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**French Political Ecumenism and Charles de Gaulle 1940-1946**

Pierre Cenerelli

A Thesis  
in  
The Department  
of  
History

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts at  
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## ABSTRACT

French Political Ecumenism and Charles de Gaulle 1940-1946

Pierre Cenerelli

The movement of resistance led by Charles de Gaulle was a high point in the history of 'political ecumenism' in France. For the first time since the Second Republic in 1848, French Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, practising and non-practising, co-operated fully on the political level. But unlike its ephemeral predecessor, the Second Republic, this experiment in political ecumenism continued well after the original events that helped to make it occur.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first will examine the relationship between Catholics and Republicans, as well as the relationship between the various religious communities that co-existed in France. The second chapter will examine de Gaulle's ideas and convictions in light of the evidence presented in the first part, as well as his relationship to the Protestant and Jewish communities of France. The third chapter will look at the practical application of political ecumenism by examining the Protestants and Jews who joined de Gaulle's Resistance movement during the Second World War.

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**French 'Political Ecumenism' and Charles de Gaulle 1940-1946****INTRODUCTION**

Before the First World War and, to some extent, until the Second, practising Catholics rarely participated in a government that was thoroughly dedicated to the Republic. Many of them hoped for a return to some form of monarchy in which France's "traditional and proper values" would be restored. For their part, most Republicans did not trust practising Catholics and held them away from positions of power. Both groups thus worked against each other and did not, for the most part, co-operate in any meaningful way.

We will argue that at the same time, however, subtle changes were occurring within and outside the two groups which helped to increase the likelihood that some form of détente could eventually be reached between them. In appearance, these changes culminated in 1914 when the Union sacrée was formed to lead France into the First World War. This government was supported by every French party, from the Communists to the Royalists, and included practising Catholics as well as non-Catholics. Although the Union held throughout the conflict, the sense of unity fell apart soon after the end of the First World War. This resulted in another twenty years of unease between practising Catholics and the Republic, although the situation was much more ambiguous than it had been previously.

The Second World War erupted at a time when tensions between Republicans and Catholics were once again becoming

alarming. Many had begun to speak quite seriously of a civil war in France. This situation arose because of the profound disagreement between Catholics and Republicans over the issue of the Spanish Civil War. Both sides increasingly compared the situation in Spain with that in France. It is ironic, then, that it was at this time of great tension that a lasting reconciliation between Catholics and Republicans began to take place.

Indeed, Charles de Gaulle's resistance movement was a culminating moment in the transformation of the political scene in France which took place between the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. It was under the general's leadership that France's most enduring experiment in 'political ecumenism' occurred. For the first time since the Second Republic in 1848, French Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, practising or non-practising, co-operated fully, first in a movement of resistance, and then in the running of a Republican government. But unlike its ephemeral predecessor, the Second Republic, this experiment in political ecumenism continued well after the original events that helped to make it occur and became a permanent feature of French politics, during both the Fourth and Fifth Republics. Although this long-term development cannot be fully analyzed in this thesis, it is clearly reflected in the 'political ecumenism' that was initiated during the Resistance. The significance of the phenomenon is further increased by the fact that de Gaulle was a practising Cath-



olic who had to overcome many of the prejudices that he was subjected to in his Catholic and bourgeois milieu.

The literature is silent on the arrival of this 'political ecumenism.' De Gaulle's biographers do not address the issue of his Catholicism in the context of his relationship with non-Catholics.<sup>1</sup> For its part, the literature on the French Resistance does not mention that a high proportion of Jews and Protestants were closely involved with the general between 1940 and 1946.<sup>2</sup> And historians of the Reformed and Jewish traditions in France do not consider the exterior resistance or this period of the general's career with any particular interest.<sup>3</sup> What follows is aimed at helping to fill this void.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. In the first chapter, we will determine the extent to which Catholics opposed the Republic between the end of the 1870's and the start of the Second World War. We will show that although Catholic intellectuals and politicians remained, on the whole, hostile to the Republic, voters (who were of course in the majority at least nominally Catholic) seemed to support parties that were firmly republican. In the same chapter, we will examine the relationship between the various religious communities that co-existed in France. This will demonstrate that religious tensions were in a state of flux throughout the Third Republic and that, for the Jews at least, the worst moments of the on-and-off vilification and persecution that they received at the hands of the Catholic

majority occurred during the Second World War.

In the second chapter, we will examine de Gaulle's general ideas about nationalism and patriotism; we will then examine the statements that he made both before and during the Second World War to determine his attitude towards France's non-Catholic communities. This will help us to establish whether the general was predisposed to welcome Jewish and Protestant associates.

In the third and final chapter, the practical application of de Gaulle's 'political ecumenism' will be examined in the period preceding his first 'political retirement' on 20 January 1946. An examination of the general's Jewish and Protestant associates will help us to demonstrate that de Gaulle not only tolerated non-Catholics in his organization but that he actively encouraged them to join him in his efforts to save France's national honour.

It is not very surprising that a substantial number of Jews joined the general's Resistance organization soon after the fall of France. The number of Protestants who joined the Resistance, however, is nothing short of astonishing. And many did so well before there was any hope among the Allies, let alone among those living in the occupied territories, that the Axis powers would lose the war. Some could soon be considered to be among the general's most highly valued aides and companions.

The fact that de Gaulle rarely mentioned their religious affiliation, either directly or indirectly, was even

more remarkable. This fact becomes even more astonishing when we consider that de Gaulle's Catholicism, the fact that he belonged to the haute bourgeoisie, his support (however brief) for the Action française, and his loyalty to the French army (if not its leaders) could very well have prejudiced him against the Jews, the Protestants, and any other groups that were traditionally associated with the Third Republic.

