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FRANCE

Crossroads of a Continent

by HELEN HILL MILLER

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Tanggal : 23 April 2012
No. Induk : 35464/PN-MUSEUM/'12
BIB - ID :
Beli / Hadiah : Ex. Museum

HEADLINE SERIES

No. 49

HEADLINE SERIES, NO. 49, NOVEMBER 20, 1944, PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY THE FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED, 22 EAST 38TH STREET, NEW YORK 16, N. Y. FRANK ROSS MCCOY, PRESIDENT; C. GROVE HAINES, EDITOR; EDITH R. GREENBURG, ASSISTANT EDITOR. SUBSCRIPTION RATES $2.00 FOR 10 ISSUES. SINGLE COPIES, 25C. ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER AUGUST 19, 1943, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.
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Some service man will be interested in this. After you have read it, why not send it to your nearest camp or hospital library?

FRANCE: CROSSROADS OF A CONTINENT

Helen Hill Miller

When Americans look ahead to the first post-war decade in Europe, two questions rise in their minds. The first has to do with the future of Germany: how can the nation which, twice in one generation, sowed sudden death across the Western world, be brought within a framework of orderly human relations? The second question is: what will be the place of France in whatever world structure takes shape after global war? What are the future prospects of the nation that has three times in the past seventy years—1870, 1914, 1940—borne the brunt of Germany's thrusts westward?

For the dismay that spread through the Western world when the Nazis overran France in the spring of 1940 was more than concern at the loss of a military ally. It was shock at the removal of a main pivot of Europe.

AN ANCIENT BATTLEGROUND

During two thousand years France has served as a center of the European way of life, a source of new ideas, new institutions, new insight into human relationships. And during two thousand years, some of the most serious threats to the Western world have been halted on French soil.

Twice in our own lifetime, American boys have fought the Germans in France. In the summer of 1944, current slang had a word for Americans who were back where they had been a

quarter of a century earlier. They were called "retreads." The ground which the Allied forces retrod from the beaches of Normandy during that critical summer was very old battleground. In August, 1944, the headlines announcing that American troops were back in Château Thierry, back at the Marne, back in the Argonne, waked vivid memories in the minds of millions of Americans, and connected the past with the present struggle. For Americans, the connection covered only a quarter of a century. But in Bayeux, in Caen, along the road to Cherbourg, some of the buildings wrested from Nazi snipers dated back a thousand years, and had themselves been erected by would-be conquerors whom the French had civilized. Why is France such fought-over country?

1. Crossroads of a Continent

France has been fought over so often because the land of France is a very fertile and desirable land, and because the access afforded by its long river valleys makes it a crossroads of history. The physical location of France on the European continent tells much about the place of France in European life.

France looks out over two oceans. The south coast, running from the border of Italy to the border of Spain, is like a huge window onto the Mediterranean, the sea that was the center of the ancient world and is today a main highway connecting Western countries with the Orient. The west coast, running from the Spanish border along the Bay of Biscay and then along the English Channel to the border of Belgium just beyond Dunkerque, is a still larger window facing the North Atlantic, the ocean that bears the same relation to the modern world that the Mediterranean did to the world of Greece and Rome.

RIVER VALLEYS—GATES TO FRANCE

And between the Roman world and the North Atlantic world the lay of the French land provided easy access. A relief map of France shows a series of river valley corridors by which peoples have moved or sought to move back and forth.

One corridor goes north from the Mediterranean, up the Rhône to Lyons, thence up the Saône to Dijon, over by the Doubs to Besançon, whence there is an easy transit to Mulhouse and the valley of the Rhine.

Another corridor goes across the southwest, following the Aude up from the Mediterranean, through the low-level pass guarded by storied Carcassonne to the valley of the westward-flowing Garonne, which joins with the Dordogne to form the Gironde estuary and take the traffic of Bordeaux out to the sea.

Further north along the west coast, two more main river systems give access to the heart of the country: the Loire, flowing past Nantes, Angers, Tours, the great bend guarded by Orléans; and the Seine–Oise–Aisne–Marne valleys, with Paris in their midst. North of them, again, runs the strategic line of the Somme.

True, there are two ranges of forbidding mountains, the line of the eastern boundary formed by the Alps, the Jura, and continued by the Vosges, with the Alpine heights echoed in the Massif Central of south-central France; and the Pyrenees, outlining the frontier with Spain. But in France, more than in any other European country, the lay of the land favors movement from place to place.

On the military maps during the summer of 1944, rapidly lengthening arrows showed the progress of Allied troops from the coasts to the center of the country, up the main river systems just described. The early landings in Normandy, on the northwest coast of France, when expanded across the Breton peninsula, took advantage of the valley of the Loire for the quick movement east to the area below Paris. Then came the sweep across the Seine that started the Germans on their way past the Marne, the Meuse and the Somme, up the road to defeat over the routes by which they had entered France four years before. And while the forces that had crossed the Channel from England were carrying out these movements, further forces in the Mediterranean theater landed



on the southeast coast of France and moved swiftly across to the valleys of the Rhône and the Isère northward to hold the gates of Switzerland. The Germans in the valley of the Garonne were pocketed between the two drives.

Even for troops equipped with mechanized transport, from jeeps and halftracks to bulldozers and tanks, well able to handle rough country, the valleys of France offered tremendous advantages. No wonder, then, that further back in history, when men and materials were moved on animals, or in small boats, or on foot, the gentle slopes and mildly flowing waters of France lured migration and tempted conquest. It is not hard to see why there has been so much coming and going along French valleys for two thousand years, whether up from the Roman or down from the North Atlantic world.

"DOUX PAYS DE FRANCE"

Neither is it hard for the traveller across the French countryside to see why men should want to stay in France once they had arrived. The phrase, "doux pays de France"—sweet countryside of France—occurs early in French literature; a Roman account of the plains of south-central France describes "a sea of meadows in which, free of danger, the errant waves go billowing through the grain."

There are few wastelands; the heights of the central mountains and the piny sands along the Bay of Biscay are barren, but elsewhere the land responds readily to the careful cultivation that employs a high proportion of Frenchmen.

WHEAT

The wheat-growing that attracted the approval of the Roman commentator is characteristic of many parts of France; bread bulks so large as a staple of French diet that bread grains have

been grown with government protection on acreages too small, too broken and too poor to compete unsupported with the output of the vast plains of Australia, Argentina, Canada and the United States.

LIVESTOCK

But alongside the grains, and the pigs and chickens to be found in almost every farmer's backyard, are many regional specialties. Northwest France receives plentiful rainfall from the Atlantic; the pastures it provides are the basis of the beef and dairy cattle industry that supplies milk, cheese and meat to the French cities. The impression of a land of plenty reported by many of the newspaper correspondents after D-day was the same that would have been felt by people arriving in a dairy region like Wisconsin or a feeder-cattle area like Iowa, particularly if those states had been cut off for some time from Chicago and other major markets.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

West-central France has its orchards, comparable to those of New York, Virginia, Georgia, and the Pacific Northwest. Along the Mediterranean on the Riviera coast, the climate is mild enough for olives, winter vegetables and other products (except citrus fruit) similar to those of California and Florida.

The vine-growing areas of France are as various as their products, many of which bear the names of the ancient provinces—from Burgundy and Champagne in the northeast to Bordeaux in the southwest.

This many-sided cultivation goes on in an atmosphere of temperate well-being. The range between heat and cold is moderate enough, the slopes are gentle enough, the alternation of sun and rainfall is balanced enough to permit, over and

above the struggle for survival, a margin in which the attainment of excellence can be attempted in what is grown. The small parcels in which most of the land is farmed do not allow the greatest yield for a given amount of effort, but they do concentrate highly individualized attention on the commodity at hand.

The making of a living, therefore, is closely accompanied by appreciation of the land on which the living is made, and of the contributions to a good life that come from it; witness the folk rhyme:

> À Issoire, bon vin à boire,
> Bon pain à manger et belles filles à voir.
>
> (At Issoire are good things three
> Good wine, good bread, and girls to see.)

A land so located as to be a crossroads, and so endowed as to be a very pleasant place is bound to have a complicated history.

2. Cavalcade of France

From the physical location of France, it is not hard to see why her people were the first to emerge from the dark forests, at a time when Greece and Rome were the centers of civilization and the rim of land around the Mediterranean basin was the whole known world. By 600 B.C., the tiny craft of the hardy Greek sailors had ventured west far enough to found a settlement at what is now the port of Marseilles. Caesar's campaign, whose history starts with the familiar "All Gaul is divided into three parts," was the beginning of a process of conquest and civilization by which the country was incorporated into the Roman Empire, with its people eventually becoming Roman citizens. Many traces of Rome's rule linger in French place-names. For example, Provence, the rich and picturesque region between the Rhône and Italy, takes its name from its old designation, *provincia romana* (Roman province).

HEIR OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

The modern visitor finds much vivid evidence of the overlapping on French soil of the Mediterranean world and the world of the North Atlantic. He observes it in the coliseum at Arles in Provence, a miniature of the coliseum at Rome; in the high-pillared arches of the Roman aqueduct resolutely marching across the countryside at Pont du Gard; in the triumphal arch at Orange, a link between memorials to Roman victories and the modern Arc de Triomphe in Paris; in the

Maison Carrée at Nîmes, the Roman model on which Thomas Jefferson based his design for Virginia's capitol.

And the churches around which the older cities of France all center are vivid evidence of the predominance in medieval French life of the Church of Rome.

Christianity came to France when it was still an underground movement of persecuted believers. St. Denis, first bishop of Paris, was only one of many early martyrs. But later the Emperor Constantine gave the new faith political power. As ruler of what was then the whole known world, he chose Arles as the meeting place of his first council of bishops. Thereafter Rome was the center of both spiritual and political authority. The tribes of Gaul were administered by men responsible to the Pope as well as by men responsible to the Roman emperor. And after the decline of Rome's worldly empire, it was the Roman church that held Western society together.

THE RISE OF CHRISTENDOM

When military strength ceased to be exercised in western Europe by Roman legions, many pagan tribes warred for control of Gaul. The Franks were one of these tribes. Then, in 496 A.D., their king, Clovis, was converted and consecrated by the Archbishop of Reims. And since the tribes of Gaul had a certain veneration for the Pope in Rome, the consecration of Clovis gave him prestige, and his conquests an authority above all others. From this time on the people now known as the French began to have a political existence of their own, apart from the Roman Empire.

Charlemagne, King of the Franks some three hundred years after Clovis, has left a legend that gives the rise of Christendom heroic form. Crowned by the Pope at St. Peter's in Rome on

Christmas Day, 800 A.D., as head of the Holy Roman Empire, he brought under one authority northern Italy, northeastern Spain, Gaul and the territories of recently conquered and Christianized tribes of Germany.

It was thus within a political framework created by the French that western Europe developed through the Middle Ages.

It was on French soil, too, during those early years, that three thrusts which otherwise might have checked the development of the Western world were halted.

In 451, Attila the Hun with his tribesmen swept up the Danube and westward with fire and sword until he came down the Rhine valley into the fertile lands of France. But near Châlons-sur-Marne he was turned back.

In 732, like the other arm of an enormous pincers, Moslem forces thrust across North Africa, through Spain, beyond the Pyrenees and halfway up western France, as far as Poitiers, but no further. (The Moors made other efforts at conquest of France. The dramatic legend of the death of Charlemagne's knights, Roland and Olivier, as they held the pass on the Spanish border at Roncesvalles describes one of these efforts.)

The third threat came from the Norsemen, the Scandinavian tribes that harried the coast of France from the Atlantic Ocean. They raided up the Seine. They raided up the Loire. In their case, the French did what the Romans had previously done with Gallic intruders: they colonized them. In 911 A.D., the Norman tribesmen, duly baptized, were given lands in northwest France on which to settle—the area known as Normandy to this day.

The successful warding off of these three threats gave western Europe time and space within which to grow and flower. And generation after generation, France was found in the

forefront of successive changes, as western Europe developed through the medieval and the modern period and European peoples carried their way of life to the Western Hemisphere.

CASTLE AND CATHEDRAL

With the growth of Western European civilization, settled agriculture replaced nomadic hunting as a means of livelihood, and those who tilled the soil began to need a local strong-point for protection against raids. Such protection was given them by the leaders of that time who specialized in warfare—the knights, nobles and princes of the feudal system. They organized protection of the lands in their immediate vicinity, and their castles became centers of political government. In return for this protection, the serfs who tilled the land owed the knights, nobles and princes their labor and a part of the produce. Similarly, the abbots, bishops and high dignitaries of the church specialized in matters of faith, administered the church law which bound all men of high or low degree, and embodied the religious aspiration of the age in the enduring architecture of the Gothic cathedrals. They, too, received support from the serfs on their lands.

From the British Isles to the Danube, from Scandinavia to Spain, the feudal pattern gave a unity to European life which it has not since enjoyed. Each country showed its characteristic variation on the pattern, but the main outline was the same everywhere. Among individuals who symbolized the high qualities of the medieval world was Louis IX, King of France from 1226 to 1270.

Son of Blanche of Castile, who reigned as regent during his youth, he was a Christian with a fervor of faith that was recognized in his canonization as St. Louis two generations later. He was a leader of chivalry, a Crusader whose second

expedition to free the Holy Land cost him his life. He was an administrator who quelled conflicts among his nobles, systematized the practice of justice, gave new recognition to the merchant population of the rising towns.

He was a patron of some of the greatest of French church architecture. The Cathedral of Notre Dame of Paris was taking shape in his boyhood; he and his mother donated the great north window at Chartres; and to hold the holy relics that he brought back from his first Crusade he built the medieval jewel case of the Sainte Chapelle, one of the most precious buildings of all Paris.

