nation, it seems that there is today a tendency to play the armistice army against the French nation. Nevertheless, in this case, there can be but two hypotheses:

Either the armistice army will join with the fighters in time and within the framework of a new unity, and the Allies can find only advantage in that;

Or, it will hold back, until the last moment, to direct a confused game to the benefit of the National Revolution which has sold out France. The game will then be played out between the armistice army and the French nation. And we of LIBERATION believe that the latter will crush the former.

I have learned, Mr. President, that since my journey  
to

to the United States French voices have been raised to weaken the exposition which I made in this sense and to minimize French resistance.

Allow me to tell you that these voices have lost all contact with France, and that the men who talk to you in that way, and who are blamed by their best friends, went too far away and went too quickly to be as qualified as we are. As our writings in LIBERATION deny their accusations of neo-nationalism, the rallying of all resistance movements to General de Gaulle is denying their assertions that LIBERATION alone has adhered to him.

Do you not think, Mr. President, that the man who will present this message to you, a socialist devoted to all the principles of liberty which you have defined, fighting from the beginning with LIBERATION, is better qualified to speak to you of France and its resistance than any of the men who stayed in America during our calvary?

Mr. President, there are few names which have a popularity equal to yours in France, but this popularity is attached to the great ideas of liberty for the defense of which General de Gaulle offers guarantees which will never be offered by men like Pétain, Weygand or Giraud.

For tactical reasons, no longer valid, the position of the American Government with respect to Vichy has been  
allowed

allowed among us. But your name continues to be joined to the name of General de Gaulle in the defense of the United Nations and of civilization; and it would lead to the greatest disillusion and the greatest bitterness in the hearts of Frenchmen if they had one day to be separated.

Please believe, Mr. President, the assurance of my very high consideration.

THE CHIEF OF THE "LIBERATION" MOVEMENT

TR:AVA:DVA

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# LE FRANC-TIREUR

Mensuel dans la mesure du possible et par la grâce de la police de Pierre Laval

LIBERTÉ — EGALITÉ — FRATERNITÉ

## LA VICTOIRE EST TOUT A FAIT CERTAINE

### Toute la France unie !

### Les Nations Libres ont pris l'Offensive

Le 8 novembre, nos anciens camarades de combat, les fils d'une libre démocratie, ceux qui laissent des centaines de mille des leurs sur les champs de bataille de l'Oise, de l'Aisne, d'Ypres, de St-Mihiel, de la Meuse et de l'Argonne, ceux que commandait le Général Pershing et que commande aujourd'hui le Général Eisenhower, débarquaient à Alger. A Oran et à Saïa.

Le 12 novembre, ceux qui envahirent la France, pillèrent ses greniers, mitraillèrent les réfugiés, fusillèrent les patriotes, volèrent l'Alsace, la Lorraine, le Nord et le Pas-de-Calais, débarquaient en Tunisie.

Les traitres de Vichy font tirer sur les libérateurs et donnent l'ordre d'acclamer le boche et l'Italien. L'honneur et la dignité l'exigent, comme dit l'autre !

Toute la France est occupée. Toute la France est anéantie. Mais, par un paradoxe heureux, l'Empire de l'Afrique du Nord est libéré. Et les armées alliées — Français, Américains, Britanniques unis — ne sont plus qu'à vingt heures des rives de la Métropole.

Les plus bêtes savent maintenant où est la maîtrise des mers, la maîtrise des airs, et la puissance des effectifs. Les plus bornés ont vu de leurs yeux vus ce qu'était devenu l'envahisseur : son matériel usé et ses hommes fatigués.

Français ! tu n'as plus le droit d'avoir peur, car la peur détruit à la fois la résistance et la prudence. Français, il faut l'attendre virilement à tout, et d'abord à voir ton pays se réhabiliter aux yeux du monde en rachetant dans l'héroïsme le forfait des félons.

Sois maître de tes nerfs ! Sois maître de tes forces ! Apprends à te vaincre apprends à agir.

On était sûr que ces jours-là viendraient ! On était sûr qu'on avait raison d'espérer. Mais, dites, quand il y a quinze jours le Franc-Tireur vous parlait du commencement de la fin, pensez-vous, lecteurs, amis, camarades, militants du grand combat de la Liberté, pensez-vous qu'en la semaine du 11 novembre 1943, anniversaire d'une victoire reniée par Vichy, écarterait le magistral coup de théâtre de l'Afrique du Nord ?

Rommel en déroute, l'Afrika-Korps écrasé, les divisions italiennes anéanties, cent mille Allemands et Italiens tués, blessés et prisonniers ; cinq cents tanks ; mille canons détruits ; la vaillante VIII<sup>e</sup> Armée britannique lancée d'un seul élan d'Egypte en Libye, Tobrouk reconquis, les troupes de l'Axe traquées...

Et — coup de tonnerre — cent cinquante mille soldats américains amenés à bon port sur cinq cents navires marchands, escortés par 350 navires de guerre, malgré tous les sous-marins de l'Axe, libèrent d'un coup de la menace hitlérienne et fasciste toute notre Afrique du Nord, mettent le verrou

La sagesse de tes ancêtres commande que tu saches attendre, calmement l'heure du règlement de compte militaire. La fierté de ta race exige que tu châties les traîtres qui t'entourent.

La Résistance Française devient l'Armée secrète. Français, fais-lui confiance : aide les patriotes, protège-les, recueille-les, fais-les vivre.