In fact, the General seemed to be quite free of the prejudices normally associated with his milieu. He always judged his associates by their actions and by the degree to which they shared his goals and his devotion to France. Like no other major political figure before him, de Gaulle shattered the myth (and to a large extent, the reality) that Catholics did not fully support the Republic and that, as a result, they refused to co-operate closely with non-Catholics. The reverse is also true: the Resistance disproved the notion that Protestants, Jews, and non-believers would not co-operate on a political level with practising Catholics.

It is important to note that we will take a cultural or sociological view of religion in this thesis. Theological debates will not be discussed, nor will we systematically attempt to determine whether the individuals under discussion were believers, unless their religious beliefs were central to their actions. In order to avoid artificial divisions, non-believers will be included only if they

acknowledged their religious background or if their backgrounds were clearly a part of their cultural and ethnic make-up. This method will be employed because, as indicated above, religious and cultural origins were often taken into consideration in France and normally affected the individual's political outlook and social position.

## CHAPTER 1

In the early years of the Third Republic, most practising Catholics felt like exiles in their own country. They formed a counter-society to resist the modern age and to resist further assaults of revolutionary fervour.<sup>1</sup> They believed that their morals and their eternal souls would be compromised if they co-operated with a governmental system that had not only persecuted them but had also perverted all of the old values of Christian France. Catholic historians usually traced this perversion of French values directly back to the Revolution. On 28 May 1880, L'Univers, an Ultramontane paper, claimed that the Revolution "est le mal, et même quand elle entreprend quelque chose qui a l'apparence du bien, en cherchant au fond, on y trouve le mal, parce qu'en fin de compte elle suit l'impulsion qui lui vient de l'ennemi du genre humain."<sup>2</sup> Some went even further and said that the Reformation was the real villain and that the Revolution only accentuated the sin of free thought and critical inquiry begun by Luther and Calvin; thus were the Republic and Protestants inextricably linked.<sup>3</sup>

An increasing number of Catholics began to associate the republican system with the Reformed after 1870. One of the reasons for this is that the proportion of Protestants in the parliament and in the upper administration was far higher than their overall proportion in the population on the national level. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were about 650,000 Protestants in France, which repre-

sented only about 2 per cent of the total population. In 1879, however, a majority of the government's ministers were Protestants. The president of the cabinet, William Waddington, was surrounded by four fellow-Protestants: Elie Le Royer, Léon Say, Jean-Bernard Jauréguiberry, and Louis-Charles de Saulces de Freycinet.<sup>4</sup> To cap it all off, one of the non-Protestant ministers, Jules Ferry, had been married to a Protestant woman in a 'civil ceremony'.<sup>5</sup> And had the Protestants been represented proportionately in the high administration, they would have held only one or two prefectures and only about ten seats in the parliament. Instead, there were about ten prefects and 100 deputies who were Protestants.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the anti-Protestant bias of the Catholics was reinforced by the disproportionately large role that members of the Reformed played in the civic realm.

Catholic-Reformed relations were not improved when the Minister of Education in the Waddington cabinet, Ferry, surrounded himself with the famous 'trilogy' of Protestants, Ferdinand Buisson, Félix Pécaut, and Jules Steeg.<sup>7</sup> The fact that he recruited them to help him set up the new system of secular education was not likely to win him any friends among those who wanted to maintain the clerically influenced public school system. On the contrary, it polarized the debate, so that both sides became more extreme in their utterances.<sup>8</sup> Catholics argued that the school system in France was originally founded not by the state but by the Church and that an examination of the number of schools in

the Old Regime would clearly indicate that the effort to alphabetize the population of France predated the Enlightenment and the Revolution and that it was in fact the latter which had ruined the Church's efforts to extirpate ignorance.<sup>9</sup> Republican politicians, for their part, tended to favour the secularization of the school system, although they did think that it was necessary to maintain some sort of 'civic religion.' It was hoped that this would help maintain the social cohesion of the country and that it would encourage the population to fulfil their civic duties.

Catholics further argued that the problem could be traced back to the Reformation;<sup>10</sup> in this view, the secularization of education was but one part of an immense project whose ultimate aim was to destroy Christianity or, at the very least, Catholicism.

Catholic intransigents argued that Protestants, Freemasons, and Jews instigated this diabolical plot, although it was the infernal 'Judeo-Masonic' couple that most obsessed the sentinels of the besieged citadel.<sup>11</sup> It was in the 1880's that the doctrinal and theological anti-Semitism professed by the Catholic church was transformed into a mass phenomenon, and the crash of the 'Catholic Union Générale' bank in 1882 was accompanied by a wave of anti-Semitic publications.<sup>12</sup> This virulent anti-Semitism was linked with strong anti-Masonic feelings.<sup>13</sup>

Catholics believed that the scandal of the fiches of 1904 provided the final piece of evidence that proved that

the Freemasons were indeed attempting to completely dominate the Republic. During this affair, the Minister of War, General André, gathered information on the officers of the army; only those with impeccable Republican and anti-clerical records were to be promoted. Officers who were too openly Catholic were to be removed from the army. The general's informants were, for the most part, Freemasons. When the system was revealed in October 1904, André was forced to resign.<sup>14</sup> The damage had been done, however, and many Catholics were slow to forget the apparent complicity between the Republican government and the Freemasons. Although this collaboration was evil in and of itself, it was worsened by the fact that its ultimate goal seemed to be the removal of Catholics from all aspects of civil life.