But little by little, modern restlessness shook off the pattern of feudal custom. To the serf, the noble, and the churchman of the medieval world were added three new types; the patriot, the protestant, and the trader.

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN TIMES

As communications improved and weapons developed, the amount of territory that could be successfully defended expanded from the fields surrounding a castle to considerable areas. Centralization brought the nobles holding these areas under firmer control by the strongest ones among them. And as broad masses of people experienced the feeling of belonging to groups larger than villages, loyalties appeared on a regional and then a national scale; loyalty to France as a national state finally took the place of loyalty to the province of Burgundy or of Orléans.

Symbolic of this process was the life of Jeanne d'Arc, who at the beginning of the fifteenth century, in response to the bidding of "voices," inspired in a divided court and a vacillating king the spirit to clear the country of foreign armies and rule it as a nation.

But as the nations of the Western world became much closer-knit, with France the first to attain overall unity, the previous unity of Christendom disintegrated. There were many reasons for this. Newly powerful monarchs recognized no man as their superior, not even the Pope. People began to urge reform of what they regarded as the Church's corrupt practices, and ended by breaking away altogether and denying the need of a church hierarchy to mediate between the individual Christian and his God. Among thinkers of the Reformation, the Frenchman Jean Calvin, founder of the Calvinist movement, symbolizes the Protestant spirit.



The appeal of Protestantism was greatest to the third new arrival on the European scene, the trader. The great discoveries and explorations of the world outside Europe provided the background for new ways of life. Medieval agriculture was a collective affair, in which the efforts of everyone on a manor were joined. So was medieval manufacture, with its elaborate guild system leading from apprenticeship through journeyman's years to mastery of the craft. But the commerce that

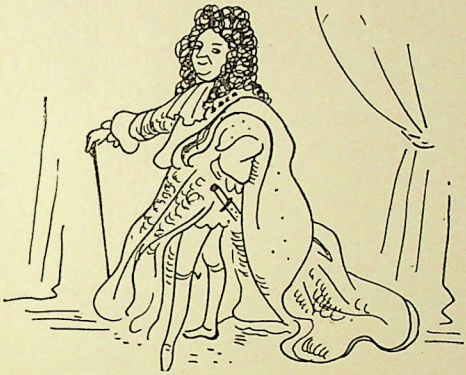
followed in the wake of the great explorers was a matter for each individual's risk and judgment. Venture capital made its appearance; goods were bought and sold in distant markets; new wants were stimulated and satisfied. To the closely contained medieval communities were added the great open spaces, where people ranged far and wide, and often alone. The independence such a life encouraged was reflected in the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century, and in the political revolts of the eighteenth.

Meanwhile, travel and interchange had combined discovery of the New World with rediscovery of the Old. The philosophy, art, literature and history of ancient times, all but forgotten in the dark ages after the fall of Rome, were found again. Fresh knowledge, of old times and new places, attracted people's interest to the things of this world: with wonder and fascination they turned toward nature and away from sainthood. In France, the Renaissance was the period of the pungent satiric writings of Rabelais, the period of the building of the magnificent châteaux of the Loire valley, of the turning of art to picture the life of ordinary mortals instead of religious subjects.

MONARCHY IN THE GRAND MANNER

Among the first fruits of the Renaissance was absolutism in politics. The sovereignty asserted by each nation as it became united under a king was centered in the monarch, who regarded himself as responsible to no one within or outside the territory over which he ruled. In Louis XIV of France (1638-1715), *Roi-Soleil* (the Sun-King), the institution reached its zenith.

By the time the Grand Monarch assumed active control of affairs, the internal struggle between nobles and monarchy had



been settled in favor of the monarchy. The merchants in the cities, the cultivators on the land, were still submissive. In the Prince of Condé and the Marquis of Turenne, the king had two extraordinary generals, well capable of carrying war abroad; in Vauban, a military engineer who knew how to build fortifications in a period when defensive positions could be held; in Louvois, an exceptional minister of military affairs. On the civil side, he had in Colbert a finance minister who understood that production is the source of national wealth, and whose monetary reforms were coupled with a lively interest in furthering trade at home through such enterprises as textiles, glass, pottery, and abroad through such undertakings as trading companies for the Indies and the Americas. To speed the flow of trade, roads and canals were built inside France, and the navy and merchant marine were developed to serve and protect overseas traffic.

Art, too, flourished; the rule of reason, expanded into a system by the philosopher Descartes, became the guiding

principle of French culture. The contemporary revival of the classics emphasized order, proportion, unity, all highly welcome to a nation like France that had suffered during the sixteenth century the horrors of civil religious strife. Symmetry and balance became the central characteristics of architecture, the theater, and the decorative arts. The palace at Versailles, built during the 1680's, in its structure, its gardens, its interior design, symbolized the lavish magnificence that was possible when the entire wealth of the nation was at the disposal of a monarch who could declare "I am the State."

The rule of reason, however, was not limited to philosophy or art. The individual, too, became affected by it; he gradually changed from a servant of the absolute monarch into an independent-minded citizen.

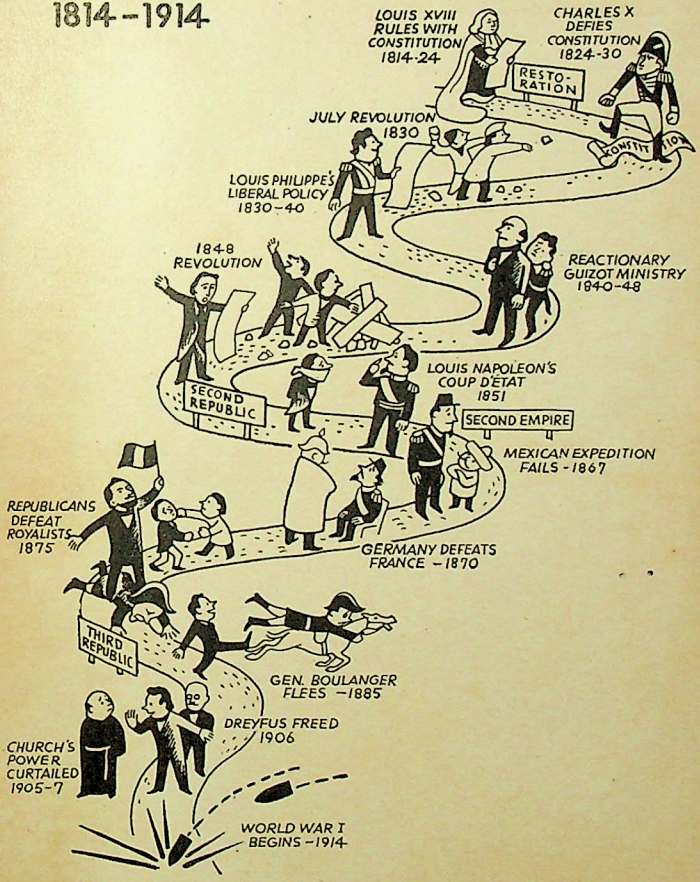
THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION

Most of the eighteenth century passed before the citizen asserted himself, before the parasitic drain of the court on the



Cartoon of pre-Revolutionary France. The Third Estate is carrying the burden of Royalty, Nobility, and Clergy. 1789.
(The Bettmann Archive)

PATH FRANCE TRAVELLED
1814–1914



GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES

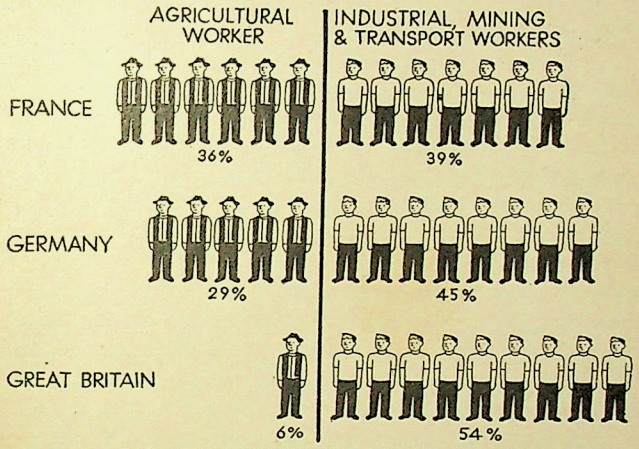
substance of the country, and the stifling of successive attempts at reform, accumulated the resentment that finally broke out in violent revolution. Yet after paying the price of dalliance, it was France that first brought the political basis of democracy to the European continent with the Declaration of the Rights of Man. The French Revolution of 1789 launched a period that recognized the citizen's rights against the state, tempered or destroyed the absolute authority of monarchs, brought constitutional safeguards in country after country during the next hundred years.

The wars that started as wars of liberation, in which the citizens of the beleaguered First Republic defended themselves against reactionary foreign intervention to the stirring summons of the Marseillaise, turned into wars of conquest under Napoleon I. But the armies that swept across Europe from Paris to Moscow eventually were driven home. After 1815 the Bourbon Restoration tried to turn the clock back; then began the uneasy alternation of monarchy, revolution, empire, insurrection and republic that characterized political France to our own day.

FRANCE AND THE MACHINE

In the political sphere, France was one of the leading nations of the Western world. Much of the political revolution of the nineteenth century was of her making. But her part in the industrial revolution was far less important. The initial progress made under Louis XVI was interrupted by the Revolution, and was not resumed till after the Napoleonic Wars. Then, during the period of individual enterprise, particularly in the realm of inventions, and in industries like textiles and clothing where much depends on individual craftsmanship and originality of design, French leadership asserted itself. But it did

LAND VS. MACHINES



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 6% OF ALL EMPLOYED PERSONS

GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES

not continue with the rise of corporate enterprise, with the rapidly growing mechanization of world economy after the unification of Germany and the completion of settlement in the United States. (There is a parallel here with the seventeenth and eighteenth century history of colonization: France supplied many of the early discoverers and explorers, but did not consolidate their findings in settlements.)

In other leading countries, since the mid-nineteenth century, industry has passed agriculture as a main source of livelihood; in France agriculture has remained almost equally important. This is partially explained by the lack of coal after the

loss of Alsace-Lorraine—a serious impediment to the development of heavy industry (although partially compensated by hydro-electric power in recent years); and by the lack of manpower after World War I, which was so serious that it became necessary to import Italian, Berber and Polish labor. But the lack of manpower in the 1930's was not caused by war losses alone; it was part of a trend that had continued for a century and a quarter: during that period the curve of the growth of manpower in the industrialized nations of Europe shows a French increase of 48 per cent contrasted with a British increase of 400 per cent and a German increase of 250 per cent.

Thus France, so long a source of innovations in Europe, fell behind when it came to the development of the institutions generated by industrialization: huge corporations and trade unions, assembly line production and mass distribution. In other nations modern life has increasingly come to be conceived in terms of men-and-machines. In an age when industrial power is a main basis for military might, France's relative backwardness proved a tragic hardship in her struggles with a heavily industrialized and densely populated Germany.

3. The French Mind

It is always dangerous to credit a people with certain national characteristics. If someone says that moderation, clarity and order are distinguishing traits of the French mind, the claim can be promptly offset by citing unquestionably romantic French swashbucklers—such as The Three Musketeers and Cyrano de Bergerac. The statement that the rule of reason is the guiding principle of French life can be similarly countered by the famous phrase of the French philosopher Pascal: "The heart has its reasons that reason never knew."

Yet in spite of conspicuous exceptions, there are certain ways of going at things, certain ways of doing things, which Americans agree to be typically American; and there are comparable traits common enough among Frenchmen to be recognizably French. In each case, knowledge of some of the mainsprings of national action aids understanding of the action that takes place—the more so since French and American traits in many cases are each other's opposites.

THE FRENCHMAN STAYS PUT

The American, always on the go and looking for something beyond the horizon, offers a complete contrast to the Frenchman who can imagine no place where he would rather be than France. The Frenchman likes to stay home.

The Frenchman's love of his country is compounded of many elements. Part of it is belief in France as the center of civilization. Memory of the threats to the Western world

that have been stopped in France is another part. The Mediterranean world of which France was the first inheritor was a narrow strip of land surrounded by the darkness of the unknown, by savage energies that had to be either brought within the Roman system or thrown back. The recurrent French sense of menace from without thus has a long historic background, quickened in our day by the fact that three times within the memory of the oldest living Frenchmen invading forces have penetrated France from across the Rhine.

This background has made Frenchmen very definite about what civilization is. In spite of the popularity of the French philosopher Rousseau, whose work extols the nobility of the natural man, the typical Frenchman finds nature in the raw turbulent, meaningless, menacing—until harmonized by man it belongs to barbarism. But a cleared space, an ordered growth, may be admitted within the pale of civilization, be it the carefully tended modern French forests or the formal gardens of the eighteenth century. When the Marseillaise rouses its singers to patriotic emotion, the *patrie* invoked is not the raw land of natural France, nor yet a vague general idea of a country. It is *nos sillons*—the furrows marked by plows, the land used by man. After the Germans' retreat across the north of France in 1918, the act of farmyard destruction of which they were most indignantly accused was the cutting of the carefully pleached fruit trees along the village walls. The barbarians had hacked at the roots of a patiently civilized nature.

FAMILY TIES

The idea of civilization which Frenchmen apply to the land is even more vigorously applied to human beings. While no country thinks more of its children than France—lately, they have had an increasing scarcity value—no country expects

more of them in terms of social and intellectual training. The unrestrained self-expression that American parents often encourage in their children shocks French parents, who believe that the civilizing process must start in earliest infancy and that this means following certain well-defined rules.