Confiance et fermeté d'âme ! L'étape sera dure mais nous savons désormais qu'elle ne sera pas longue.

Vive la France !  
Vive la Liberté !

à la Méditerranée et s'installent face à l'Italie bombardée, épuisée et tremblante.

Quelle immense allégresse chez tous les peuples qui couvent leur rage sous le joug allemand ! Quelle joie dans la France Résistante unie à la France Combattante, celle d'Afrique comme celle du Général de Gaulle. Pendant des mois, alors que les Russes par des prodiges d'héroïsme rendaient vain l'effort de la Wehrmacht, alors que Stalingrad l'indomptable devenait le tombeau de centaines de milliers d'hitlériens, l'Angleterre et l'Amérique préparaient en silence et réussissaient d'un seul coup l'opération précise et puissante qui ouvre sur l'Axe une géante tenaille.

Est-il encore un sceptique pour douter ? Est-il encore un Français capable de penser que l'Allemagne et l'Italie, quelles que soient leurs possibilités de défense, de riposte et de durée, puissent désormais reprendre les positions vitales qui leur échappent ? Ah ! l'on ignorait la force russe, l'on railait les Anglais, les Américains. L'Allemagne gagnait toujours... Tout pliait devant les blindés boches, tout fuyait devant les stukas, tout rampait devant Hitler. Maintenant les hordes du tyran des peuples s'embourbent dans les neiges d'un nouvel hiver, des monceaux de cadavres allemands jonchent les plaines et les montagnes de Russie. D'autres blindés arrivent, d'autres avions, d'autres armées. Et l'armée d'Hitler fuit en Libye et les villes d'Allemagne comme celles d'Italie flambent sous les coups terribles des Spitfire, des Curtiss, des Fortresses volantes. Ceux qui ont déchainé l'enfer vont périr sous l'enfer.

Le commencement de la fin ? Churchill, plus précis, a résumé dans son discours :

« Non ! la fin du commencement ». De fait, l'occupation de l'Afrique du Nord, conjuguée avec la victoire d'Egypte, marque bien la fin d'une première phase foudroyante de l'offensive déclenchée par les nations unies. C'en est fait. L'Italie sera attaquée. La Turquie se joindra à la grande union des nations libres. L'Axe a perdu l'initiative qui est dans les mains des peuples libres. La deuxième phase va commencer bientôt, que l'Italie, d'abord, attend avec panique. C'est en vain que les pleutres fascistes occupent sans péril Nice et les ports de Corse pour faire oublier leur désastre, c'est en vain qu'Hitler dirige en hâte ses troupes sur Marseille et les côtes. Le coup est frappé. Et pour la première fois le coup est frappé, résumé COMTESSON Hitler.

Que la bête soit forte et féroce encore, qui en doute ? Regardez-la se tourner vers nos misérables sans cervelle et sans conscience, regardez-la tenter la grande fascination comme le serpent du « Livre de la Jungle », hypnotisant le stupide peuple des singes dociles à sa magie. Ecoutez donc Hitler assurer Pétaïn le « vénérable » de son regret et de son dévouement, exprimer l'espoir de voir la France se joindre à sa défaite. On dirait du Laval traduit en Allemand, puis retraduit en Français ce message inouï de cauteleuse flatterie. Ah ! elle est bien touchée la bête pour en arriver là. Elle veut faire de Vichy son dernier atout. Qu'importent les manœuvres ténébreuses, les ralliements de la onzième heure, les calculs machiavéliques ! Dans l'appareil mondial de la guerre et de la politique fasciste, tout s'en va, tout se désagrège. Il n'y a plus rien qu'une certitude pour la France et pour le monde : celle de la VICTOIRE !

## Les Honnêtes Gens

M. Darquier, dit de Pellepoix, est sous-ministre de Pétain. Il y a 16 ans ce personnage était exclu pour escroquerie de la Société dont il était Administrateur. Voici les textes :

« Extrait du *Moniteur Officiel* daté 12 et 13 avril 1926.

« Acte 3812. — Grain Union Company, Société Anonyme, à Anvers. Retrait des pouvoirs d'un Administrateur.

« Assemblée générale extraordinaire des actionnaires en date du 16 mars 1926.

« Il résulte d'un vote de l'Assemblée générale extraordinaire, tenue au siège social le mardi 16 mars 1926, à 2 heures de l'après-midi, que la résolution prise par le Conseil d'Administration en date du 27 février 1926, retirant à M. Louis Darquier des pouvoirs d'administrateur dé-

légué, est approuvée et M. Louis Darquier est en outre révoqué, dès maintenant, à dater de ce jour, de ses fonctions d'administrateur de la Compagnie.

« Anvers, le 16 mars 1926.

« Signé : Pierre May, administrateur.

« Signé : Marcé Marcus Président du Conseil d'Administration.

Enregistré à Anvers (Actes adm. et S. S. P.) le 18 mars 1926, volume 76, folio 36, case 7 et sans renvoi. Reçu 12,50.

« Le Receveur : Signé Van der Berghe.

« Déposé au Greffe du Tribunal de Commerce d'Anvers le 3 avril 1926. »

Surveillez votre portefeuille, Monsieur le Maréchal !...

## Comment on informe !

Voici comment le public français a été informé des événements d'Egypte :

5 novembre, midi. — La censure, après de longues délibérations, interdit aux journaux du soir de publier les communiqués du Caire. Les journaux ne peuvent rien dire de plus que n'ont publié les journaux du matin.