However, the anti-Masonic trend in Catholic thought went back much further, and the fiches scandal was merely its most pronounced manifestation. The encyclical Humanum Genus, written by Leo XIII in 1884, caused an uproar within France because it encouraged the high clergy to stop manifesting its hostility to the established authorities of the state.<sup>15</sup> After the release of this conciliatory document, many Catholic writers felt betrayed by the pope and accused him of not fully understanding the situation in France. They went to great lengths to expose the Freemasonic plot that they believed was unfolding in the Republic and that aimed to gain full control of France, thereby placing all French Catholics in danger. Some even went as far as saying



that Freemasons performed satanic rituals at their secret reunions.<sup>16</sup>

It was in this charged atmosphere that Leo XIII attempted to effect a more complete reconciliation between French Catholics and the Republic in 1892. In his encyclical Au Milieu des Sollicitudes, the pope advised French Catholics to rally to the Republic and suggested that the best way to defend the interests of the Church was by taking part in political life.<sup>17</sup> This first attempt at a Ralliement, however, failed. Alexander Sedgwick claims that the French political structure was the main cause of this failure.<sup>18</sup> Since tradition was a more powerful force in France than innovation, Catholic Intransigents "could not take the final step of entering the Republic."<sup>19</sup> This caused a lack of unity within the Right which, in turn, caused the Ralliement to flounder. Jacques Piou, one of the leaders of the Action libéral populaire, a Catholic-inspired party, did not identify quickly enough with the Republic.<sup>20</sup>

However, the evidence presented above clearly indicates that a purely political explanation for the failure of the Ralliement is not sufficient. Piou, along with most other Catholic leaders, hesitated to identify with the regime because of a deep-seated distrust of the Republic and its leaders, and not because of some political blunder. Leo's attempt at reconciliation created a misunderstanding between the Vatican and most French Catholics.<sup>21</sup> Maurice Larkin goes farther and says not only that there were a large

number of Catholics who resented the pope's advice but that, of those who followed it, many did so merely to stand on firmer ground in their fight against Republican ideals.<sup>22</sup> Such a situation could only occur because of some profound disagreement; Catholics did not lightly spurn the advice of the papacy in the nineteenth century, particularly after the Vatican Council of 1870 which greatly strengthened the spiritual authority of the pontiff.

Larkin provides an indication of the importance of the Intransigent position in France by comparing the circulation of the Assumptionist press with that of L'Univers, the paper that most faithfully reflected papal policy. Even after the papal encyclical of 1892, the Assumptionist fathers still believed that the representatives of the Republic were the "heirs to the twin-headed beast of the Assumptionist apocalypse--the French and Industrial Revolutions."<sup>23</sup> They also believed that the government of France was infested with Jews, Protestants and Freemasons.<sup>24</sup> They were reluctant to give any legitimacy to such men, whom they believed to be the subverters of all that was sacred and true in France. Larkin calculated that if one included the daily La Croix (with all of its local editions) and the illustrated weekly Le Pèlerin, the total readership of the Assumptionist press reached nearly 500,000. By comparison, L'Univers had a circulation of less than 20,000.

But another measure of the influence of Catholic intransigence, namely the effect that it had on voters,

indicates that it was far less influential than might be expected. In the elections between 1874 and 1891, most communes with a majority of practising Catholics elected Republican deputies. In some communes, where the level of practising Catholics approached 90 per cent, the number of republicans reached the same proportions, due to their hostility to an Old Regime, a 'time of seigneurs and of the dîme' which was still engraved in their collective memory.<sup>25</sup> Once again, most of the elected candidates were on the Right, but they were nevertheless firmly Republican.

Literate Catholics, however, because of their superior education and because they were usually to be found among the upper echelons of the country's society, wielded much more influence on the country than their numbers warranted and were thus able to wage a substantial battle against the republican system.

The prospect of a reconciliation was not helped by the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>26</sup> One of the important effects of this event was that it helped to revive anti-clericalism, and tended to confirm in the minds of many that Catholic intellectuals and polemicist had never truly accepted the Republic. The fact that most were anti-dreyfusards,<sup>27</sup> caused many anti-clerical individuals and groups to increase their campaign to eliminate any trace of Catholic influence over the Republic. For example, the couvent of the Grand Orient annually denounced the clerical peril and in 1899, it even demanded "l'anéantissement de la conjuration cléricale,

militariste, césariste et monarchiste."<sup>28</sup> This type of appeal was repeated by a number of other people and eventually pressured Prime Minister Waldeck-Rousseau sufficiently to force him to come down hard on the congregations that were most heavily opposed to Dreyfus, such as the Assumptionists.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, the Dreyfus Affair, and the actions of the Republican government, confirmed Catholic fears of a Judeo-Masonic plan to subvert France.<sup>30</sup>

This renewed anti-clericalism culminated in the Law of Separation of Church and State that was passed in December 1905. According to Anne-Marie and Jean Mauduit, the application of the law of Separation did not begin very auspiciously.<sup>31</sup> As the inventories of religious buildings called for by this legislation proceeded, public opinion became more and more inflamed, either for or against, and sites targeted for inventory increasingly became the sites of violent riots.<sup>32</sup> The fact that the new pope, Pius X, was far less willing to arrive at a compromise with the French Republic than his predecessor Leo XIII did not help.<sup>33</sup> In the final analysis, though, there was only limited, albeit violent, opposition to the inventories. This apparent support of, or at least indifference towards, Republican policies by the majority of the French people, including practising Catholics, is given here to indicate that Catholic intellectuals often lived in a world of their own, one that reflected their vested interests or their outdated social concepts or both.