This process is essential to the well-being of the French child; for the French world is a world of and for adults. France, as an old nation, prefers those who have come of age. The ardors of youth seem to her at once futile and exhausting. She has lived too long not to realize the effort which mere maintenance requires. The romantic extremes of adolescence are incompatible with the French ideal of moderation, the belief that a *juste mesure* (just measure) is at the center of intelligent living.

Partly because the French family expects to stay put, with the children growing up to receive, operate, and in their turn transmit the family heritage, there is a compactness about French family life that has caused one acute observer to compare it to that of the Chinese. It is in sharp contrast to the American assumption that the children, once grown, scatter far and wide and take up new and different occupations.

The American family does not set too much importance upon its circumstances at any given time because it expects change and welcomes the prospect. The French family, by contrast, is consistently interested in its situation—so much so that the word in English conveys only a minimum of its content in French. A Frenchman would be lost without his concept of his personal *situation*—that is, his location in society at any given time. This concept is repeated, on an enlarged scale, in his concept of every other *situation* up to and including the *situation* of his country. The French word includes a ruthlessly clear estimate of all assets and liabilities, a strict account-

ing of ways and means by which the assets can be gradually built up and the liabilities gradually lessened, and an outline of a general plan toward whose realization every action should be directed.

In the furtherance of their personal plans, most Frenchmen are highly individualistic. Business affairs, social affairs, are looked upon as not only private but personal matters, not to be shared casually with others outside the family circle. Clubs, organizations, societies, the colorful paraphernalia of group life familiar to the American scene, are rare in Paris, though the cafés serve some of the same purposes. They are rarer still in the French countryside. The French Revolution recognized only the individual and the state; until the very end of the nineteenth century associations were outside the law. Under such circumstances, society consists only of the individuals who compose it and the regulations in accordance with which they have agreed to act.

FRENCH SOCIAL CEMENT

In other words, the thing in France which makes a society out of what would otherwise be a collection of individuals is the legal structure. If, to citizens of a country like the United States where voluntary associations are as thick as blackberries in midsummer, the French seem at times unduly legalistic, unduly committed to the letter of the law, it is because the law is the cement that holds French society together. It enables the innumerable individual actions of French citizens to present a harmonious effect without being involved with one another—what is not individual in France is impersonal.

Symbolic of the rational unity imparted to French life by the legal structure is the code drawn up at the time of Napoleon—and partly modeled on the Roman code—that sys-

tematizes all law in a single instrument. It contrasts sharply with the mixture of custom, judges' decisions, and statutes made at different levels of government with which Americans are familiar. In France, authorization for, or denial of, any given procedure can be traced to some specific section of a single document.

GOVERNMENT AND LANGUAGE

Similarly with regard to government: whatever regime France has had at a given time has always been highly centralized—quite unlike the American federal system with its division of powers and overlapping jurisdictions. In our own time, centralization—domestically and in respect to the colonial empire—went further in France than in any other contemporary democratic regime.

The logical symmetry characteristic of all French institutions is nowhere better illustrated than by the versatile tool with which their business is conducted—the French language. The story used to be told in Geneva of the session of an international commission where the discussion, in English for the moment, was going more and more at cross purposes. But when the time came for translation, and the points at issue were put into French, the divergences which had remained unobserved in the loose constructions of English were brought into such sharp relief that they could be intelligently, rather than emotionally, dealt with.

THE PLACE OF THE INTELLECT

In view of the fact that for generations the rule of reason has been the mainspring of French society, it is not hard to see why the intellect holds the place of honor in the French scheme of things. This attitude is summarized in Descartes'

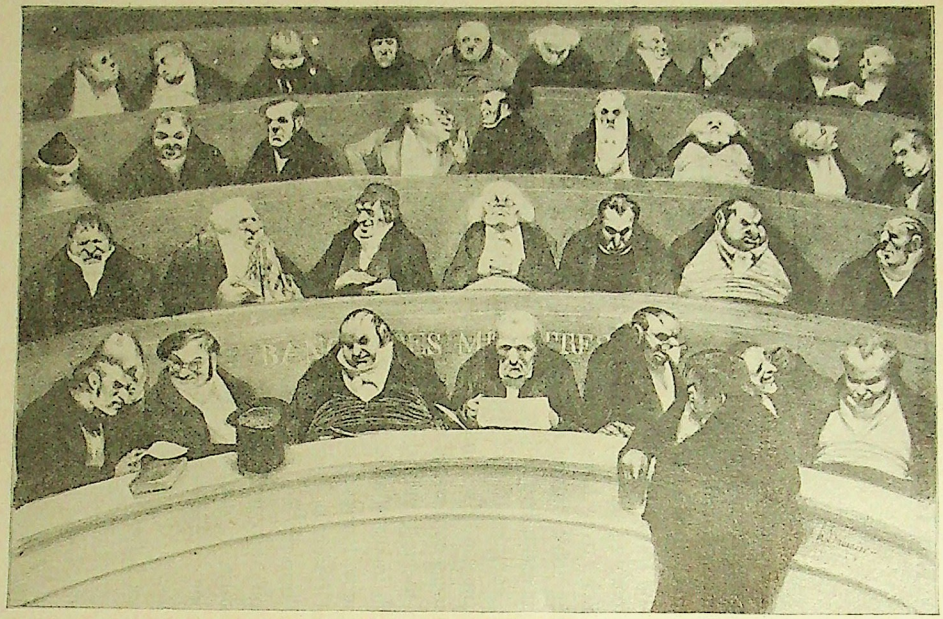
brief phrase, *je pense, donc je suis* (I think, therefore I am). Conviction that without the meaning and order that man, the thinking creature, can bring to it, life is barbarism, makes the French regard the intellect as the source of civilization. The world preeminence of Paris as a center of philosophy, art, music has supported this assumption. The claim of the *Ville-Lumière* (City of Light) to be the capital of humanity is based upon the welcome extended there over the years to all men as thinkers.

Like everything else, however, French intellectual life has had its *situation*. In the realm of pure thought, of creative art, the products of the intellect have a universal appeal: witness modern French music, modern French painting, and much modern French literature. But on social subjects, thought cannot be "pure" in the sense of being remote from the give-and-take of everyday life. Because of that, political and economic ideas, throughout the nineteenth century and our own time, could never appeal to more than half of France.

4. The Two Frances

The French Revolution split in two the internal politics of France; from that time to our own there have been twin Frances, mortal enemies. The left-over bitterness of the American Civil War is still a political factor, yet in the United States the geographic unity of the opposing sides has been a softening influence. The French Revolution was a civil war in which, over large areas, the lines were drawn not on a geographic but on a social basis. When it was over, the ex-combatants had to live side by side in persisting bitterness. As the completeness of the democratic victory, with the passage of time and the coming of reaction, became less complete, two Frances confronted each other: authoritarian France, founded on the institutional trinity of monarchy, army and church, with industry as an ally after World War I; and democratic France, founded on the ideological trinity of liberty, equality and fraternity among individual citizens.

From the Revolution of 1789 to the founding of the Third Republic in 1870, changes in the form of government—empire, restoration, constitutional monarchy, empire again—occurred about once a generation, punctuated by revolutionary interludes. And while the Third Republic lasted some seventy years before it was interred by Marshal Pétain and the collaborationists in 1940, its stability was more than once in doubt. It was threatened in the 1880's by a man-on-horseback, Boulanger, and again at the turn of the century at the time of the Dreyfus case.



LE VENTRE LÉGISLATIF, 1834. The Chamber of Deputies during the reign of Louis Philippe as caricatured by Daumier. (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

THE DREYFUS CASE AND THE STAVISKY AFFAIR

The importance of the Dreyfus case in French politics is comparable to that of the Dred Scott decision at the time of the American Civil War: it clarified issues that everyone knew to be full of political dynamite. Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army, was tried for selling French military secrets to Germany, convicted, and sentenced to the penal colony of Devil's Island. The opinion circulated that he had been framed to cover the activities of another officer who was more acceptable to traditional army circles. The novelist Émile Zola, backed by the part of France that believed in republican justice, made the case a political issue with his famous open letter, "*J'accuse!*" Reinvestigation cleared Dreyfus and fixed the treason where it belonged.

That time, the Republic was vindicated. But in the 1930's, another notorious case put the shoe on the other foot. Restlessness with the regime had been growing during the interwar years, based on an uneasy certainty that too many of its officials were little men, at best blandly unaware of the deepening crisis; at worst, venal and corrupt. That was why the Stavisky swindle concerning a municipally operated pawnshop in Bayonne took on the proportions of a national scandal.

Distrust of a government which seemed to be party to such corruption was widespread even among citizens who did not belong in the authoritarian camp. This affords some explanation of the acceptance by a defeated France in 1940 of the slogan, "work, family, fatherland," as a substitute for "liberty, equality, fraternity."

GEOGRAPHY: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, RELIGIOUS

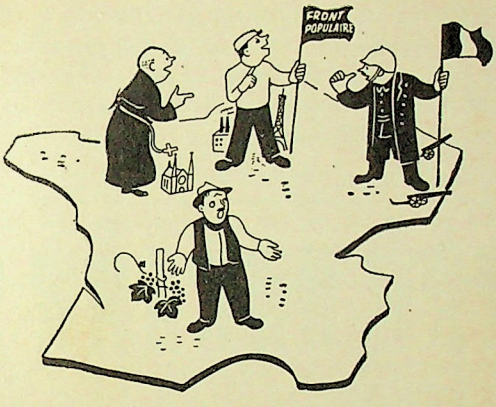
In order to understand the social struggles of France in our time, struggles which will provide unfinished business for post-

war leadership, it is important to know the geography of the country—not only its physical geography, described in Chapter 1, but the political, economic and religious geography of its various regions. The centralization of life in Paris is too apt to blind the foreigner to the diversity of provincial France, no less real and no less important than the diversity among American regions.

Review of the map of France as it was at the opening of World War II indicates various realities that were overlaid rather than eradicated by the German occupation.

Take the map of France as a study in political geography. Straight across the country, south of the Loire, lay the France of nineteenth century democracy. The effects of the French Revolution were most sweeping in the south. It is not surprising that Toulouse, the early capital of radicalism, was among the first cities to rise in the summer of 1944. The Breton peninsula of the west, where the Revolution was unsuccessful, also changed but little after those bloody days; in this country of Celtic extremes, in recent years, the black conversatism of church and chateau lowered over the red radicalism of the fishing fleet. In the northeast is Alsace-Lorraine, the vulnerable frontier with Germany, scene of recurrent war, fortification, anxiety, desire for strong government. In the north-center is Paris, with the function of exerting on these very diverse elements the unifying influence of a political capital.

Take the map of France as a study in economic geography. With the Revolution, the south and east became the home of the French peasant proprietor, of most of the four and a half million Frenchmen who between wars had holdings of less than fifteen acres, of the million more with holdings of less than seventy-five. In the west, where the large landed estates were not broken up, tenure changed little through a century.

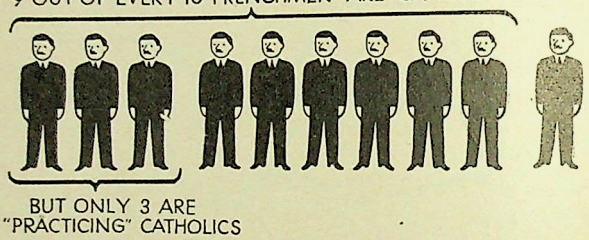


Eighty-five per cent of the industrial wealth of France lay in the north-north-east and the Paris region; the major part of the iron, steel and mining industries was within gunshot of the frontier. In the cities—Paris, Lyons, Marseilles—were entrenched the class-conscious workers.

Take the map of France as a study in religious geography. In the 1930's thirty-six of the forty million French were adherents of the Roman Catholic Church, but in studying the political aspect of their religion it was important to distinguish between those who were Catholics by conviction and those who were Catholics by convention. There were some twelve million Catholics by conviction, the intensity of whose religious life caused them to be classified as *catholiques pratiquants* (practicing Catholics). There were twice as many others whose conventional Catholicism was directly comparable to conventional Protestantism in the United States. They called the priest for weddings and funerals; they thronged the churches for the principal services of Christmas and Easter,

The Frenchman who said "*Je suis athée, mais naturellement, je suis catholique*" ("I am an atheist but, naturally, I am Catholic") summarized the nature of their conformity.

At the polls, these nominal Catholics were most useful in furthering the worldly interests of the Church.



Every hamlet had its curé. That was why Jules Ferry, in 1882—when Gambetta's cry, "Clericalism, there is the enemy!" was still loud in the public ear—began free popular education in the name of the Republic and set up a counter-influence in the local schoolmaster. The story of the laws of 1900-1905, under which church and state were separated, is the story of local battles between democratic and authoritarian France.

The religious map also shows certain exceptional groups. The Bretons of the west are Catholics, but because they are also Celts their mystic approach to religion has more in common with the Catholicism of Ireland than with that of the rest of France. The Catholics of Alsace-Lorraine are also of another tradition. Scattered over the country, but concentrated to some extent in the cities, were 1,000,000 Protestants and 165,000 Jews: both groups were prominent in the public life of the inter-war years beyond their proportionate popular strength.

These three maps, superimposed on one another, give a rough picture of sectional politics as regularly reflected every four years by pre-war elections to the Chamber of Deputies. Viewed against this background, the election returns belie the prevailing opinion that French politics were erratic. Cabinet changes were frequent exactly because the election results, year after year, showed so nearly equal a division between the France of authority and the France of democracy that the cabinet of the day always balanced on a knife edge. The bloc system in parliament resulted in the formation of unstable majorities which could be upset by a very small shift, and so bring down the ministry of the day. The French Cabinet, moreover, unlike the British, could not discipline parliament by a threat of calling an election and going to the country on the issue which brought it down; the premier of the day merely resigned and bestowed on his successor the dubious task of finding a new and if possible a less precarious majority.