5 et 6 novembre. — Marion et les services de l'Information se sont dépassés. Les 4 et 5 novembre les journaux devaient ignorer l'écroulement de l'armée germano-italienne en Egypte.

Le 6 novembre. — Le seul communiqué britannique admis était celui que l'Agence Havas OFI avait tripatouillé en en supprimant l'essentiel.

Le 6 novembre, à midi. — Les journaux devaient donner à la bataille d'Egypte le même titre que la veille !

Voici d'ailleurs les consignes successives données à la presse le 5 après-midi et le 6 au matin. Elles vont jusqu'à supprimer dans la note allemande elle-même un mot qui pourrait faire supposer que les forces de l'axe ont subi des pertes : « La dépêche OFI relative aux opérations en Egypte devra être donnée obligatoirement à l'exclusion de toute autre texte. Elle sera présentée sur deux colonnes dans le corps et au centre de la page. (Ne pas indiquer « de source allemande » dans le titre ou les sous-titres). »

Exigé : ...15 h. 10, titre de la dépêche OFI « Des combats acharnés se livrent dans le secteur d'El Alamein ».

Puis rectification dans le second paragraphe : supprimer le mot « également » dans la phrase : « En raison de la tactique défensive élastique adoptée par les forces de l'axe, l'ennemi a « également » essuyé de lourdes pertes ».

Le 6 novembre. — Additif à la consigne concernant la bataille de l'Egypte : les

communiqués allemand, italien et britannique transmis par les agences sont seuls autorisés. Aucun commentaire, aucune chronique militaire sur les opérations, aucune autre information, ne pourront être publiées. Bien entendu le texte OFI, qui fait l'objet de la consigne 925, demeure obligatoirement dans les conditions prescrites.

Enfin, le 6 à midi, les journaux devaient toujours parler de combats à El Alamein !

## FRANC-TIREUR, TOUJOURS !

Malgré les difficultés et les périls de l'heure, le F. T. a réussi à paraître régulièrement une fois de plus avec un tirage jamais atteint à ce jour.

Il a bien l'intention de continuer, de mener la lutte contre l'ennemi et le traître, avec une vigueur accrue.

Toute la France est désormais occupée mais c'est en vain que les boches vont maintenant collaborer avec Vichy dans la répression anti-française.

Le F. T. en a vu d'autres !

Il fera de son mieux !

Mais si le journal, un jour, ne pouvait sortir, l'action des militants et des combattants se poursuivrait avec le même courage.

Que nos amis serrent les rangs autour de nos responsables qui leur transmettront nos consignes.

## IMAGE DE LA RELEVÉ

Voici ce qui s'est passé il y a quelques jours dans la gare de Nantes :

Un train d'ouvriers désignés pour l'Allemagne va partir. Soudain de tous les wagons l'Internationale mée à la Marseillaise éclate. Les Boches restent d'abord impassibles. Le train s'ébranle, roule quelques mètres et stope brusquement. Quelqu'un a tiré le signal d'alarme. Les chants reprennent et redoublent. Le train repart. Nouveau coup de freins. Par quatre fois les ouvriers retardent ainsi le départ. C'est alors que les policiers militaires allemands ceux qu'on nomme les colliers de chiens parce qu'ils portent au cou une grosse chaîne, se précipitent furieux à la fois vers le train et vers la foule, tirent des coups de pistolets. La verrière de la gare tombe en éclats sur la foule des femmes et des enfants qui hurlent de terreur. Et le train repart enfin. Mais à chaque portière, sur

## TARTUFFES !

Les ouvriers de la zone occupée sont souvent contraints de partir. Mais ils ne veulent pas, malgré les avantages financiers que l'on fait miroiter devant eux, être considérés comme volontaires. Ils refusent de signer le contrat.

Aussil les inspecteurs du travail ont ils reçu l'ordre de signer ce contrat « pour l'ouvrier empêché » (sic).

Il faut défendre les gens même contre eux-mêmes disent les instructions.

Le 19 novembre Pétain ose dire aux Français : « Vous n'avez qu'un seul devoir : obéir.

Est-ce l'arrivée des troupes allemandes qui donne à son illégalité un tel droit à l'insolence ?

le marchepied se tient un boche qui braque sur le compartiment son pistolet chargé.

C'est ainsi que les Nantais ont compris le sens de la collaboration.

FRANÇAIS ! SOUVIENS-TOI QUE LA GUERRE CONTINUE !

# QU'IMPORTE ? OUI... MAIS NOUS N'OUBLIONS RIEN

Bien sûr, tout ce qui fait échec à l'ennemi, tout ce qui le déconcerte suscite notre satisfaction et la joie de tous les Français. N'importe quel ralliement, fut-il de la dernière heure, c'est un coup de poignard à l'ennemi dont nous aurions tort de ne pas profiter. Et nous en profitons. De la tragi-comédie qui se joue certainement entre Vichy et Alger nous ne voulons retenir qu'une chose : l'Amiral Darlan donne le commandement de l'armée d'Afrique au Général Giraud lequel combat l'Allemand. Nous sommes donc enchantés de la tournure des événements et de la conduite de M. l'Amiral de la Flotte (nous n'en pouvons dire autant, hélas, de celle de ses commandants de vaisseaux). Mais, nous n'oublions rien, nous n'oublierons jamais que Pétain et ses hommes ont d'abord profité de l'occupation étrangère pour réaliser un projet mûrement médité : celui d'étrangler la République et d'installer en France un régime « étranger » à notre peuple, un régime honteux de dictature et de bêtise.