For our purposes, however, the most important upshot of the Dreyfus Affair was that it dramatically increased the tenor of the attacks against both Jews and Protestants from nationalists, conservatives, and Catholics. That the Affair increased the level of violence in the writings of France's anti-Semites is commonplace. But it is rarely acknowledged that the attacks on France's Protestants also increased both in volume and in virulence. Richard Griffiths indicates that at the time of the Affair, the massacre of the Huguenots on Saint Bartholomew's Day, 12 August 1572, became for many writers "quelque chose d'admirable; on demande même une Saint-Barthélemy moderne."<sup>34</sup> Griffiths concludes that:

Dans l'histoire du protestantisme français, l'Affaire marque donc un changement de température dû au langage dans lequel on a essayé d'assimiler les protestants aux autres ennemis de la Nation, comme une partie du mythe puissant du complot.<sup>35</sup>

Between 1906 and the outbreak of the First World War, relations between Catholic thinkers and Republican politicians, and between Catholics and non-Catholics, remained fairly tense. When the war broke out, however, these divisions disappeared and Raymond Poincaré's call for a union sacrée was almost universally accepted.<sup>36</sup> Indeed,

All divisions in the nation disappeared. Monarchists and republicans, employers, workers and peasants, rich and poor, united in defence of the patrie. The peacetime battle of clerical and anticlerical was forgotten. Priests joined up and fought side by side with laity. Most remarkable of all, defeat was not followed by the cry of 'Nous sommes trahis'. There was no Fifth Column. . . .<sup>37</sup>

The situation was further changed by the appearance of a new pope, Benedict XV, who, unlike his predecessor, adopted a

conciliatory approach to French problems.<sup>38</sup> But the war placed the new pope in a difficult position because he could not appear to be partial to France; to do so might offend the large Catholic populations of the Central Powers.

Nevertheless, two events after the war allowed the pope to begin a rapprochement with the Republic. First, the election of 1919 brought to power a government that was less anti-clerical than its predecessor.<sup>39</sup> One of the reasons for this shift was that a considerable number of priests and other religious personnel had joined the largest army ever assembled in France. A large number of ordinary French citizens had thus discovered that these clerics were, in the words of one author, "des 'ratichons épatants."<sup>40</sup>

The second event was the restoration to France of Alsace-Lorraine.<sup>41</sup> These regions had been granted special ecclesiastical advantages by both the Concordat and the Second Reich; in order to maintain religious peace, the Republican government decided to maintain these special religious arrangements. After the First World War, the new pope, Pius XI moved quickly to arrive at a global agreement with the Republic, in spite of ecclesiastical opposition.<sup>42</sup>

One of the most remarkable symbols of the new détente between the clergy and republican leaders was the canonization of Joan of Arc in 1920, which coincided with the creation of a national holiday in her honour.<sup>43</sup> As Maurice Agulhon perceptively pointed out, "Jeanne d'Arc doit certainement son caractère de personnage le plus statufié de

France à ce qu'elle cumulait en sa personne l'appartenance du panthéon officiel et l'affiliation au culte catholique contestataire."<sup>44</sup> On occasion, Joan was a source of tensions between some non-believers, who accused conservatives and Catholics of co-opting an essentially revolutionary figure for their own reactionary purposes, and some of the clergy, who believed that "notre sainte nationale aurait encore attendu si la France n'avait pas été victorieuse [en 1431 et en 1918]."<sup>45</sup> For the most part, however, Joan was considered to be "la sainte de la Patrie par l'ensemble des Français et aussi par Rome."<sup>46</sup>

But not all was well between the Catholics and the Republic. And the situation was not improved when the Prime Minister, Édouard Herriot, attempted to introduce a strict laicization programme in 1924. His plan, which included the revocation of the Concordat in Alsace-Lorraine and the withdrawal of the French embassy at the Vatican, was opposed by Catholics throughout France.<sup>47</sup> The demonstrations that were held to voice this opposition bore fruit: Herriot's project was not voted in the parliament; and Paul Painlevé, Herriot's successor, completely eliminated the proposed Laic laws from the government's programme. The Catholic point of view had prevailed, both because of the strength of the opposition and because of the relative indifference of the rest of the country towards these anti-clerical measures. Both Catholics and secular Republicans became less passionate on the issue of laicization during the second half of

the twenties and the thirties.<sup>48</sup>

This should not be taken to mean that there were no religious divisions in France. This is most clearly illustrated by the success of the Action française among the 'thinking French,' most particularly Catholics. Founded in 1898 by Charles Maurras, the Action française was a group that promoted a return to the monarchical system in France, by violent means if necessary. In 1908, this Royalist movement began publishing a daily paper that featured some of France's most accomplished writers, including Georges Bernanos, Jacques Maritain, and Maurras himself. When the paper began, it was only one among many; however, Samuel Osgood notes that by the start of the First World War, the Action française had already become completely identified in the public mind as the prime defender of royalism.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the war increased Maurras' prestige; indeed, the Action française had entered the postwar period at a high point in its "seesaw" history.<sup>50</sup>