French national and local politics were closely linked, as in the United States, and there was a corresponding tendency to vote for persons and parties rather than on issues. The parties, moreover, had been so long established that their issues were traditional rather than immediate, and they were unable to present to French voters certain contemporary questions on which action could not safely be postponed.

As long as the framework of the Third Republic endured, all but the extremist political fringe had to pay at least lip-service to the democratic ideal. On the far left, in the 1930's, the Communists extolled another system, and an offshoot of the Socialist party urged something very like national socialism. At the same time, on the far right, a small but vociferous group proposed restoration of the pre-Revolutionary mon-

archy, and certain reactionary industrial leaders campaigned for centralization of governmental power in the President.

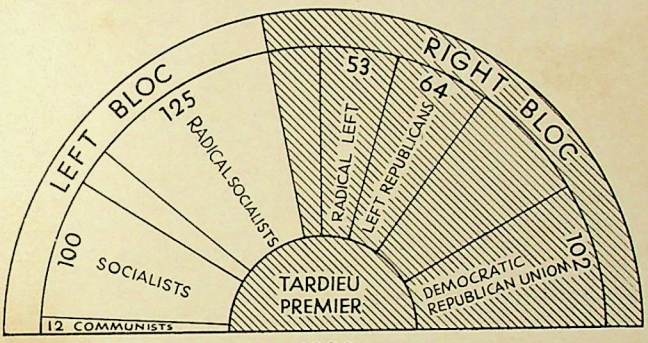
But between these extremes, the chief parties bore names which showed how the winds of politics blew to the left. The furthest right group called itself the Republican Federation; the right-center, the Democratic Alliance. In the middle-of-the-road, wielding the balance-of-power, were the Radical Socialists; left-of-center stood the Socialists. These party alignments offered relatively satisfactory divisions for votes on issues that concerned politics or religion. But they were brittle with age. The developments of the twentieth century required action on social and economic issues which the existing parties were ill-equipped to undertake.

THE AGRICULTURAL BACKGROUND

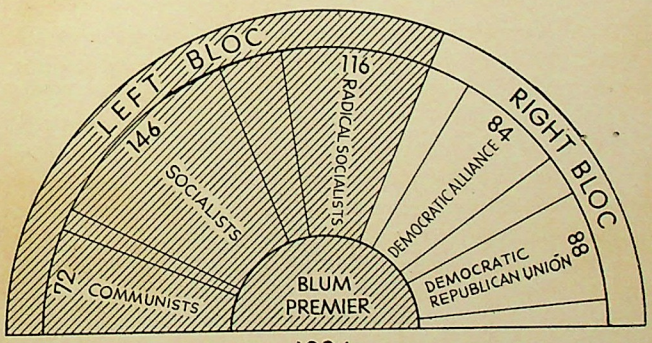
The reasons for the inadequacy of parties under the Third Republic go back to the days of the First. The revolutionary demand for political rights came from the newly important commercial populations of the towns. But the resulting reforms were applied in a predominantly agricultural country. The outstanding domestic change effected by the Revolution was the transfer of the land from feudal to peasant ownership. Unlike the Russian revolutionaries after 1917, the French townsmen did not maintain the political initiative after the agricultural reform. The center of French political life became the rural peasant proprietor, often represented by his lawyer of the agricultural market town.

In other countries, the industrial revolution became the central national fact. The towns and cities that were commercial headquarters when the political revolution started became manufacturing centers with corporation executives and trade union officials among their citizenry. The farm

FRENCH POLITICAL PARTIES



1930



1936

GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES

population moved to town to share in the new jobs until the majority of the nation lived in cities, and much more than the majority had a city outlook. In France, that did not happen. Hence the issues which factory production, particularly mass production, brought to the fore, were real only to minorities of the French population.

THE POLITICAL VERSUS THE INDUSTRIAL LEFT

The difficulty of getting the French people to consider machine-age issues was particularly felt by the left-of-center parties. Unlike the parties of the Right, they could not rest on a defense of the existing state of things or daydream about the past. The French peasant proprietor was their political mainstay, but his ideas on property really belonged in the Rightist camp. His personal *situation* was built on individual reward, on private ownership. He found collective action, trade unionism and public control repulsive. Yet the industrial workers of France also sought political representation through the Left. How to integrate the two groups and their desires? The French Left of the inter-war period was constantly struggling to keep in line two banners—one inscribed with the Communist Manifesto, the other with the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

POLITICS AND "GENS TRÈS BIEN"

The fact that the center of French political life under the Third Republic was in the small agricultural holding and the commercial town not only limited the issues on which positive political action could be taken but the origins from which candidates were likely to come. Humble origin—like the log-cabin tradition in American politics—and long local political apprenticeship were almost indispensable to a place in the

party structure. With few exceptions, the Third Republic drew its personnel from the Third Estate—a fact which enabled the social lobby at Paris to exercise a corruptive influence.

During the nineteenth century, the *gens très bien* (upper crust) whose *situation* offered them other openings were inclined to look down their noses at the electoral process and its products. Many such Frenchmen, if they entered government service, sought posts which offered continuity with pre-revolutionary France, in colonial administration and in the military services.

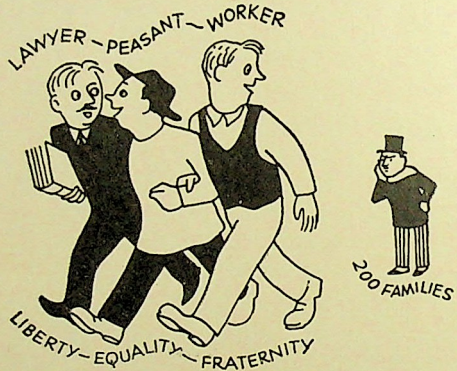
THE EMPIRE ADMINISTRATORS

To the typical citizen of the Third Republic, at least until the early part of this century, France meant the land contained within the boundaries of the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the vulnerable northern frontier, the soil which he and his grandfathers fought to defend at Valmy, at Metz, and again, with the outbreak of World War I, at the Marne. The Empire was a collection of faraway countries of which he knew little. Yet during the lifetime of the Third Republic, by a series of tactfully handled parliamentary authorizations, the Empire administrators increased French colonial territory tenfold, French colonial population twentyfold; and to a France increasingly aware of her precarious manpower situation, these facts, in the between-wars world, suddenly took on great general interest.

THE ARMY

Similarly, the average citizen of the Third Republic looked on the army as a *levée en masse*, a rising of citizens in time of danger. Training for this unwelcome necessity was, he thought,

rightly under a system of universal conscription which equalized each youth's individual sacrifice. The profession of a career officer was something not of his world. France as a world power interested him almost exclusively in terms of the security that world power would insure to his domestic way of life. Yet in certain families, son followed father regularly at the military academy of St. Cyr.



THE "TWO HUNDRED FAMILIES"

But not all of the *gens très bien* were in uniform or abroad. They also held the domestic financial and industrial power which made political symbols of the "two hundred families" and the organization of industrialists known as the Comité des Forges. Basically, French heavy industry was an outgrowth of the bourgeois private enterprise which had originally been liberal in its tendencies. But entrenchment and increasing wealth gradually centered its interest on the maintenance of its privileges, and on the prevention of social revolution at all

cost. The holders of big industrial property thus increasingly made common cause with the reactionary descendants of the part of France that had opposed the political revolution. Like other such industrialists in other countries, they shuddered at the name of Communism, admired Mussolini and Franco, and eventually preferred Hitler to Blum. These nostalgic supporters of feudalism, agricultural and industrial, each furnished a man for Vichy. Pétain stood for monarchy, church, aristocratic army, peasant economy. Laval stood for a National Socialist, anti-Communist France.

THE SOCIALIST ISSUE

It was this division between authoritarian and democratic forces that made the socialist issue, common to all democracies in the between-war years, so particularly difficult for France. The situation of the French government in the 1930's can be illustrated from the experience of various American states during the same period. In a number of states, especially in the north-central region—Ohio, Michigan, Illinois are examples—there are a few highly localized manufacturing areas where the problems of modern industry are the key problems. The other parts of these states are agricultural in their interests and outlook. The depression hit the manufacturing centers hard. Relief measures were essential to the prevention of acute distress. But the acuteness of the distress, and the amount of cash outlay required to keep city families going, even at the barest minimum, were often considered with scant sympathy at the state capital because representatives of rural constituencies formed a powerful bloc there. Upstate or downstate from the factory centers, industrial problems were unreal, uninteresting, unimportant. In France, a similar attitude burdened a government that had national responsibilities.

THE MAGINOT MENTALITY

In the early 1930's Charles de Gaulle, then a not too well known officer in the French army, in a book on *The Army of the Future*, questioned the validity of the current concept of the army and drew some important conclusions from the machine age as far as military power was concerned.

The general staff, de Gaulle charged, was deeply at fault. Superficially, it was at fault in building its plans, equipment, and strategy on the requirements of the last war. But fundamentally, it was at fault in attempting to maintain, under modern conditions, the notion of what an army was that had dominated France ever since the end of the eighteenth century. Then, France could triumph by sheer quantity of manpower. In our time, that notion is invalid for two reasons. France no longer has the manpower; instead of outnumbering others, she is outnumbered by the surrounding European states.

The second change which has rendered the old notion invalid is the coming of the machine. The machine has provided the basis on which neighboring populations have greatly expanded; it has reintroduced into military science the idea of specialization, typified in the medieval world by the special skill of the highly trained and cunningly armored knight. The invention of the tank, said de Gaulle, made obsolete the trench-warfare of World War I. It revived the possibility of surprise and maneuverability, with the relentlessness of machinery added. To fight the kind of war which contemporary machinery demanded, de Gaulle urged in vain in the mid-thirties, the general staff must revise its basic ideas.

TOTAL PREPAREDNESS AND THE FRENCH WAY OF LIFE

The inferences that de Gaulle drew with regard to the army were drawn by other thoughtful people with regard to

other parts of French life. They raised the question: if mechanization is the price that must be paid to stay in the game of power politics, does France want to remain a great power? Would it be preferable to cede her place in the world of force, to withdraw from the clash of industrial energies beyond her competitive capacity, and to rely rather on the influence of the French way of life?

The choice implicit in these questions was sharpened in the years just before the outbreak of war in 1939. Clearly, if France was determined to be strong, she had to live in a state of total war, think of nothing but war, bend every energy to a long-maintained preparation, knowing that the chance of peace was very slight and knowing that when war came it would bring in its train famine, civil war, and misery for a generation in a Europe plunged into anarchy.

Concentration on total preparedness, moreover, leaves little room for the finesse in human relationships, the taste for craftsmanship, the capacity for the reflective life, that have had more to do with France's greatness than has material power.

But the men who favored France's choice of a secondary role in world affairs assumed that France could develop her way of life peacefully in security from attacks by her neighbors. De Gaulle wrote: "The dream of France is, preeminently, that of an organized world, where the strictness of the law, the moderateness of desires, and the ubiquity of the police would guarantee peace for all and allow everyone to live his own life."

SPRING, 1940 . . .

That dream was shattered by the Nazis' mechanized forces in the spring of 1940. In military form, the war came to an end with the armistice of June 22, 1940. In non-military



Reference map to show places mentioned in the text



GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES

forms, it went relentlessly on. The Germans fought by many methods. They divided France into two zones—occupied and unoccupied. They sought to weaken it by retention of the bulk of the French army in prison camps, by shipping French workers to the factories of the Reich, and by imposing a semi-starvation which produced soddenness rather than open revolt. At the very beginning, they sought to disarm French dislike by "correctness." But as soon as large-scale confiscations made Frenchmen feel that it is of little help for a goose to be plucked in a correct manner, the Germans undertook to sow mutual suspicion, distrust and hatred among the civilians who remained at home; they seized hostages in reprisal for "incidents," executed those who resisted them—and wooed collaborators. The French fought back through the Underground —by a clandestine press, obstruction, sabotage, aid to the Allies—and through the French National Committee of Liberation headed by General de Gaulle first from London, then from Algiers—until D-day brought full-scale military opposition to the Germans on French soil again, and the guns at Cherbourg celebrated the anniversary of the Bastille.

5. European Adjunct or World Power?

As soon as the first news of the liberation of Paris reached New York, an impromptu demonstration was organized in the court at Rockefeller Center. The tricolor, with French sailors standing behind it, was broken out at the flag poles all around the square. There were happy crowds. There was a band playing *La Marche Lorraine* and Lily Pons singing *La Marseillaise*. Ticker tape drifted down story after story through the bright August sunlight.

How much did it mean? One thing surely: France was alive again. Across the Atlantic, around the Arc de Triomphe, demonstrators to whom the moment was of far more profound significance were celebrating the liberation of their capital. The occupation was over. The Nazis were on their way out.

But a quarter of a century before, there had also been happy crowds, and bands playing around the Arc de Triomphe. The children who waved little flags at that celebration grew up into a world of cynicism, defeat, humiliation.

FRANCE'S SECOND CHANCE

Now, after the first joy, the first relief from fear, the first relaxation of tension, comes France's second chance. No country in Europe has on hand more unfinished business.

A major part of that business concerns the place of France in Europe and in the world.