Quelques-uns commencent à trembler et à balbutier des explications et des excuses. Il en est qui, dans notre

Afrique du Nord, espèrent pouvoir laver dans un baptême tardif, leurs abjections et leurs crimes. Après avoir fait couler le sang français, après avoir retardé la délivrance, ils croient avoir le droit de garder les privilèges et les honneurs qu'ils ont reçus, comme une aumône, de l'ennemi. Après avoir occupé des postes confortables sur les littères de la servitude, ils voudraient se présenter au peuple de France comme les grands héros de la résurrection nationale ! Oublieraient-ils les féodalités, les condamnations, les souffrances, les misères sans nombre, les humiliations et les hontes qu'ils ont infligés à leurs concitoyens ? Le peuple français n'a pas la mémoire aussi courte.

Ils trompaient, disent-ils, l'ennemi ! Ils leurrèrent Hitler ! Allons donc ! Aussi longtemps qu'ils ont cru à la victoire allemande, ils se sont prosternés devant les idoles nazies, ils ont adoré la force, ils ont piétiné la France. Aujourd'hui, il leur suffirait d'un mot, d'un marchandage, d'un sourire, pour effacer tout cela ? Ah non ! Mille fois non !

Nous verrons peut-être le sinistre vieillard de Vichy tourner lui aussi sa vareuse

et ses feuilles de chêne. Après avoir tout fait pour corrompre la France, après lui avoir imposé le joug germanique, il serait le « sauveur de la Patrie », le grand Maréchal de la Victoire ! Et c'est tout juste si l'on accorderait alors un pardon dédaigneux au grand Français, au grand soldat, authentique, celui-là, qui, en juin 1940, alors que tout paraissait perdu, a ramassé les tronçons du glaive que les chefs militaires dégénérés, joints aux traitres patentés, avaient laissé choir ! Non, mille fois non !

Le peuple français n'est pas aveugle, il n'est pas sourd. Il saura quels furent les artisans de la libération.

Une armée en guerre peut accepter les concours les plus suspects et les plus tardifs sur le plan stratégique de la résistance.

Mais notre victoire, la victoire de tous les peuples libres, de tous les soldats glorieux ou obscurs de la libération, nous ne la laisserons pas escamoter. Elle sera d'abord et avant tout celle de la LIBERTÉ, de la DEMOCRATIE MONDIALE, de l'ANTI-FASCISME et de la REPUBLIQUE SOCIALE !

## La vraie République naîtra de cette Guerre

On a imputé à la liberté bien des erreurs et des fautes. Le régime que nous établissons ne nous a pas convaincus des mérites de la dictature. A l'étouffement de la pensée et de l'initiative individuelle, au culte sénile d'un fétiche, nous avons vu la dictature joindre la corruption, le servilisme, l'incompétence, la gabegie. Nous ne voulons revoir ni le parlementarisme bavard, ni le patronat égoïste, ni le syndicalisme démagogique. Mais nous restons attachés au principe de la REPRÉSENTATION NATIONALE. Nous ne voulons pas que la PLOUCROCRATIE INDUSTRIELLE et FINANCIÈRE régent la vie du pays, domine sa politique, pille son économie. Nous voulons que le peuple travailleur ne vive plus dans l'insécurité et la misère, mais qu'il participe au bénéfice des richesses créées par son labeur. Nous ne croyons pas à une égalité qui nivellerait les situations de chacun au stade de la médiocrité, mais nous voulons la hiérarchie du mérite, et non celle de la fortune et de l'arriérisme.

La victoire n'a de sens pour nous que si elle permet au pays libéré de l'envahisseur, de fonder un régime social capable d'évoluer sans cesse vers le progrès. Ce régime, nous ne le concevons qu'à travers la liberté, sous l'égide d'UN GOUVERNEMENT ISSU DE LA VOLONTÉ NATIONALE, mais doté des pouvoirs nécessaires pour contrôler l'activité de chacun et veiller à ce que la liberté ne soit pas un moyen pour quelques-uns d'asservir les autres.

Pour réaliser ce programme, nous ne rejetons le concours de personne. Nous appelons les hommes de bonne volonté de tous les partis à entrer dans le grand mouvement de la résurrection française.

D'abord, et par tous les moyens : CHASSER L'ENVAHISSEUR.

Ensuite : FONDER LA VRAIE REPUBLIQUE.

## Lettre de Monseigneur l'Evêque de Montauban sur le Respect de la Personne Humaine

« Mes bien chers frères,

« Des scènes douloureuses et parfois horribles se déroulent en France, sans que la France en soit responsable.

« A Paris, par dizaines de milliers, des Juifs ont été traités avec la plus barbare sauvagerie, et voici que dans nos régions on assiste à un spectacle navrant : des familles sont disloquées, des hommes et des femmes sont traités comme un vil troupeau et envoyés vers une destination inconnue, avec la

perspective des plus graves dangers.

« Je fais entendre la protestation indignée de la conscience chrétienne et je proclame que tous les hommes aryens ou non aryens, sont frères, parce que créés par un même Dieu, que tous les hommes, quelles que soient leur religion, ou leur race, ont droit au respect des individus et des Etats.

« Or, les mesures antisémitiques actuelles sont un mépris de la dignité humaine, une violation des droits

les plus sacrés de la personne et de la famille.