This should not be taken to mean, however, that the Action française enjoyed popular favour. In the elections of 1919, Léon Daudet became the only candidate of the Union Nationale, the Action française's political party, to win a seat in parliament.<sup>51</sup> Daudet's defeat in the senatorial election of 1924 effectively ended the Action française's flirtation with parliamentarism.<sup>52</sup> The influence of the Action française, therefore, is not to be found among the people, but mostly among upper class Catholics in the prov-



inces and a certain Parisian political élite. The Action française recruited its most heated partisans among the military, the liberal professions, the provincial bourgeoisie, and the landed aristocracy.<sup>53</sup> In other words, the Action française's strongest supporters were found in de Gaulle's social environment. Indeed, de Gaulle was himself an avid reader of Maurras' polemical paper; he was undoubtedly influenced by some of the ideas that it propagated, most particularly anti-Germanism. As Jean Lacouture remarked of de Gaulle's adolescence:

quand on a eu 18 ans au moment où est lancée l'AF quotidienne et qu'on a été instruit sans trêve par un monarchiste tel que le PDG [Henri de Gaulle, Charles' father] . . . comment ne pas être ébloui par la pugnacité intellectuelle du petit homme de Martigues [Maurras], et par l'antigermanisme flamboyant de 'son' historien, Jacques Bainville?<sup>54</sup>

But de Gaulle became increasingly critical of the ideas expounded by Maurras and his vitriolic friends. This disenchantment was not helped by the pope's condemnation of the paper and its supporters in 1926. However, as Lacouture has suggested, perhaps it was de Gaulle's anti-intellectualism that ultimately decided him to reject Maurras and his doctrines of integral nationalism.<sup>55</sup> We shall return to this topic in the second chapter.

One of the turning points of the Action française was its condemnation by the pope in December 1926. The paper, as well as all of Maurras' works, were placed on the Index; furthermore, anyone who continued to read or to sympathize with the Action française could not receive the sacra-

ments.<sup>56</sup> On a personal level, Maurras did not particularly worry about the pope's decision, since he was a non-practising Catholic. He was, however, somewhat concerned about how his Catholic colleagues and supporters would react. As can be imagined, this declaration had a profound affect on most of them. Faced with a difficult choice, many decided to exclude themselves from the Church rather than abandon their anti-republican and Royalist stance. Overall, though,

La condamnation de 1926 arrache les catholiques à la contemplation souvent morose du passé. Tous n'abandonneront pas leurs opinions conservatrices, mais ils savent que celles-ci ne sont pas un prolongement inéluctable de leur foi, et bon nombre d'énergies se trouvent libérées pour d'autres formes de pensée et d'action spirituelles, intellectuelles, sociales, ou politiques.<sup>57</sup>

The pope's attempt to separate Catholicism from anti-republicanism (or even conservatism) was to have a powerful effect on the history of France which began to manifest itself during and after the Second World War.

The advent of the Popular Front was to show how much had to change before political pluralism was fully accepted by the French. In fact, Henri Noguères says that, apart from André Philip, "dont on connaît les convictions religieuses (on les tolère parce qu'il est protestant et non catholique), on peut dire que la quasi-totalité des militants socialistes considèrent la religion comme l'opium du peuple."<sup>58</sup> To support this assertion, he cites the figures of a Parisian socialist who claimed that in his section of the party, 80 percent of the members who had died between 1920 and 1936 had been buried in civil ceremonies while 30

percent of them had been incinerated.<sup>59</sup> He does not, however, provide any other evidence; there is no clear indication that this trend extends beyond this one section. Furthermore, a majority of the people mentioned in the above statistic were part of an older generation that was much more anti-clerical than those who followed them. In fact, many areas of France, such as the Gard, had a strong and fairly old tradition of social christianity among a large proportion of the Reformed population. Nevertheless, No-guères' assertion that for a substantial number of socialists the issue of anti-clericalism was far from dead, even as late as 1936, is undoubtedly true. This persistent anti-clericalism is particularly ironic in light of the fact that the left wing party that did the most to attract Catholics was also the most radical, namely, the Communists (PCF).<sup>60</sup>

It should be added, however, that the Popular Front did get some Catholic support at the grass-roots level as well as from a few left-wing Catholic intellectuals such as Marc Sangnier.<sup>61</sup> This is particularly relevant to our discussion since it presaged, to some extent, the 'Popular Front' created by Charles de Gaulle and the Free French.

The Spanish Civil War was the last major event to divide the French along religious lines before the outbreak of the Second World War. The relevance of the conflict for the French was increased because of the apparent similarities between the situation in Spain and in France. Both republics were ruled by a Popular Front coalition composed

of left wing elements, including Communists, and much of the opposition to the government came from Catholic circles.

Nevertheless, problems of conscience were raised for some Catholics because the conflict took on the aspect of a Holy War. At the start of the uprising, most Catholics supported the insurgents. For them, "La publicité faite aux massacres de prêtres, aux incendies d'églises, aux profanations de cimetières, justifie rétrospectivement l'insurrection et confère un sens religieux au conflit."<sup>62</sup> The initial reaction of such writers as François Mauriac would seem to indicate that Catholic opinion was still anti-republican or, at the very least, anti-Left. Right wing and Catholic writers usually divided Spain into two camps: the soldiers of the Church (the insurgents) and the infidels (anyone who opposed them, particularly the Communists and the Anarchists). The right wing press remained faithful to this simple presentation of the Spanish Civil War until the bitter end.<sup>63</sup>

However, many Catholics did revise their opinion of the sanctity of the conflict. Mauriac was one of the more notable converts. During the summer of 1938, he wrote that

La présence des Maures, l'intervention massive des escadrilles et des troupes italiennes et allemandes, les méthodes atroces de la guerre totale, appliquées par des chefs militaires à un pauvre peuple qui est leur peuple, les souffrances des Basques coupables du crime de non-rébellion, posèrent aux catholiques français un cas de conscience douloureux.<sup>64</sup>