The American crowds that celebrated the victory of November 1918 rejoiced that the intrusion into French ter-

ritory had been stopped. Their rejoicing, however, came from general goodwill at the turn of the fortunes of a sister republic. Only a small minority of Americans, in those days, realized how much difference the future of France made to the future of the United States. Today, after the menace of world disorder has again been made brutally clear, this time on battle fronts around the entire globe, more Americans feel a direct concern as to how world order can be maintained. And more Americans realize that the strength or weakness of France, and the relation of France to other countries, is centrally important to their own future. For generations, France has recognized the limits on her policy set by outside powers; the United States, by contrast, has hardly felt such limits until our own day.

THE DIPLOMATIC POSITION OF FRANCE

Twice in modern history, at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, France dominated Europe single-handed. At other times, France has been a chief organizer of the groupings of nations that have made the European balance of power.

The longest period of control of Europe by a single nation was during the reign of Louis XIV. The Grand Monarch raised France to the ranking power of the continent. The main contenders on the European scene were the Hapsburg dynasty, controlling Austria, the Spanish Netherlands and Spain; Holland and Sweden; and England, across the Channel but intensely concerned with continental alignments. Germany and Italy were then areas divided into numerous small states, adjuncts to the moves of the major powers. Russia was remote from European affairs.

Four of these contenders, Spain, England, Holland and France had domains and interests beyond the European continent in the Americas and in the Far East; a struggle between them therefore had world implications.

Louis' interest, however, was primarily in the continent. Calling upon the doctrine of "national boundaries," he advanced his frontiers north through Artois into Flanders, northeast into Luxembourg, east through Alsace to the Rhine and through Franche Comté to the Jura, south through Roussillon to the Mediterranean Pyrenees. Among these gains were the strongpoints of Verdun, Metz, Strasbourg—strategic centers along the French frontier where physical barriers are lacking, and scenes of subsequent battles. Beyond these territorial gains, he used the wars of 1648-97 to hasten the disintegration of the many-branched Hapsburg dynasty, and promote the Bourbons to the Hapsburgs' place. Not only in France but throughout western Europe, the latter part of the seventeenth century was the age of Louis XIV.

But even during Louis' lifetime, the supremacy of a single state was challenged in the name of the balance of power. When he attempted to make his dynasty the heir of the Hapsburgs in Spain, the rest of Europe gathered its forces against him in the Grand Alliance, and in 1713 the Treaty of Utrecht put a limit to the expansion of French influence.

The Bourbons ranked high in Europe for the better part of the eighteenth century, but increasingly their power was more apparent than real. It was sapped at home by the extravagances of a court that fatuously imagined Versailles to be France. It was sapped abroad as preoccupation with continental affairs permitted a series of losses in the overseas

empire until the positions of Britain and France in India and North America were reversed.

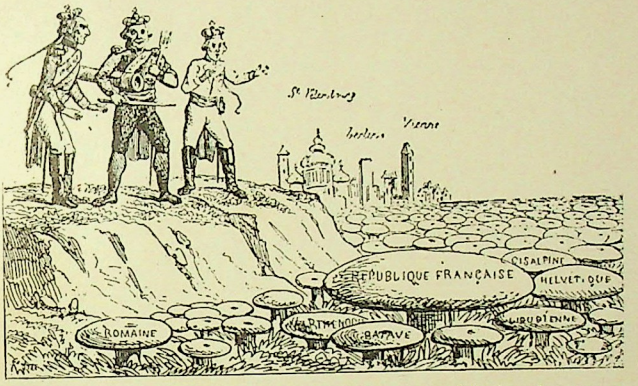
THE WARS OF LIBERATION

Then the monarchy fell of its own weight, and the revolution opened a brief period when European wars were not wars of dynasties but wars of ideas. The first armies of revolutionary France that met the advancing regulars of an alliance bent on stamping out the revolution and vindicating the monarchic principle, were barely organized masses. They wore liberty caps but had little equipment. Yet at Valmy, in September 1792, they stopped the threatened invasion. They were a new kind of army, conscripted from the whole citizenry, staffed by officers whose position depended solely on ability in the field, fanatic in devotion to the liberty, equality, fraternity of the Republic. In a few swift campaigns this new military force rendered obsolete the professional armies of eighteenth century Europe. It pushed back the combination of powers that had successfully contained the soldiers of Louis XIV.

NAPOLEONIC MILITARISM

But victory was heady wine. These successes gave the democratic revolution not only a nationalistic but a militaristic turn. Under Napoleon, the Republic became the Empire, and the Empire extended across Europe from the Mediterranean to the Baltic. From the end of the 1790's to 1814, war was the order of the day, with French armies campaigning from Spain to Moscow.

This wave of French dominance was broken on the territories of a newcomer to the European balance. The absolutism of Louis XIV had found enlightened imitators, both across the Rhine, where Frederick the Great raised Prussia above the



A 1799 cartoon illustrating the sense of menace felt by the young republic. The three monarchs are discussing the largest of the "republican mushrooms."

The king of Prussia: Lord, how it grows; it's frightening
The emperor of Russia: It would be good to eat
The emperor of Austria: Don't touch it, friend, it's poisonous

level of petty German principalities, and still farther east, where Peter Romanov developed an insatiable curiosity about Western ways. Under him, and his successor Catherine, Russia was formed into a leading power. From 1815 on, European affairs were affairs concerning all Europe, not just the Atlantic fringe.

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

Under the guidance of Metternich, the Congress of Vienna—the international conference that settled the peace after Napoleon's downfall—systematized the prevailing opposition to the growth of liberal ideas and movements in Europe. Its members were committed to intervention in the domestic

affairs of any state where constitutional restrictions on the reigning monarch appeared likely to be proposed, or where more far-reaching revolution threatened; three of the major participants, the rulers of Russia, Austria and Prussia, sanctified this congenial program by the Holy Alliance.

Britain, where constitutional reform was further advanced, was an inconstant member of the system—Canning, when Prime Minister, violated its central principles by recognizing Spain's revolted colonies in South America and calling "a new world into being to redress the balance of the old."

The return of France to the monarchical fold under the Restoration was welcomed by the powers that formed the conservatively-minded Congress, but with some reservations, based on the fact that the democratic disturbance had originated there, and the suspicion that many Frenchmen still cherished republican ideas.

While the democratic revolution in Europe moved uncertainly forward, with outbreaks and setbacks in 1830 and 1848, little by little, in respect to questions concerning the continent, France and Britain abandoned their traditional enmity.

THE GROWTH OF INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIES

Meanwhile, a new economic society was taking shape. Its requirements were partly met by the iron-and-coal-bearing areas of Europe, around which an increasing population came to be concentrated. But it also began to use raw materials from parts of the world that had previously been little developed. For that reason, events in non-European territories, particularly in Africa and the Far East, occupied much of European diplomacy during the latter half of the nineteenth century. France, as an old colonial power whose overseas holdings had been largely lost in the decline of the Bourbons,

was very active in the partition of Africa and in the occupation of southeast Asia.

AFRICA

Particularly in Africa, French and British expansion overlapped and caused periodic tension between the two countries. The discoverer Stanley had an opportunity to parallel his famous phrase, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume," when he undertook exploration up the Congo for the British government and, upon reaching the water now known as Stanley Pool, found that the Frenchman de Brazza had beaten him overland to its northwestern border and set up the outpost, Brazzaville, that the Fighting French brought into the headlines again in 1943.

THE BALKANS AND THE NEAR EAST

The Balkans and the Near East formed a third area that occupied much of the time of European chancelleries from the mid-century to the outbreak of the First World War. While this territory was important in itself as a source of raw materials, particularly oil, it was even more important as a line of transit, and the decadence of the Turkish Empire, ruling the Balkan area in Europe and the lands of Asia Minor across the Straits, invited the application of competing pressures. Russia wanted an outlet on the Mediterranean. England and France wanted to keep the Mediterranean clear for their lines of communication to the Far East. The Entente Cordiale with England, which Napoleon III encouraged in order to prevent any possibility of a new coalition against France, had as one of its main manifestations the Crimean War of the two countries against Russia with the object of keeping the Turkish Empire intact. Germany began to nur-

ture dreams of a Berlin-to-Baghdad route overland. Increasingly, the Balkans and the Near East became the scene of conflicts and the cause of realignments in a checkered history that was only partly of their own making.

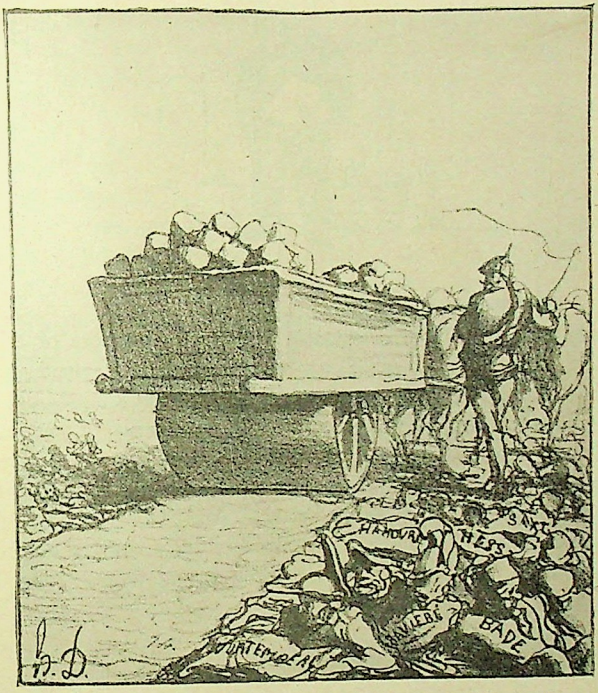
A UNIFIED GERMANY

But the central fact with which French diplomacy had to concern itself after the mid-century was the unification of the petty principalities of central Europe into the Italian and German nations. The series of brief wars by which Bismarck set the territorial limits of the new Reich, and humiliated the previously ranking powers of Austria and France while doing so, ended in a symbolic act when the Prussian King was proclaimed Emperor of Germany in Louis XIV's Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

The seventy years that followed the emergence of Germany as a unified power were consumed by the effort of Germany to achieve single-handed dominance of Europe, and the efforts to contain Germany within limits, undertaken outstandingly by France. The Franco-Russian treaty, achieved in 1893 after prolonged negotiation, insured two-front coordination; the settlement of colonial problems effected by France and England in 1904 opened the way for joint action in the west and against the developing German fleet. The Triple Entente of 1907, linking England, France and Russia, was the bulwark on which France relied at the opening of World War I.

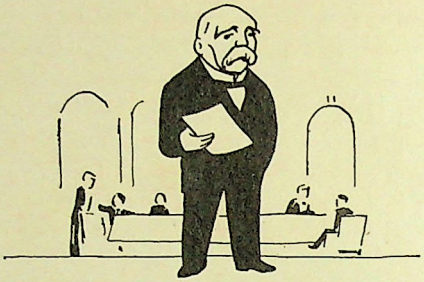
BETWEEN WARS

France came out a victor in the war of 1914-1918. But a victor weakened by the loss of one-and-a-third million men, by the devastation of a war fought very largely on French soil, by a series of international changes that upset her previous



"German unity" as Daumier saw it during the siege of Paris. (From the Daumier-Cham *Album du Siège* published in Paris in 1871.)

system of alliances. Russia was in the midst of a revolutionary upheaval, and eastern Europe was divided among a multiplicity of small, independent, newly-established states. To avoid the dangers of such a period, France tried two lines of approach.



CONTINENTAL ALLIANCES

One was to make new alliances comparable to those of the past. The effective great powers of 1919 were England and the United States. From them, France unsuccessfully sought a guarantee of territorial integrity. In the absence of such an assurance of security she set about the accumulation of less powerful allies—Belgium, Poland, the Little Entente powers, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Jugoslavia. And as the years passed, France was the nation most inclined to bury distrust of the Bolshevik Revolution in desire for a strong power beyond Germany in Eastern Europe.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The other approach was to give force to the new framework of international relations offered by the League of Nations. The idea of an inclusive overall structure to bring order to world affairs was congenial to the French mind. The hope that collective security might be obtained through joint international action was comforting to the French mood.

For both reasons, France worked vigorously to strengthen the League. The Third Assembly of the League expressed

the conviction that disarmament was possible only if the disarming nations had guarantees of security. Accordingly, in 1923, a draft treaty of mutual assistance was prepared, under which states located on the same continent with a state that was the subject of aggression should give whatever assistance the League Council decided.

After this treaty failed to receive British support, the Geneva Protocol, presented at the League's Fifth Assembly in 1924, declared wars of aggression to be international crimes and offered several kinds of machinery for their prevention. Legal disputes were to be referred to the World Court, or to arbitration. Political disputes were to be referred to the League Council or a body of arbiters. All states were to agree not to go to war unless in self-defense against an aggressor, or to carry out League measures against an aggressor. Should a state go to war, economic sanctions were to be applied. Alliances were to be registered with the League. A disarmament conference was to be called, and its results put into effect prior to the Protocol's going into force. France placed great hopes on the Protocol.

What actually grew out of these moves was the series of Locarno agreements, signed by Germany, Belgium, France, Italy and Great Britain, under which mutual guarantees were given of the frontiers between Belgium and Germany and France and Germany, and of the demilitarized Rhineland zone.

Through all this period, the United States was a remote "observer" of European affairs. Its only participation was in the Kellogg-Briand pact of 1928, a self-denying ordinance by which the signatories agreed not to use force as an instrument of national policy, a palely legalistic last try at a general approach to the problem of security. Disarmament conferences continued to meet, but the days were over when Geneva

was the center toward which various member governments directed their initiative.

World depression, spreading ominously after 1929, made "every man for himself" increasingly the rule in world affairs. And while the various countries were struggling to get the wheels of industry off dead center, each year brought closer the outbreak of Germany's second try at European—and world—dominance. Beyond the Rhine, there was no unemployment. There was a record output of military goods.