« Que Dieu console et fortifie ceux qui sont iniquement persécutés; qu'Il accorde au monde la Paix véritable et durable fondée sur la Justice et la Charité.

PIERRE-MARIE,  
Evêque de Montauban.

La stabilité ministérielle promise par Pétain continue...

Le 18 novembre deux ministres de plus étaient démissionnaires !...

On ne détruit pas le « FRANC TIREUR », on le passe à un ami.

## L'ARMEE FRANÇAISE DE LA LIBERTÉ

80.000 Français se battent actuellement aux côtés des Nations Unies : les forces combattantes de terre se trouvent au Iles Britanniques, en Egypte, en Lybie, en Syrie, dans le Pacifique, en A. E. F. et au Cameroun ; les forces françaises combattantes comptent plus de 2.800 aviateurs ; l'escadrille « Normandie » se bat en Russie ; en Chine se bat une escadrille venue d'Indochine ; aux Etats-Unis une autre escadrille coopère avec les forces américaines. 6.000 marins français luttent sous les ordres du Général de Gaulle ; la flotte française combattante compte 45 bâtiments de guerre, croiseurs, corvettes, sous-marins, torpilleurs, dragueurs de mines et des nombreux navires marchands.

Et, maintenant, en Afrique du Nord, de nouvelles forces françaises libres luttent avec les anglo-américains contre l'Axe.

Vive la France libre et combattante !

### Les Français se souviennent

Le lundi 26 octobre eurent lieu les obsèques — reportées par le Préfet du dimanche au lundi — des 9 aviateurs britanniques dont l'avion s'écrasa au sol à Montcorny.

La présence de quelques officiers de la Wehrmacht n'empêcha pas une foule de 5000 personnes de transformer ces obsèques en une imposante manifestation d'amitié franco-britannique ; devant les tombes ouvertes un groupe de jeunes filles et de jeunes gens adressèrent un suprême adieu à ces héros en chantant la *Marseillaise* et le *God save the King*.

D'innombrables couronnes jonchaient le sol ; les inscriptions, comme « Aux Défenseurs de la Civilisation », « A nos Amis lointains, mais si proches de nos Ames », furent enlevées nuitamment par la police.

### L'AVIATION AMERICAINE COMPTE 1.500.000 SOLDATS

Au cours d'une cérémonie de promotion le Général Arnold, chef de l'Aéronautique américaine, a déclaré que celle-ci atteindra bientôt l'effectif de 2.500.000 hommes.

## Ne pas libérer les prisonniers c'est les livrer aux boches

On verra aussi ce scandale, cette infamie sans nom. Ce n'était pas assez qu'une police et qu'une justice serviles traquent, emprisonnent tous ceux qui résistent à l'ennemi, tous ceux qui pensent et agissent français. Ce n'était pas assez que les prisons, les camps, les bagnes, soient pleins d'hommes, de femmes, de jeunes gens dont beaucoup n'ont fait qu'exprimer une opinion qui n'est pas celle de l'ennemi. Maintenant que la fiction de la zone dite libre est définitivement morte, maintenant que les nazis sont partout en France, on ose garder en prison des Français des Françaises tous parfaitement honorables, mais anti-allemands et par là-même victimes désignées à la répression féroce des nazis. La Justice et le Gouvernement dits français vont-ils pousser la honte jusqu'à laisser ce crime s'accomplir ?

Le doute n'est pas possible : on sait bien que la Gestapo est là et commence à travailler. On savait d'ailleurs que la Gestapo collaborait déjà depuis longtemps avec Vichy. Mais il est ignoble et contraire à toute tradition de ne pas libérer

des prisonniers politiques qui ont été frappés pour leur action contre l'ennemi, alors que celui-ci va d'un moment à l'autre les réclamer et les saisir. Aucun prétexte ne peut justifier ce forfait et à qui pourrait-on faire admettre qu'il s'agit là encore de double jeu. Double jeu ? Double jeu, la livraison de Français à l'ennemi ? Ruse de guerre cette nouvelle lâcheté ou peut-être cette manœuvre consciente d'hitlériens camouflés et de fascistes français tout heureux de se débarrasser ainsi d'adversaires politiques ?

S'il est encore à Vichy des gens qui ont un reste de conscience, s'il est encore des policiers, des magistrats, des procureurs, des directeurs de prisons et de camps qui gardent un certain sens de leur vraie responsabilité, qu'ils donnent les ordres, qu'ils prennent les mesures nécessaires qu'ils s'arrangent par tous les moyens pour faire sortir ou évader les prisonniers politiques. Bientôt il sera trop tard pour les sauver.

Mais alors il sera trop tard aussi pour les valets de bourgeois d'échapper à la vengeance.

### La Résistance à l'Etranger

Des patriotes ont attaqué une ville près de Kirkenes (Norvège) où 4000 soldats allemands tenaient garnison : ils ont mis le feu aux baraquements ; 3 baraques sur 52 ont échappé à la destruction.

Bulgarie. — 2000 soldats bulgares ont été arrêtés par la Gestapo.

Tchéco-Slovaquie. — On apprend de Zurich qu'à Krasnaya (Slovénie), les allemands ont fusillé toute la population masculine du village et déporté en Allemagne les femmes et les enfants à la suite d'un attentat contre des officiers allemands.