In fact, it is the last item on this list that caused the most problems for the Catholics of France because the Basque

people and clergy had both remained fervently loyal to the Republic.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, most of the Right and a large number of Catholics continued to see the Spanish Civil War as a Holy Crusade that would rid Spain of its diabolical Republican regime. This clearly reflected the fact that Catholic opinion was less sensitive to the menaces of fascism than to those of communism which remained the enemy that must be sought out both within France and abroad.<sup>66</sup>

The ascendancy of the Fascists and the Nazis in the 1920's and 1930's, and their temporary victories in the Second World War, affected Catholics and non-Catholics in France in a variety of ways. On the one hand, many Catholics became fervent supporters of the New Order as professed by the Nazis, which some believed would restore the so-called traditional values of France; not all of these enthusiastic supporters of the New Order were practising Catholics, however. Men like Maurras and Marcel Déat were only nominally Catholics. This was also true of many of the leaders of the Vichy regime, including Philippe Pétain and Pierre Laval, to name but the two most notorious examples. Among the French, the most important Catholic thinkers who actively supported the Vichy regime were usually to be found among the upper clergy.

However, many other leading Catholic intellectuals, such as Jacques Maritain and Yves Simon,<sup>67</sup> had always been fervent supporters of democracy, and, in Simon's case, social democracy. The events of the war only strengthened

their convictions.

Other Catholics were enraged by the defeat of France not so much because of the subsequent suspension of democracy by Vichy, but because the very concept of an occupation of France by the Germans was appalling to them. This was certainly the case for Charles de Gaulle. This second group was united in its implacable hatred of the Nazis and of German militarism (as they saw it); they were ready to do everything to permanently eliminate the German 'threat.'

It is well-known that in Europe, religious and ethnic tensions and persecutions exploded during the Second World War. France had its fair share of religious persecution, in the course of which approximately 90,000<sup>68</sup> Jews lost their lives.<sup>69</sup> Robert Zaretsky even argues that in the region of the Gard, the Vichy regime provoked "a revival of confessional tensions and conflict [among Christians]."<sup>70</sup> His basic argument is that by the end of the summer of 1942, "a sharp difference existed in the way Catholics and Protestants of the Gard regarded Vichy--a divergence which was deepened by the snowballing of the state's anti-Semitic policies."<sup>71</sup> Zaretsky's claim that Catholics approved or even encouraged the policies of the Vichy government can be, and has been, questioned.<sup>72</sup> But it is undoubtedly true that the acquiescence of the Catholic population and the support of prominent Catholic intellectuals and of much of the clergy greatly facilitated the task of both the Vichy regime and the Nazis. And the 'clerical' tendencies of the

Vichy government, and its emphasis on the ancient Catholic values of France, only reinforced the sense that a significant number of Catholics actively supported Pétain's Révolution nationale and that it had the tacit approval of the church. Such evidence is mentioned here to once again underline the fact that de Gaulle's resistance to Vichy was opposed by a important proportion of Catholics. His inclusion and, on many occasions, his active recruitment of Jews and Protestants only increases the significance of the general's contestation.

Before we examine de Gaulle's thinking and his non-Catholic associates, it will be useful to draw a few conclusions from the evidence presented above. First of all, the evidence has shown that upper-class and 'thinking' Catholics were either suspicious of or hostile towards the republican system of government. These same people, furthermore, believed that the Third Republic was controlled at least in part by the Jews and the Protestants (as well as the Freemasons) and that the ancient and Catholic values of the French nation were thus being perverted or even destroyed. Finally, although religious issues were quiescent throughout the 1930's, they erupted with unexpected force during the Second World War. These developments tend to give the impression that a rapprochement was not possible in this period. And yet, this is exactly what occurred in de Gaulle's Resistance movement.

## CHAPTER 2

Before examining the Protestant and Jews who joined the Free French, we will take a detailed look at Charles de Gaulle's attitude towards the two groups on a general level. In this chapter, we will attempt to determine if de Gaulle was predisposed to accept non-Catholic associates.

Although de Gaulle was, to say the least, a prolific writer, his writings rarely revealed his innermost feelings. This is true of his pre-Second World War works and even more evident in the period after June 1940, as it became increasingly evident that he was the key figure of the French Resistance and that he would probably end up being the leader of France in the post-war era. This reluctance to reveal his personal feelings was nowhere more evident than in his correspondence. Although many of the letters that he wrote to members of his family (particularly his parents) before the Second World War were quite frank, de Gaulle adopted a much more 'political style' as the war approached. He seemed entirely candid only when he was discussing military or political matters, and then only when they affected France's defensive position. This may be due, in part, to the death of his father in 1932; it would seem that Charles de Gaulle was deeply attached to his family and that his father was one of his trusted advisors.<sup>1</sup> He may have felt that he could no longer confide in his family, or anyone else, for that matter, at least not in writing. To some extent, the death of de Gaulle's father left this strongly



independent man entirely on his own for the first time.

However one explains de Gaulle's impersonal correspondence, the end result is that, although we will use it in our analysis, we will also have to rely heavily on the many public declarations and speeches that he made throughout the war. It is on the public stage that the "Connétable"<sup>2</sup> most cogently expressed his personal beliefs. Although he was often no more candid in these speeches than in his correspondence, his public declarations did address issues in a broader context than his private letters. They often offer startling insights into de Gaulle's ideas and beliefs.