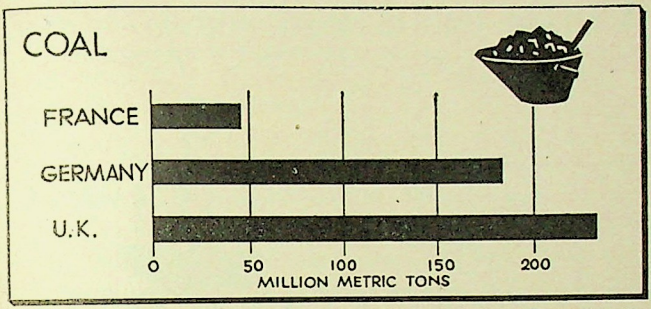
TEST CASES OF AGGRESSION

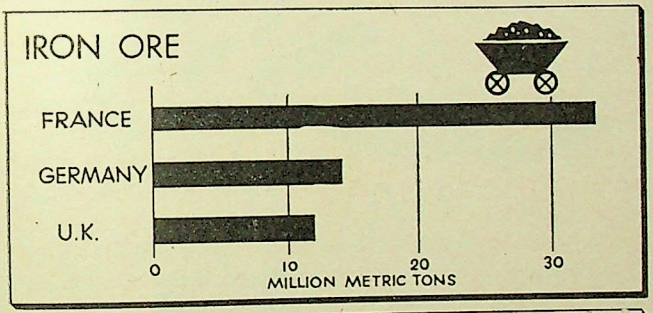
Test cases of aggression began to multiply. Japan's moves in the Far East and Mussolini's in Ethiopia had direct repercussions on the French Empire. After rapid consolidation of his domestic power, Hitler began expansion of the Third Reich with military reoccupation of the Rhineland, continued with annexation of Austria. The Spanish Civil War was a proving ground for things to come, with the Fascist countries in active support of Franco and the Falangists, Russia in support of the Loyalists, and France and Britain attempting nonintervention. In these cases, and in the handling of the mutual assistance pact with Moscow, French leadership was repeatedly inept. Then came German seizure of the Sudetenland and the humiliation of Munich.

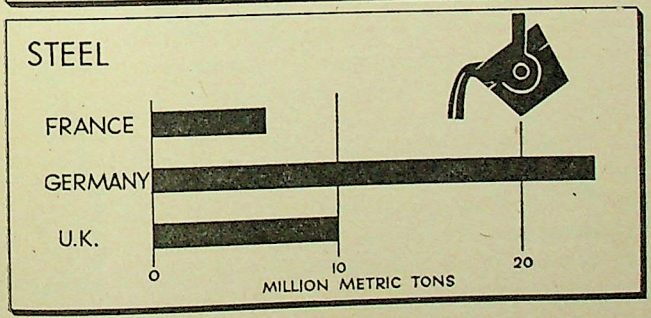
OVERT AGGRESSION

The final test case was Poland. In August 1939, Germany signed a pact of nonaggression with Russia. In September, Hitler attacked Poland. At that point, France and Britain took up the Nazi challenge.

After a winter of "phony" war, in the spring of 1940, the French search for security was terminated in as drastic a defeat



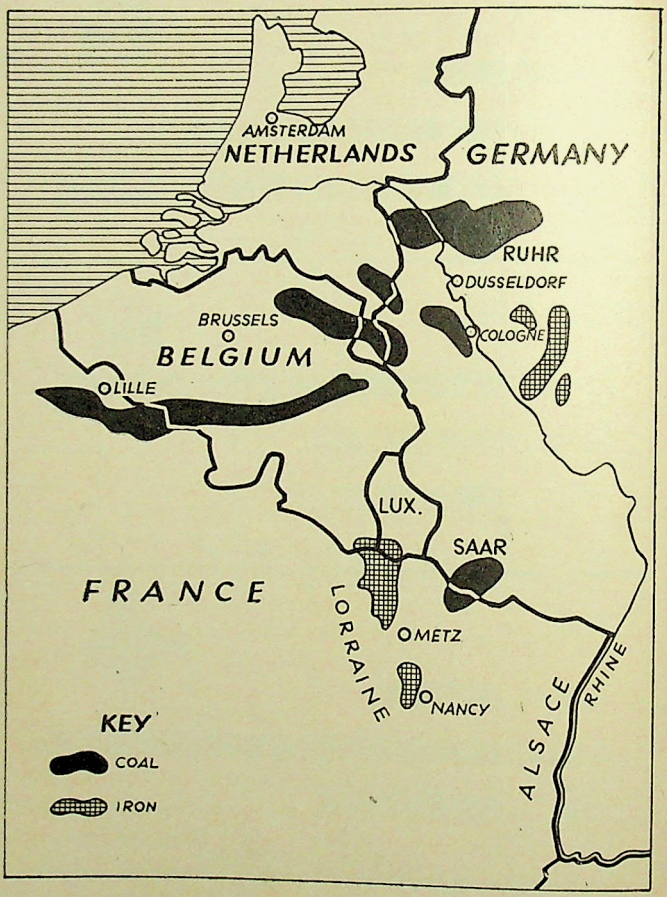




1938 FIGURES

GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES

A VITAL INDUSTRIAL AREA



as has been administered in modern times to a great power. For four years, the French nation was out of world affairs.

FRANCE'S FUTURE PLACE

In the second half of the twentieth century, what will be France's place? Today, Europe lies between two enormous and active land-masses, Russia and the United States. France by herself cannot duplicate the industrial productive potential of Russia or the industrial productive capacity of the United States. And World War II has proved the impossibility of neutrality and isolation.

Continental Europe, organized as a whole, would be comparable in strength to today's great powers. The idea of European federation has fascinated French statesmen for a long time. But today, an arrangement including all of Europe seems unlikely, if for no other reason than because of the war's bitterness.

A GROUPING OF LIBERATED COUNTRIES

An alignment that seems more nearly possible, however, is a grouping of the European states that the Nazis overran. General de Gaulle has suggested such a course, to be combined with friendly relations with Russia and rapprochement with Italy, and paralleled by support of an international organization; the idea likewise appeared independently in the pre-liberation thinking of the French resistance movement.

The arguments for it are that such a grouping represents enough power to enable the small European countries to be a center of continental initiative, and so prevent the exercise of a controlling influence by either Russia or Britain and America in their affairs. The nations on the western coast of Europe share a long tradition of representative institutions, and they

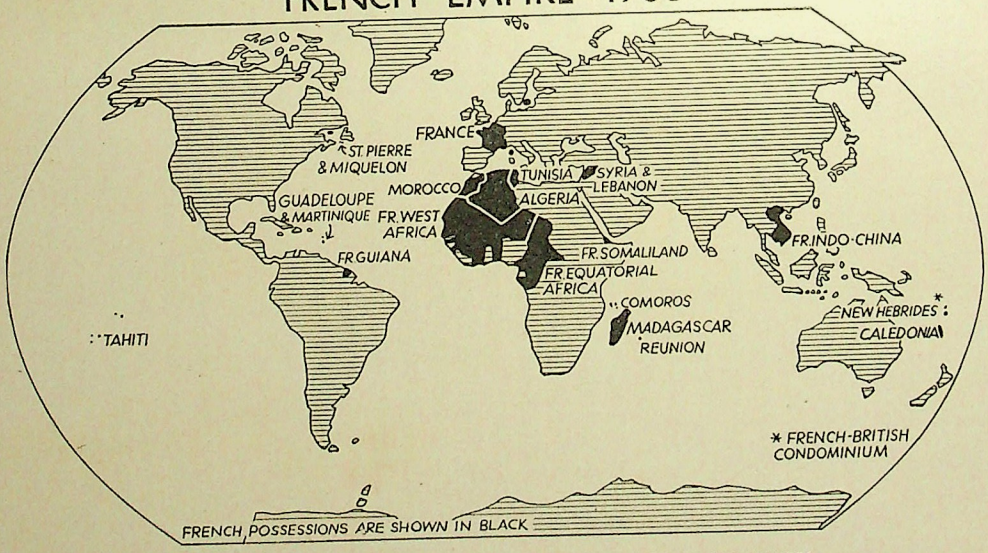
have a contemporary sense of community based on their common needs plus the fact of their common resistance to a common enemy these last years. Working agreements among these nations would be no mere arrangements made on paper; they would recognize a reality that was already there.

RELATIONS TO BRITAIN AND RUSSIA

The relations of such a grouping to Britain and Russia would be a matter for delicate negotiation. On what line is Russia likely to insist as the western boundary of her sphere of influence? Will France continue to serve in the post-war period as she did in the inter-war years, as the Western power most eager to bring Russia into relation with the rest of the continent? To what extent would the British want to participate in such a grouping? Churchill's offer of union with the British Empire, made to France in the black moment of 1940, was not accepted. General Smuts' more recent suggestion of close cooperation, under British guidance, of the European democracies along the Atlantic fringe, has been questioned in some French quarters as a potential threat to French continental leadership. Yet in spite of the fact that an acceptable balance of leadership in a grouping of the western part of the continent would have to be worked out with a high degree of deftness on the part of both British and French leaders, the mutual advantages of such an arrangement appear to make it worth the effort.

As a matter of fact, the main questions to which the two countries now have to find answers are curiously parallel. Politically, how can they stay in the front rank of world powers in view of their size and population? Economically, how can they compensate for the resources and the mass markets which the United States and Russia have within their own borders?

FRENCH EMPIRE – 1938



GRAPHIC ASSOCIATES

THE FRENCH EMPIRE

The French may find a partial answer to these questions in the Empire. During the last years of the Third Republic, interest in the Empire spread broadly through the French population—the Colonial Exposition at Paris in 1931 symbolized its newly central place. (French overseas territories took 12.8 per cent of French exports and supplied 11.1 per cent of French imports in the years just before World War I; by 1938, the proportions of each had grown to some 27 per cent of greatly enlarged totals.) Since the war, this interest has quickened because of the manpower situation, because the future of mandates and trusteeships will be a non-postponable question as soon as the war stops, and because of the relation of the colonies to the Free French movement during 1940-44.

The Free French and British effort to take Dakar failed, but the New Hebrides and New Caledonia repudiated the Vichy regime in midsummer 1940 and French Equatorial Africa very shortly thereafter. By the end of the year the mandated Cameroons and Gambon were added to Free French administration, and so were the North Atlantic islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. An important factor in the African decisions was the contrast observed by native leaders between the absence of race prejudice among the French and the Nazi racial theories to which the Vichy government acceded. The Lieutenant-Governor of French Equatorial Africa, who effected its transfer to the Free French, was the West Indian Negro, General Eboué; there was a period when the personnel of the Fighting French forces numbered more Negroes than whites.

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION AND SUBJECT PEOPLES

The worldwide restlessness of subject peoples has made it clear that new forms of colonial administration will have to

be worked out, with a view to eventual assumption of governmental responsibility by the native populations. In this venture, Frenchmen feel that they have something of a head start. Under the Third Republic, representation in the French parliament was accorded to the French colonies in the Western Hemisphere. St. Pierre and Miquelon, Martinique and Guadeloupe, French Guiana, the enclaves in British East India and the Island of Réunion had their deputies and senators; so did the departments into which Algeria was divided. Cochin-China had representation in the Chamber of Deputies but not the Senate. All the colonies had representation on the advisory Conseil Supérieur des Colonies in Paris.

The post-war plans of the French include a continuance of this process of admitting native populations to government responsibilities, beginning with local functions in the areas that are currently organized under primitive tribal structure, and proceeding, with the advance of literacy and the broadening of experience, to more extensive control. Meanwhile, measures will be instituted to parallel political with economic advance. Integration of the Empire and diffusion of its economic benefits might considerably reduce French difficulties in respect to both manpower and materials; and the absence of race prejudice is likely to make the transfer of power within the framework of the Empire far easier than in areas where color distinctions are prevalent.

A PART IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

One thing is certain: France must become a participant in international life on a world scale if she is not to become a satellite of one of the great powers bordering on Europe, Russia or Britain. The absence of French participants at the Quebec meeting of Churchill and Roosevelt and the Moscow

meeting of Churchill and Stalin in the autumn of 1944, when European questions were clearly under discussion, was bitterly resented in France. The future of the Rhineland, a centuries-old preoccupation of France, could, the French felt, hardly be dealt with in the absence of one of the powers that will certainly bear a measure of responsibility for maintenance of the settlement; and the Eastern European questions under current consideration concerned France's former allies. That is why General de Gaulle, in a speech on October 14, 1944, warned his compatriots that "our greatness will come not from the kindness of others but from our own efforts." From the French point of view, the Allied recognition of the De Gaulle Committee as the effective government of France at the end of October was made at the last possible moment. The participation in the European Advisory Commission which it facilitates had to be immediate if it was to be effective, and there is every reason for shortening the phrase "in due course" which qualified the inclusion of France as a permanent member of the Security Council in the draft proposal for an international organization drawn up at Dumbarton Oaks.

The limitations, beyond French control, on what France can do abroad are many. But the main determinant of her world position will be what happens at home. Can France recover a sense of national wholeness and national integrity? (Without it, she cannot have a foreign policy that represents the nation.) Can France develop a way of life adapted to the machine age? (Without it, she will become an anachronism.)

These questions, the domestic unfinished business before the people of France, also imply answers for her world future.

6. Unfinished Business

In midsummer, 1944, pictures of French towns in the first stages of liberation showed "Vive la IV" (Long Live the Fourth) hastily painted on statues celebrating the Republic. These crude signs marked France's first need—a government.