Yougo-Slavie. — A la suite du meurtre d'un chef de district allemand, 50 hommes ont été faits prisonniers dans un village et le restant. A Uskub, le 27 octobre, exécution de 13 patriotes serbes et

d'un Juif, le 29 octobre cinq autres exécutions.

Allemagne. — A Dortmund des ouvriers étrangers se sont mis en grève. 60 arrimeurs polonais soupçonnés d'avoir coulé une grosse péniche à charbon dans le canal de Dortmund ont été arrêtés. C'est à la suite de ces faits que des Français, des Bulgares, des Yougoslaves, des Italiens se sont mis en grève avec leurs camarades polonais. L'Alsacien Albert Bruhl a été exécuté pour avoir incité ses camarades à la désertion.

Pologne. — D'après des informations émanant du gouvernement polonais de Londres, des attentats à la bombe ont eu lieu le 24 octobre à Varsovie dans des restaurants réservés aux officiers allemands ; plusieurs officiers allemands ont été tués ; le lendemain, à la suite d'une rafle de la Gestapo 50 otages ont été arrêtés. Il est interdit aux Polonais, sous travaux forcés, de sortir après 19 heures.

## LES OUVRIERS CONTRE LA RELEVÉ

Les grèves en Haute-Savoie. — A la suite de la désignation de 50 ouvriers de la région industrielle de la Vallée de l'Arve, les ouvriers de Cluse, Sciorzier et Marinaz ont tenu à la mairie de Cluse une réunion de protestation et fait grève pendant une demi-journée. L'hôtel-de-Ville de Cluse a été occupé par plusieurs centaines d'ouvriers. La Vallée de l'Arve possède des industries de décolletage et d'horlogerie.

Dans les Basses-Alpes. — Le samedi 17 octobre 1943 dix cheminots de la S.N.C.F. désignés pour l'Allemagne quittaient Veynes (centre ferroviaire important) pour l'Allemagne. A la station de Aspes-sur-Buech, ces cheminots quittaient le train et gagnaient la montagne, la région de Baumagne célébrée par Glono et où les Huguenots s'étaient déjà réfugiés au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. La gendarmerie organise des battues et dresse des barrages sur les routes. Les cheminots sont cachés et ravitaillés par les paysans.

### MESSAGE de l'Union des Cheminots de Grande-Bretagne aux cheminots français

L'Union des cheminots de Grande-Bretagne, qui compte 400.000 adhérents, a adressé le message suivant aux cheminots français :

« Dans l'épreuve que vous traversez, dans la lutte que vous soutenez, nous voulons simplement vous dire ceci : « Nous, vos camarades anglais, avons les yeux fixés sur vous. Votre héroïsme est pour nous un sujet d'admiration et de respect. Nous vous citons à nous-mêmes en exemple et en pensant à vous, à vos souffrances, nous travaillons plus ferme encore pour acquérir votre libération. Nous connaissons votre sort, nous savons comment vous le supportez. Vous subissez aussi hélas les attaques des avions alliés contre vos machines utilisées pour l'ennemi. Nous nous rendons d'autant plus compte de votre position et nous admirons d'autant plus votre courage que nous avons nous-mêmes connu la violence des bombardements allemands. Gardez bon courage, camarades français, on travaille dur dans notre camp et le jour de la libération approche. Les 400.000 cheminots anglais vous expriment leur fraternelle admiration. »

Translation of Darlan's message to  
Eisenhower, November 21, 1942.

file

The French nation foresaw that in spite of the arrival of her allies the liquidation of Vichy in French North Africa would not take place without delay or even sudden changes. But, the French nation, in its imprisonment, felt greatest concern on learning that delays may be such and such and that sudden turns may take on such a character. The nation in its imprisonment intends to find out what goes on.

Much French territory is occupied by the allied armies with the consent and enthusiastic support of the people. The nation asks whether or not the regime and spirit of Vichy will remain there in force, whether or not the present Vichy "lords" will continue in office, whether or not this part of the French empire will be able to unite with that part which has already taken up arms again under the banner of honor, whether or not national deliverance beginning with the liberated empire ought to be dishonored by a foursome of culprits, camouflaged for the time being under additional perjury. It would be serious and dangerous simply to ask these questions if at the same time they could not be answered.

Certainly France has only too many times known that in the confusion of this world war there are risks of making mistakes on the part of individuals with the best of intentions. But she (France) has also recognized that the alliance of all her allies was a sincere one and that the sacred ideal for which so many, many men and women suffer and die on the field of liberty necessarily rejected dishonor and treason as France herself cursed them.

Of a certainty, France knows how a regime of oppression and of lies has long been able to silence free speech and public opinion in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. But she also knows that once the columns of the temple of the idol have been shaken, nothing will again stifle the powerful expression of national will either in Africa or elsewhere.

Likewise, France is fully aware of the difficulty in bringing about co-operation in the war of territories so diverse and so long separated as those making up its empire and (she is also aware of the difficulty) of united action in combat of armed forces which she has or which she is going to be able to draw upon from all parts of the earth. But she knows that in order to unite all the forces which belong to her and the possessions which she protects, there exist ties of long standing: just laws of the legally constituted republic and treaties which she has concluded. She knows that her soldiers, whether they fight in Tunisia, Libya, in Thcad, or in the Pacific, are not the soldiers belonging to an individual but are the soldiers of France.