What was probably de Gaulle's first public speech about patriotism, a subject of considerable importance for him, was given in 1913. In it, he said that

Le vrai, le sincère patriote, doit garder son âme à l'abri des penchants pervers pour n'y cultiver que les belles passions et les nobles enthousiasmes, et un corps hors tout vice, pour que toute l'énergie dont il est capable puisse servir à son pays et pour qu'il transmette à ses enfants un sang pur et généreux. Voilà, . . . même [pour] ceux qui ne suivent les préceptes de la religion catholique, un sûr moyen d'être des hommes aux aspirations élevées et des citoyens qui, au-dessus de leurs intérêts, de leur vie même, mettrons le respect du devoir.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, de Gaulle believed that patriotism was determined above all by one's moral behaviour. Doctrinal religious belief did not, in his view, affect one's ability to be a good patriot. Although de Gaulle made many other declarations, both private and public, on patriotism, this speech basically summarizes the beliefs that he would defend for the next fifty-seven years.

The fact that de Gaulle rarely mentioned his own Catholicism, let alone his personal religious convictions, tends to confirm this analysis of his patriotism. His speech to the French Canadians on 1 August 1940 was, in this sense, quite exceptional because he said "Je ne vous énumérerai pas nos erreurs militaires, morales, nationales. Le soldat, le catholique, le Français qui vous parle les connaît et les reconnaît."<sup>4</sup>

There are, however, a few other instances in which de Gaulle called himself a believer or a Christian. On 10 August 1940, for instance, de Gaulle wrote a brief note in response to a request by the British journalist Richmond Temple. It began as follows: "Je suis un Français libre. Je crois en Dieu et en l'avenir de ma Patrie."<sup>5</sup> On another occasion, Jean Lacouture related that, when asked by a bureaucrat "Est-il vrai que vous êtes catholique pratiquant?" de Gaulle replied: "Oui, et après?"<sup>6</sup> And finally, in a secret wartime letter to Monsignor Salièges, bishop of Toulouse, he said:

Les remous profonds que provoquent dans les âmes de nos compatriotes certains aspects de l'atroce situation dans laquelle se trouve notre pays m'amènent à exposer en toute confiance à Votre Grandeur l'alarme que je ressens comme chrétien et comme Français.<sup>7</sup>

Lacouture says that throughout his life, both private and public, during official travels and when at his residence in Colombey, the general scrupulously attended mass and, it would seem, regularly committed himself to "'faire ses pâques'".<sup>8</sup> Lacouture concludes that de Gaulle was both a

practising and a believing Catholic, but that he did not mix his religious beliefs with his public, let alone political, affairs; the two were, in fact, kept strictly apart.<sup>9</sup> This conclusion is not entirely satisfying, especially in light of the discussion on the preceding pages. It is clear that de Gaulle thought that the moral precepts of Catholicism exerted a positive influence on an individual's civic and political actions. It is equally evident that de Gaulle's sense of Catholicism led him to believe that anyone could be a good patriot as long as he or she followed certain moral standards.

To confirm this analysis, we shall examine de Gaulle's specific references to the Protestants and Jews of France before and during the Second World war. It is interesting to note that de Gaulle's first major reference to Protestants was not made until the war, and that it was also very explicitly ecumenical. In a radio broadcast of 10 November 1942, the general declared:

Français, Françaises, le 11 novembre, . . . vous serez tous rassemblés, soit dans nos églises et nos temples, soit dans les lieux de vos travaux, soit dans vos habitations. Tous ensemble vous donnerez à la France vos prières ou vos pensées.<sup>10</sup>

In this passage, de Gaulle appealed to Catholics ("églises"), to Protestants, and, possibly, to Jews ("temples"); to those with religious convictions ("vos prières"), and to those who lack such beliefs ("vos pensées"). As indicated before, this was an ecumenical message par excellence.

Near the end of the war, de Gaulle wrote an interest-

ing, and for our purposes, a very informative letter to Barmolini, the president of the Synodal Commission in Strasbourg:

Pendant les dures années que nous venons de vivre, ni les chrétiens d'Alsace, ni l'ensemble du protestantisme français, n'ont perdu la claire vision de l'intérêt véritable du devoir sacré de la patrie. A maintes reprises, des voix courageuses se sont élevées parmi eux pour l'affirmer. Cette attitude était conforme au noble esprit d'indépendance, de résistance à l'oppression, de fidélité au drapeau qui anime la tradition de vos Églises.<sup>11</sup>

De Gaulle clearly praised the traditional spirit of independence once again demonstrated by France's Protestants. It is this spirit which caused them to forcefully resist the Vichy regime and the German occupiers.

The only other major reference to Protestantism by de Gaulle can be found in a speech that he made in Edinburgh on 23 June 1942 during a visit to Scotland. He spoke here about the political and military alliances between France and Scotland that go back to the Middle Ages. However, he added that

dans notre vieille alliance, il n'y eut pas seulement une politique commune, des mariages et des coups d'épée. . . . Il y eut aussi mille liens profonds des âmes et des esprits. . . . Comment pourrions-nous méconnaître ce qu'il y a d'indivis entre l'Église presbytérienne d'Écosse et les doctrines de Calvin?<sup>12</sup>

This passage indicates that de Gaulle was quite sympathetic to the Protestants. In fact, he made a point of speaking of the Protestants as being an integral part of French culture and thought, and thus confirms our previous assertion that de Gaulle linked patriotism and the spirit of the French nation not to Catholicism but to a state of mind developed

by France's various Christian communities.