RESISTANCE LEADERS AND GOVERNMENTS-IN-EXILE

In all of the overrun countries, serious problems of government followed on the heels of the departing Nazis. During the four long years 1940-1944 the governments-in-exile maintained the legal existence of their states. But they had to do this on foreign soil, and except for word brought at great risk by messengers of the Underground, they were out of touch with what was going on at home. An essential condition of their keeping their government intact was separation from the vicissitudes of their fellow citizens.

By contrast, the leaders of the resistance movements inside the various countries not only suffered with the people but maintained the integrity of the nation on its own soil. Yet for security reasons, their identity and their followings, in advance of liberation, could not be made known outside their local communities, and their isolation behind Nazi barbed wire limited their knowledge of what was going on in the world—if not their thoughts about future French policy—to furtive news and forbidden broadcasts.

The partial character of leadership from either of these sources was obvious: those who were on the outside had the

famous names, the legal structure, the overall facts; those who were on the inside had the knowledge of what the people on the spot have been thinking over the past years, and the advantage of ties formed through persecution, suffering and endurance.

In the first months after liberation, the integration of these two types of national organization will raise problems in all countries, but nowhere in more intricate form than in France.

THE VICHY REGIME

By dividing France into an occupied and an unoccupied zone under the 1940 armistice, Germany achieved the establishment of the Vichy regime under which Frenchmen made the French State the successor of the Third Republic, and administered part of metropolitan France and the French Empire as of right. The Vichy Frenchmen were collaborationists—some of them actively welcomed the opportunity from the beginning and others yielded to the pressure of circumstance. They not only administered the country but they enabled the Nazis, through government by remote control, to sow confusion far more widely than in a country like Norway, where the Quisling whose name has become a common noun, governed with German troops at his side, or like Holland, where a Nazi was directly charged with civil affairs. A further consequence of this arrangement was to deprive France's outside representation of the legal authority of a government-in-exile.

In midsummer, 1944, the French constitutional position was not clear. On July 10, 1940, the French parliament, which had been elected in peacetime under the Third Republic, assumed constitutional power in authorizing the Pétain Cabinet to reorganize the French government. Using that power, the

Pétain administration set up the French State, superseding the Third Republic.

But under the Constitution of 1875, while parliament could revise the constitution of France, it could not delegate that power to a cabinet, and in any case, revision of the form of government was forbidden by an amendment to the constitution passed in 1884. Since the Pétain-Laval dictatorship clearly was another form of government, inaugurated without parliamentary authorization, its constitutionality was highly dubious.

THE FRENCH NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The alternative to the Pétain government which developed outside France, was known in succession as the Free French, the Fighting French, the French National Committee (in London) and then the French Committee of National Liberation (F.C.N.L.) in Algiers. It was organized by Charles de Gaulle, who refused to accept the surrender, arrived in London June 17, 1940, and broadcast to his people, "France



has lost a battle; she has not lost the war." De Gaulle had a connection with the last legally constituted government of France: a month before it fell, Premier Reynaud had given him the Cabinet post of Undersecretary of State for National Defense. This was, however, a slender thread on which to hang constitutional legality for the Committee which he subsequently organized.

As the war progressed, however, the French National Committee became the main rallying point of Frenchmen opposed to Vichy; it exercised the active authority in certain parts of the French Empire, and various Underground leaders escaped to adhere to it. In June 1943 it was merged with the Giraud Conseil Impérial to become the F.C.N.L. In November 1943, the Committee strengthened itself by establishing a provisional Consultative Assembly, with members representative of the resistance movements inside and outside France, former deputies (with strength proportionate to the pre-war strength of their parties in the Chamber) and delegates from departmental councils elsewhere in the Empire. In June 1944, de Gaulle proclaimed the Committee as the Provisional Government of the French Republic, and obtained recognition from most of the governments-in-exile and a number of other states—Russia had accepted the Committee as "representative of the State interests of the French Republic" in 1943. Finally, in October 1944 the United States extended recognition to the de Gaulle regime and the British and Russian governments formalized their relationships with it at the same time.

FRENCH-U. S. RELATIONS

The cost of the confused French constitutional situation was nowhere more apparent than in the strain it exerted on the traditionally good relations between the United States and

France. The Roosevelt administration's transition from dealing with Vichy to making contact with de Gaulle was very long-drawn-out. De Gaulle's public reference to "dear and powerful Russia" in the spring of 1944 may well have expressed bitterness over the contrast between the treatment he received from the Soviets and that from the Allies on the Atlantic side.

The Americans and British ignored the Fighting French at the time of the North African landings in November 1942, when General Eisenhower dealt with General Giraud and Admiral Darlan and when the retention and promotion of prominent Vichyites—such as Peyrouton—went unprotested by the American and British governments. And though gradually improved, relations between General de Gaulle and President Roosevelt had not reached the stage of common counsel when the Normandy landings occurred in 1944. The meeting between the two men some weeks later represented an advance, and the conduct of civil and military affairs proceeded without incident in the weeks following; but for two months after the arrival of de Gaulle in Paris the American government retained its non-committal attitude about the next government of France.

THE NEXT FRENCH GOVERNMENT

The conditions of establishing a permanent government are several. First, there is the legal question. The provisional government has declared from the first that there must be elections in France within a year after liberation. The Treveneuc Law of 1872 placed governmental power in the hands of the councils of the departments in default of parliament; but with the collaborationist record of some councilmen, these provisions seemed of doubtful utility in midsummer 1944. The Provisional Government has therefore proceeded to enlarge the

Consultative Assembly by additions from the various Underground movements, former deputies and senators with clear records, and new representatives elected by departments after their councils, under the influence of administrators appointed as each area is liberated, have been purged of collaborators. At the same time, it has reorganized the Cabinet so as to include a large number of members from the resistance movement inside France; the Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Georges Bidault, is the president of the National Council of Resistance. It is planned for this interim regime to serve until France is in control of her territory, and the French soldiers and others in Germany are repatriated, when a general election can be held.

THE MORAL BASIS OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

The legal requirements for reestablishing government in France, are, however, by no means the only ones that must be fulfilled. A constitution is not just a document. Its force comes in part from its legal authority, but in larger part from the moral agreement, the consent, of those it governs.

Before the country can have an effective constitution, France must again become one people. The old divisions between clericals and anti-clericals, between Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards, between republicans and anti-republicans, went deep. It is possible that the divisions between resisters and collaborationists, during four years of enemy occupation, have gone still deeper, and have obliterated old lines by cutting across them. In that case, unity depends upon the relative proportion of resisters and collaborators, and the extent to which a double process of liquidation and reconcilation makes France into one people again. A delicate balance will have to be found between summary action against collaborationists,

with the further decimation of the French population that civil war would bring, and the smoldering animosity that would endure if those who got along with the Nazis were let off too easily.

THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT REMAINS

The conditions that attach to successful cooperation between the Frenchmen who worked outside France and those who worked inside during the period of Nazi domination have been underscored by two events. The decision of the National Council of Resistance to maintain its organization and serve as a consultative organ to de Gaulle is an indication that only a government which represents a clear-cut break with the past will be acceptable. The attitude of the French Forces of the Interior with regard to integration with the regular French army further underscores the insistence on new names and new faces in the future direction of France.

THE FRENCH COMMUNISTS

In the search for unity, the Communist position is causing certain difficulties. The Communist Party in France, after declining during the early 1930's, came up suddenly in the 1936 elections, benefiting by the anti-Fascist protest vote. But it followed the party line with regard to the Russo-German agreement in August 1939, and was banned later that year because of its opposition to the war. This ban was lifted by the French Committee of National Liberation in 1943, and thereafter Communists were included in the Consultative Assembly as part of General de Gaulle's policy of broadening his movement. But the General hesitated to appoint Communists to the F.C.N.L. because of their insistence on acting as a self-determining group. They have followed the Moscow line (not join-

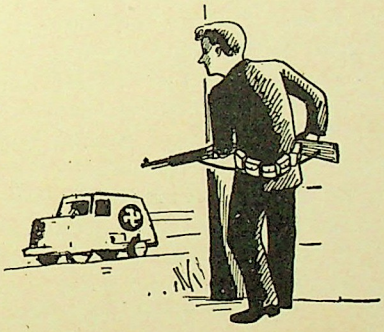
ing the resistance movement until the Germans attacked Russia) and since liberation, in various parts of France, they have been reluctant to accept the authority of the National Committee, even though two of their number are in the Cabinet. Whenever Communist personnel has been appointed to serve in public posts, moreover, the party has insisted on making its own selections. Contention over the latter point deferred nominations to the National Committee in North Africa for the better part of a year and reappeared again when de Gaulle reorganized his cabinet after reaching Paris. In spite of the notable record of the Communist elements in the resistance group, the existence of a state within a state raises problems in a country that is trying to achieve national unity.

THE PATTERN OF FUTURE POLITICS

If the resistance movement has been representative of the great majority of Frenchmen, and if it can handle a positive program as well as a negative one, the politics of the new French state may have some exceptional advantages. The Third Republic suffered from the very large number of parliamentary groups, from the *bloc national* of the Right to the *cartel des gauches* of the Left, each representing a segment of opinion, each in varying degree capable of acting as a makeweight to upset a Cabinet balance. The tenacity with which minor variations on a main position were treated as causes for difference made impossible the attainment of solid majorities and solid opposition.

The resistance movements were not so splintered. They got their start in the spontaneous determination of innumerable localities, but when the time came to form a national structure various fusions occurred. Combat, Libération, Franc-Tireur and other smaller groups joined in the united resistance move-

ment, later called the Mouvement National de la Libération. Another fusion, in which, unlike the M.N.L., the Communists participated, was known as the Front National. The two were united in the National Resistance Council, on which sixteen representatives of resistance groups directed overall activities against the Nazis. If this kind of large grouping can be maintained now that the resistance movement is above ground, the French capacity for effective political action will be greatly increased.



FORTHCOMING DOMESTIC POLICY

Proof of French capacity to leave the recent past behind will not be made under easy conditions. The inescapable decisions that must currently be made will be test cases of major proportions.

THE NEXT ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

Under what auspices will the wheels of French production get started again? The issue of private enterprise versus public management was hotly argued in France, as in all the democ-

racies, during the 1930's. What course will in the main be followed now?

Whatever the desires of the next French government (or any of the returning governments of occupied countries, for that matter) it is difficult to see an immediate alternative to large-scale government activity. Much French machinery was carted off to the Reich in the earlier stages of Nazi occupation, and much French labor impressed to follow after it. Then Allied strategic bombings before D-day destroyed factories, equipment, electric installations, railroads and rolling stock on a large scale. After D-day, further destruction was effected by advancing Allies and retreating Germans.

Beyond this type of physical destruction of economic goods, moreover, is the legal chaos that was a deliberate part of the Nazi program for economic confusion in conquered areas. Forced sales and transfers have clouded titles to a very considerable part of the properties of France. In any country, this would have caused serious results. But France, as previously explained, is peculiarly dependent on legality; the individualistic attitude of most Frenchmen toward property makes definition of ownership a prerequisite to economic effort. However, it seems obvious that the next French government cannot wait for lawsuits, searches for missing persons, etc. to take their course while the French economy stalls.

General de Gaulle's homecoming speech at Lille on October 1, 1944 outlined a program which had been previously indicated at Algiers:

> "We do not want to return to that political, social and moral situation that took us to the edge of the abyss. Our duty is to make the fullest use of what we possess in our soil, our sub-soil and our empire. To do this there is no other means than what is called planned economy.

"We want the state to direct the economic effort of the entire nation for the benefit of all and to insure that the life of every Frenchman and Frenchwoman shall become a better one. We cannot longer tolerate those concentrations of interests called trusts. They may have survived a certain period in the development of the earth's resources; but they no longer meet the needs of the economic organization—just as, in the past, military feudalism ceased to meet the needs of defense on a national scale.

"For this planned economy, this fullest use of the resources of the country, the first essential is that the collective—that is, the state—should take over the direction of the great sources of the common wealth and should control certain other activities, but, of course, without excluding the stimulus of just profit and initiative."

Confiscation of the Renault factories near Paris—whose owner died while under indictment as a collaborator—has indicated that this program is not one of words only. The coal mines of the north have been nationalized. Widespread demands are being made for workers' participation in industrial management.

THE CONSERVATIVE COUNTRYSIDE

But what about the countryside? In 1848 and in 1870, the ardors of Paris were cooled by the rest of France. When the slower-moving peasant proprietor says his say, what will he want? Will he be overruled? How much influence will be exercised by French industry? Will the Catholics crusade against Communism?

RESTORATION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES

Early in 1944, the Underground paper, *Franc Tireur*, published a list of objectives of the National Council of Resistance in respect to civil liberties: 1) Complete democracy; 2) Full free-

dom of thought, conscience and expression; 3) Freedom of the press—a press independent of government, financial powers and foreign influences; 4) Freedom of association, meeting and manifestation; 5) Inviolability of the home and secrecy of correspondence; 6) Respect of human personality; 7) Absolute equality of all citizens before the law.

Immediate fulfillment of part of this program—the negative part—has been easy: de Gaulle's denunciation of the anti-Semitic laws of the Vichy state promptly upon his return to Paris is an example. But the constructive part is harder.