Since the country fell beneath enemy blows and from treasonable plots, the treasure of national independence and dignity has been safe-

-1- DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. letter FEB 5 1973

Date APR 10 1973

~~SECRET~~

guarded. Through what trials? Only God knows. But having experienced that, France saw leap from the very depths of the soul of the people, the all enveloping flame of hope and liberty. It is due to this sacred flame that there has been raised up and organized, under the very heel of the enemy and of his collaborateurs, the tremendous resistance of the French people. It is by virtue of this same flame that much of our territory and a part of our forces have little by little come together. It is around this same flame that the whole empire will unite itself with the whole nation to fight and to conquer side by side with all the allies of France. It is thus and thus alone that victory will gloriously wipe out with a single blow, our mis fortunes, our factions and our tears.

A single struggle for a unified country.

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. letter, FEB 5 1973  
By RT Date APR 10 1973

PSF: France

~~Gen. Lannes~~  
drawer 3-42

file  
plus mail

The  
Langdon

TWO EAST FIFTY-SIXTH STREET  
NEW YORK

November 26, 1942

President Franklin D. Roosevelt

Mister President,

This is a day of Thanksgiving. I hope that many French people will write to you to tell you that they are thankful for the brave fight put up by the United Nations on all the fronts of this war - a fight from which a free World and a free France will be reborn.

My thoughts, to day, are with the American and English soldiers in North Africa who are preparing for a hard battle against our common enemy on the Tunisian soil. They are with the American men who might lose their lives in that battle. They are with you - their Commander in Chief - who have magnificently planned this daring expedition.

Amidst all the political difficulties - painful to us but which, I am sure, find their source in strategic necessities - please do not believe that the French forget what America is doing for them: She is hastening the day of victory. She is shortening the probable length of the starvation, of the suffering of our people at home. You are fundamentally and, I trust, forever our friends, our allies. We know that. We will be faithful.

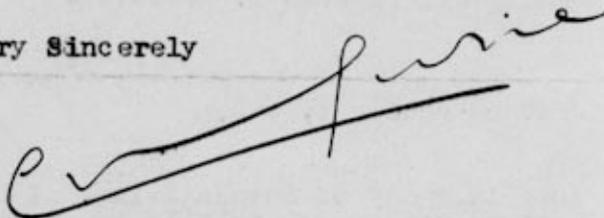
I wish - oh, so much - that you should address my compatriots again, in the same straightforward way that you used on the first day, in your own, sincere French words. Perhaps that this is not feasible yet, because of pressing military developments. Perhaps that days, or weeks must pass before it is feasible. But when the day comes, wont you tell the captive French who wait inside our borders, as much as you safely can about your decisions, your motives, your plans? The enemy propaganda, the inevitable divisions among Frenchmen, can easily create misunderstanding and distrust between our two nations. Your voice can be a guide, a rallying point. In the minds of the French ( of the Alsatian peasant, of the Breton fisherman, of the Paris factory worker, and also of the Fighting French soldier who has been in action for many months in a Lybian desert outpost ) there must be to day some uncertainty, and the feeling of not knowing where their duty lies. You

can show them the way and tell them how to help, how to unite. They trust you. You can also tell us how to help. It is so important that, ultimately, the forces of resistance to the enemy should not split - inside or outside France.

But this is not what I intended to write to you to day. I just wanted you to know - and Mrs Roosevelt to know - that the words " America " " Roosevelt " and " Thanks " are, now as always, linked in my heart.

With devoted wishes

Yours very Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marie Curie". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Mademoiselle Eve Curie".

Mademoiselle Eve Curie

P.S. I was so moved that you should have taken the time to answer my telegram the other day. Please do not even waste the time of your secretary to acknowledge this letter.

France folder  
1-42

file  
Confidential

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

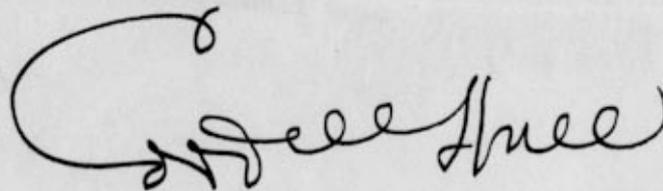
November 30, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

I am quoting below for your information a message which is understood to be intended for you from Mr. Leon Jouhaux in the name of the French Syndicalist resistance movement. The message was received through clandestine channels with the request that it be given no publicity.

"Following your proclamation to the French nation at the time of the landing of American troops in North Africa we are happy to know you have confidence in the French working classes. Be assured of the inflexible will of French syndicalism to continue resistance against conscription of labor and against the oppressor in general. We are of good hope."

Faithfully yours,



The President,

The White House.

1. de Gaulle, Gen,

France folder 3

MEMORANDUM FOR

GENERAL WATSON

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

December 18, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

I think I can see General de Gaulle on January tenth or the morning of the 11th, but I greatly doubt if I can see him after that until about February first.

I think it would be a mistake for General de Gaulle to send a small mission to Algiers. Sometimes the best way to keep peace in the family is to keep the members of the family apart for a while.

F. D. R.

*never arranged -  
filed 9/1/43*

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

December 17, 1942

My dear Mr. President:

In my last talk with Mr. Adrien Tixier, Chief of the Fighting French Delegation in Washington, he raised two questions which I told him I would have to clear with you before giving a definite reply.

The first had to do with your willingness to receive General de Gaulle. I told Mr. Tixier that it was my recollection that you would be willing to see the General if he came to Washington sometime after January 10, but that since the matter had not been discussed for sometime, I would wish to make sure that this understanding still held true.

Secondly, Mr. Tixier said that General de Gaulle inquired of Admiral Stark sometime ago whether he could not be permitted to send a small mission to Algiers for the sole purpose of keeping him informed as to what was going on in North Africa. It was the General's thought that this mission would have contact only with the British and American Military High Commands, and that the members

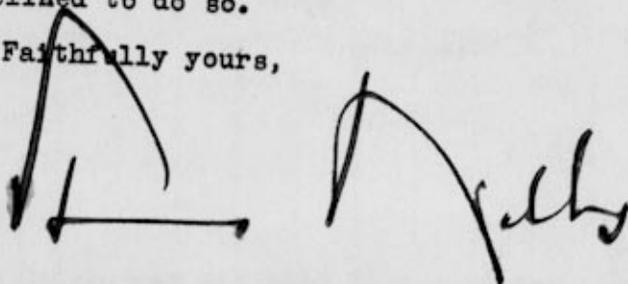
of

The President,

The White House.

of the mission would have no power or authority to enter into any discussion with French officials in North Africa. I told Mr. Tixier that I would have to look into this question, at the same time reminding him that when General de Gaulle had been informed that you and Mr. Churchill agreed that he might send a representative to Algiers, the General had declined to do so.

Faithfully yours,



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

12-24-42

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

(from General Marshall)

Message just received from  
Murphy for Secretary Hull:

"I was called urgently to Darlan's office half an hour ago, and learned Darlan attacked at 1545 hours, by young man of French nationality, whose identity not determined.

"Assailant succeeded in firing 7 revolver shots, 4 of which struck Darlan, whose condition as yet is uncertain.

"Further details will follow as soon as possible."

E.M.W.

(dictated over telephone to  
J. Romagna)

*France folder*  
*file*  
*Confidential 1-42*

December 26, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

This was received by Admiral Leahy for the President about twelve hours after word was received of the assassination of Admiral Darlan.

STON OF VERILST DULTEN  
NIGL SOLO ARE LOCETAGG OL EPE WREBETUN-  
LOL EPE ALBERTHUS WPOH ERTAS HODLE  
LNU ARE LOCETAGG DA WORTLET PAGA

TERORVNDON LAM 1942 WITED

PSF: France folder  
1-42

Alger, 2 décembre 1942

à Monsieur Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Président des États Unis d'Amérique

Monsieur le Président,

Je prends la liberté de vous adresser cette lettre pour vous demander de bien vouloir agréer l'expression de ma profonde gratitude pour votre généreuse proposition - transmise par M<sup>r</sup> R. Murphy - d'accueillir mon fils, Alain Darlan, à Warm Springs.

Permettez moi de vous dire simplement que j'accepte avec reconnaissance votre offre si humaine.

L'état de santé de mon fils qui, après la paralysie infantile qui l'a frappé, a eu à lutter contre toutes les complications que l'on peut imaginer, ne lui permet pas, en ce moment, de quitter Rabat où il a été transporté grâce à la courtoisie du commandement américain en Afrique. Les médecins qui le soignent estiment à environ deux mois le temps qui doit s'écouler avant que son départ puisse être envisagé.

Pour le moment, les possibilités thérapeutiques de Rabat sont suffisantes; mais le docteur est convaincu que, dès que l'état du malade le permettra, un séjour à Warm Springs sera décisif.

Comme je l'écrivais il y a quelques jours à l'amiral W. Leahy, avec qui j'ai toujours entretenu les relations les plus franches et les plus amicales, je vois l'intervention de la Providence dans la maladie de mon fils. Sans elle, je n'aurais pas été autorisé à quitter la France et je serais probablement aujourd'hui prisonnier des allemands car, aussi que je l'ai toujours déclaré depuis Juin 1940, la flotte devait rester française ou périr.

Grâce à Dieu, après avoir exécuté loyalement les ordres que j'avais reçus, j'ai fait ce combat meurtrier dont la prolongation eût été néfaste à l'amitié séculaire franco-américaine et à l'intérêt de l'Afrique du Nord.

Un sang précieux aurait inutilement coulé et les forces armées de l'Afrique française ne combattaient pas aujourd'hui, fraternelle-

-ment aux côtés des forces alliées.

Ainsi que je l'ai déjà écrit au Commandant en chef Américain en Afrique, je n'ai agi ni par calcul, ni par ambition. J'ai senti que, désigné par le Maréchal, alors qu'il était libre de ses décisions, pour le remplacer éventuellement et lui succéder, je devais agir pour sauvegarder en Afrique les intérêts de la France et reprendre la politique d'entente avec les alliés, politique que notre isolement depuis l'armistice et la menace allemande suspendue sur le pays avaient conduit le Maréchal à remplacer par la politique "attentiste" qu'il m'avait ordonné de suivre jusqu'au 16 avril 1942 date, à laquelle, sous la pression allemande, j'ai quitté le gouvernement.

Je n'étais resté successeur désigné du chef de l'Etat et Commandant en chef que sur la prière expresse du Maréchal qui menaçait de se retirer si je partais.

Je n'ai aucune ambition personnelle. Mon seul désir est, une fois la victoire acquise, de rentrer dans la vie privée avec la satisfaction

MSM

d'avoir fait mon devoir en servant mon pays  
de mon mieux.

Daignez agréer, Monsieur le Président,  
l'hommage de mon profond respect et  
l'expression renouvelée de ma reconnaissance  
personnelle.

R. Darlan,  
Amiral de la flotte