THE FRENCH PRESS

Freedom of the press is a case in point. No problems illustrate more clearly than the present problems of the French press the choices that must be made to prevent the revival of what was decadent in pre-war France and to transfer the values of the resistance movement to the out-in-the-open institutions of peace. Before the war, the press was one of the most vulnerable of French institutions: it used to be said cynically that the only French newspapers that couldn't be bought were those that just had been. In order to get circulation, papers sold at uneconomic prices. A small amount of revenue from advertising and a large amount from subsidies—sometimes many different subsidies—made up the difference. News was secondary to opinion; that was why there were so many different papers—Paris printed around a hundred dailies in 1938. The one national news-gathering agency, corresponding roughly to the AP and UP in the United States, was Havas, whose reporting was known to be subject to multiple pressures, some of them connected with the fact that it also handled advertising.

During the occupation, a number of the better-known papers, of all shades of opinion, suspended publication rather

than continue under conditions prescribed by the Nazis. Many others, however, went on, with varying degrees of willingness to collaborate.

At the same time, the resistance movements published clandestine papers that gave France a genuine free press: *Libération*, *Franc-Tireur*, *Front National*, *Valmy*, *Combat*, and numerous others. And the Nazified Havas had competition in the underground "Agence d'Information et de Documentation," whose members took over the Havas building and plant a few hours before Paris was liberated.

Meanwhile, de Gaulle's Committee established a centralized agency to deal with press and radio. Its announced purpose was to secure for France a general news coverage under French auspices, and thereby avoid dependence on foreign agencies as sources. But in various quarters, the move was viewed with alarm: the question was asked as to how a press subject to government control could do other than publish what the government found to its liking, particularly when the question of the new French constitution would be under consideration. The papers of liberated Paris were disinclined to accept the new censorship, and pressed forward with the organization of an independent news-gathering agency; the control was shortly withdrawn.

THE TESTING TIME

De Gaulle's initial treatment of the press was also taken, by some people, as indicative of the dangers of personal government. Clearly, the reality of this danger depends in part on the presence—or absence—of personal ambition in de Gaulle. But it depends much more on the capacity of the French people to form a new government where a unified policy is proposed by citizens rather than imposed by a chief of state.

Now is the testing time. The next tests will concern the establishment of the authority of the provisional government over the whole country, the preparation for elections, and the finding of an interim program for putting France back to work which will be acceptable over a broad enough range from Left to Right to evoke national enthusiasm.

Parallel with this domestic program is the making of a program for international affairs. To the post-war world structure that is emerging, France has a number of contributions that are uniquely hers to make, as leader of the continental nations that the Nazis overran, as a center of interest of the nations in the Western Hemisphere that derive from the Latin world, and as a colonial power prepared to experiment with the structure of empire.

THE FUTURE OF THE FRENCH COLONIES

Vernon McKay

France lives again! Frenchmen of courage and faith have led their country triumphantly through its supreme crisis in modern times, a victory that was made possible by the strategic position and remarkable loyalty of the French colonial empire. In the new perspective thus provided by the Second World War, the argument that colonies do not pay is very unconvincing. No one should be surprised, therefore, at General de Gaulle's insistence that France is going to hold on to her possessions tenaciously when this war ends.

COLONIES AROUND THE WORLD

The French have gone a long way toward catching up with the British empire-builders. Today France's colonies circle the globe. In Asia, Africa, Oceania and America they total over four and a half million square miles and about seventy million people. To the "old colonies," small remnants of France's first colonial empire, have been added vast territories acquired since 1880 when the French entered the race to partition the "backward" areas of the world. The completion of the conquest of Northern Africa, sometimes called White Africa, was one result of this movement. To the French, here are to be found the "brightest jewels of the Empire"—a sort of extension of the mother country beyond the Mediterranean. During this same

period West and Central Africa and Madagascar—sometimes called Black Africa—were subordinated, and the French were faced with the difficult problem of dealing with millions of primitive Negroes. Another late conquest was Indo-China, which de Gaulle is now making plans to reconquer, although he has promised it greater autonomy. Finally numerous Pacific island possessions were occupied. Probably the only missing part of the empire will be the mandates of Syria and Lebanon. They are being given their independence in a special treaty relationship that will simply carry out a promise of the Third Republic.

WHAT ABOUT THE ATLANTIC CHARTER?

But many Americans will ask, "If the French are going to keep these colonies, what about the Atlantic Charter which respects the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they live?" This apparent contradiction has been called to the attention of thousands by the crusading spirit of Wendell Willkie's *One World*, which demanded that the right of self-determination be carried out all over the world. But the fight for freedom is not so simple. Some of its complexities are elaborated by Jacques Stern, a former Minister of Colonies, in a recent book which sharply criticizes Willkie's demand. With engaging candor he presents, as only a Frenchman could, the case for France's great civilizing mission. This is a frankly imperialistic viewpoint. But it becomes increasingly apparent that this war probably cannot end imperialism, although it may make it more and more benevolent. Mr. Churchill is not fighting to bring about the dissolution of the British Empire, and Mr. Roosevelt has too much sense to try to force him to do so. Therefore they are in no position to liquidate the French Empire. Mr. Churchill has announced

his faith in France, and the "United Nations" peace plan specifically recognizes the need for a strong France to join the four great powers of Dumbarton Oaks. France cannot be one of these five great powers without her empire. This will not satisfy the demands for absolute morality and justice, but it is expedient.

The long-range goal of the true statesman, however, is to be moral and just. That is why it is important to agree upon principles while wartime idealism is high. Here the fight for freedom and the Atlantic Charter are real and vital. Their application to Africa is discussed in a stimulating report entitled *The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint*, presented by a committee representing the best American thought on the question. The recommendations of this report are a real challenge to change the old imperialism of exploitation to the new ideal of guardianship. What we really want to know about France is whether she will measure up to the challenge.

Happily, French colonial thought today is fixing its principles along the lines of the "fight for freedom." This enlightened attitude is the product of the experience and careful thought of several generations. The blunders made by the French in Algeria forced them to reconsider the merits of a rigid policy of "assimilation"—that is, compelling the natives to adopt French customs, institutions and the French language. The result was the evolution of the more flexible policy of "association," which respected native customs and gave the natives a greater voice in the management of their own affairs. Association has not replaced assimilation but has developed along with it. Many able French colonial administrators deserve credit for this achievement, but outstanding among them is the soldier Lyautey who disliked abstract formula and red

tape, and conceived the army's supreme task to be the improvement of conditions in conquered countries. He wanted a highly specialized colonial army because he wanted the soldier to be a good administrator as soon as he ceased to fight. The monument to Lyautey's greatness is his work in Morocco where he was Resident-General from 1912 to 1925. His remarkable achievements there are regarded as a "masterpiece of French colonization." Anyone who reads French writings on colonial subjects discovers that by the compelling force of his personality and his ideas, Lyautey exerted much influence on colonial thought. One of de Gaulle's chief associates, General Catroux, was one of the best men of Lyautey's school.

FIRST FRENCH IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

With this tradition behind it, the first French Imperial Conference met in 1934-35 and worked out a comprehensive "Fifteen Year Plan" to spend over eleven billion francs in colonial development. The Gaullists, it is good to see, have taken up this ideal and worked out a reasonably clear and precise statement of their own intentions. This prompt action results in part from gratitude, for it was colonial loyalty that enabled de Gaulle to organize the movement that made him head of the Provisional Government of the French Republic. It was with a proper sense of pride that Minister of Colonies René Pleven reported to the Provisional Consultative Assembly on January 14, 1944: "The fact that . . . such a spiritual unity has been achieved, is proof that . . . our colonial policy, our methods of administration, and the quality of our personnel, held in themselves basic elements of solidarity." Pleven also outlined extensive problems to be discussed at a forthcoming Colonial Conference at Brazzaville in Equatorial Africa, climaxing his speech with the suggestion that the time had

come to give serious attention to the idea of a French Federation of both the mother country and her colonies.

BRAZZAVILLE CONFERENCE

The Brazzaville Conference met in February 1944. Although the needs of "Black Africa" were the prime consideration the reforms recommended provided a useful blueprint for future political, economic and social changes in other parts of the Empire as well.

The political recommendations were twofold: more colonial representation in the national government, and more native participation in local government. To these ends a mere increase of colonial representation in Parliament was declared insufficient. Instead a new "Colonial Parliament or, preferably Federal Assembly" was called for. The colonies "should gradually advance on the way leading from administrative decentralization to a status of political personality." In the local governments, it was suggested that the present system of consultative councils be reorganized and supplemented by elected assemblies (composed partly of Europeans and partly of natives), endowed with deliberative powers on economic and financial matters, and consultative powers on other questions.

In the economic field, the Conference proposed the creation of an Institute of Agricultural Research of French Africa, with a School of Tropical Agriculture annexed to it. It was urged that agricultural machinery be imported and that measures be taken to restore the fertility of the soil. The need for gradual industrial development was recognized, and it was suggested that this industrialization be undertaken by private enterprise subject to governmental authorization and subsidies. An extensive plan of public works to develop transportation

and communication facilities and a more liberal and flexible tariff regime were also suggested.

Proposed social reforms were even more comprehensive and precise. The starting point was the recognition that the progress of Africa depends on the development of the native populations. Traditional political institutions, it was decided, should be maintained as a framework through which France can direct the evolution of the natives toward political responsibility. As to family matters, it was recommended that attempts be made to discourage large-scale polygamy, and to give women the right of consent to marriage. In legal disputes, it was held desirable that civil and commercial matters be, as far as possible, under common law with native judges. Educational reforms called for included the establishment of schools of instruction in French in all villages with at least fifty boys and girls of school age; advanced primary schools, vocational schools, and specialized educational institutions in all territories for the more advanced natives; and the establishment as soon as possible of teachers' colleges for the training of the native teachers essential to this program. Recommended labor reforms begin with the insistence that local authorities restore freedom of labor within five years. Obligatory one-year labor service is suggested for physically fit natives from twenty to twenty-one years of age, exemption from this requirement to be provided for natives drafted for military service, and for all natives who can prove that they were employed by a private individual for eighteen months. Other proposals of the Conference included social security pensions for natives who have worked for fifteen to twenty years, the eight-hour day, observance of the weekly rest-day, the right of a wife to accompany her husband to his place of work, and respect for the religious beliefs of the workers. Employers would not be

permitted to retain any part of the native's salary without the administration's consent. It would be the duty of labor inspectors, working under the Ministry of Colonies, to see that these reforms are carried out. Finally, a program of medical reform called for a great increase in the number of European and native doctors, native midwives, and nurses, and the creation of a colonial medical school. It was also proposed that foreign governments be approached concerning the creation of a permanent common Office of Health.

EDUCATION CONFERENCE AT DAKAR

Such were the Brazzaville recommendations. Certainly they include nearly all that could be hoped for at this point. Steps to put some of these plans into practice have already been taken. Recognizing that the school is the starting point of the whole program, Governor-General Cournarie called an education conference of the French West African colonies at Dakar. Plans were made there for 66 teachers' schools and 50,000 grade schools for 2,500,000 pupils. The 50,000 teachers needed are to be trained within 20 years, and all children are to be brought into the school system within 50 years.

FELIX EBOUE

The Brazzaville Conference must have been a great personal satisfaction to the late Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa, Felix Eboué, a Negro, whose death in May 1944, is mourned by all friends of Africa. Throughout his lifelong experience (he spent 23 years among the Negroes of Ubangi), he won widespread admiration and respect. His ideas concerning the proper handling of native problems formed the basis for the specific reforms recommended at Brazzaville. In his approach to these problems he showed, to quote a phrase

of Lyautey, "that spark of love without which no great human enterprise can be accomplished." With a sincerity and understanding that probably could come only from a Black, Eboué pleaded for a new spirit of appreciation of native institutions. He was convinced that the hope of the future lies in giving the country back its own elite—which means primarily the development of respect for the native chiefs. Such an attitude will restore the confidence of the natives in their own dignity as human beings and prepare the way for the progress of Africa. In the career of Eboué is a striking example of the advantages in the French lack of racial prejudice that makes it possible for a Negro to become a Governor-General.

NORTHERN AFRICA

In Northern Africa with its ancient cultural and political organization the French face the more difficult problem of dealing with the proud Moslem, who is devoted to his own customs and religion. Here the intensity of modern nationalism expressed itself in a series of native uprisings in the 1920's, an agitation that was further stimulated by the great depression. In Tunisia alone, between 1921 and 1933, the French suppressed 292 publications advocating independence. But today the native nationalist movement appears to lack vitality. The Gaullists hastened to cater to native customs by reviving the practice of providing transportation for the annual Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca. More recently a reform program has been announced for Morocco and the right to apply for French citizenship has been granted to Algerian Moslems. Many Frenchmen think that Northern Africa must be made an integral part of France, but a better solution may be to provide greater political autonomy and economic freedom within a French Federation.

In the Brazzaville recommendation for the establishment of a permanent international Office of Health in Africa lies the germ of an idea that offers the greatest hope for the future: international cooperation—not only in medicine, but in education, economic development, the extension of the "open door," and the acceptance of international supervision by all powers. This means the extension of the mandate ideal, if not of mandates. Whether public opinion can ever force the acceptance of this view remains to be seen.

A practical and hopeful sign of the times is the widespread emphasis on the need for regional cooperation within a world organization. One significant venture along these lines is the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission that was set up in March 1942 to promote social and economic development in the region where France holds Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana. The French have just announced their own plans for improvements in French Guiana. With the way now cleared by the recognition of de Gaulle, will not France be included in the Caribbean Commission? The friendship and understanding that could result from such cooperation might be a precedent for the creation of a Pacific Commission to promote similar development in the East Indies and southeastern Asia.

Meanwhile, the strong traditions of the Lyautey school, the work of men like Eboué, the Brazzaville recommendations, and the plans for a French Federation do at least hold out some promise of a "new and better world" for the French colonies.

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HEADLINE SERIES

Published bi-monthly at New York, N. Y. for October 1, 1944.

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