In light of these examples of de Gaulle's openness to France's Protestant community, one might expect to find that he adopted a tolerant view towards the Jews, as long as they demonstrated their attachment to France and to the 'French spirit.' We will begin our examination of de Gaulle's complex relationship with the Jews by going back to the year 1919, when a certain Captain de Gaulle was sent, at his own request, to Poland, where he helped to train and organize the officers of the Polish army, which was fighting Soviet invaders. In the summer of 1920, he witnessed the battle of Warsaw, in which Polish forces, with the help of a French contingent, defeated the Russian army and forced the Soviet Union to sign a treaty with the Polish government. It is at this time that we get some of de Gaulle's most candid commentaries on Jews.

In a letter to his mother, young Charles said that in the midst of untold poverty and suffering in Poland, there were

d'innombrables [...], détestés à mort de toutes les classes de la société, tous enrichis par la guerre dont ils ont profité sur le dos des Russes, des Boches et des Polonais, et assez disposés à une révolution sociale où ils recueilleraient beaucoup d'argent en échange de quelques mauvais coups.<sup>13</sup>

Although a key word is mysteriously missing in the official edition of de Gaulle's correspondence, Lacouture suggests that there can be no doubt that de Gaulle was referring to the Jews but that this revealed more about "le milieu que fréquentait alors Charles de Gaulle (les salons de Varsovie

et les messes d'officiers polonais) que ses sentiments profonds, qui auront l'occasion de se manifester autrement."<sup>14</sup>

At the end of his stay in Poland, de Gaulle wrote an account of his sojourn that was first published in the conservative Revue de Paris of 1 November, 1920. The account mentioned the Jews at least three times. In the first instance, de Gaulle wrote that, in Poland,

la détresse économique faisait peu à peu sentir ses effets à la classe aisée. . . . Le prix de toute chose devenait incroyable. . . . C'est à peine si les charmantes femmes, si les beaux jeunes gens que nous avons vus naguère heureux de vivre et de ne point compter, trouvaient encore à danser. Les théâtres étaient pleins, il est vrai, mais d'élégances bien israélites.<sup>15</sup>

Although the commentary does not directly criticise the Jews, de Gaulle does imply that they are becoming wealthy at the expense of the rest of the Polish population.

Furthermore, de Gaulle noted:

Dans les restaurants chics, autour de trop de tables, on reconnaissait, parlant de haut toutes les langues, et l'air assuré, ces négociants de troisième ordre, dont se souviendront longtemps en Europe les pays à change défavorable: Rhénans, Viennois, Hongrois, Polonais . . .<sup>16</sup>

Although it is not at all clear who these "négociants de troisième ordre" were, there is a good chance that de Gaulle was talking about Jewish merchants, particularly since it came immediately after his comment on the "élégances bien israélites" that he witnessed at the theatre.

When he next mentioned the Jews, however, de Gaulle was slightly more sympathetic. He said that

En certains coins, le grouillement caractéristique des juifs polonais entassés, cherchant en dépit des quolibets et des brutalités à trafiquer de quelque chose, vivant dans l'insécurité et la terreur permanentes, détestant au fond de leur coeur l'un comme l'autre de deux adversaires, les cosaques de Budienny [a Soviet officer] autant que les uhlands polonais.<sup>17</sup>

This statement is quite different from his previous comment. The Jews, who were referred to earlier as the exploiters, now became the exploited. He now seemed to be condemning the xenophobia and the social environment that maintained the Jews in a state of perpetual poverty.

His final reference to the Jews is the most ambivalent of all:

Nous sommes arrivés à Sieldce hier [17 août 1920] à la suite des vainqueurs [les Polonais]. La ville est bouleversée. Les bolchevistes y avaient installé un soviet avec le concours des juifs de l'endroit (plus de la moitié de la population d'ailleurs). A présent les Polonais de Sieldce veulent punir les juifs favorables à l'ennemi, et ce sont des arrestations continuelles opérées au milieu des hurlements variés d'une plèbe innombrable. Ce matin, plusieurs juifs ont été fusillés, car ici les exécutions ne tardent guère. Autour de la voiture qui transportait les condamnés au supplice se tenaient à bonne distance leurs familles et leurs amis, échangeant avec eux des lamentations. Puis la communauté a pris possession des cadavres, et vite, vite, suivant la coutume israélite, on a couru les enterrer. Quand un juif est mort, il s'agit, me dit-on, de mettre le corps sous terre avant qu'une cloche de chrétien n'ait sonné: sans quoi le démon torturerait le malheureux, et causerait aux assistants une foule d'ennuis. Ils en ont déjà bien assez, les pauvres, dans leur vie perpétuellement agitée par la crainte des mauvais coups et la passion du trafic.<sup>18</sup>

This passage is a strange mix of Jew-bashing (they helped the Bolsheviks install a repressive Soviet government), of superstitious rumours (where did de Gaulle hear about the Jews' burying rituals and why did he seem to accept the information that he received at face value?), and of com-

miseration (within the same paragraph, the Jews are transformed from the role of oppressor to the role of oppressed).

It is clear that de Gaulle distinguished between two types of Jew: the rich and the poor. The rich were to be reviled as the oppressors of the people, and the poor were to be pitied as the victims of a society that loathed them. But it is possible to say that de Gaulle became increasingly aware that things were not as he had been told, and that the Jews were more often than not the victims of persecution. Although he did not approve of their (supposedly) active role in the invasion and the 'Sovietization' of Poland, it would appear that he believed it was understandable under the circumstances. Nevertheless, it seems that de Gaulle did not hold the Jews in high regard in the period immediately after the First World War.

Near the end of his article, however, de Gaulle made a comment which indicated that his xenophobia was not restricted to only one group. After a discussion with a Soviet commander who said he would like to find employment outside of Russia, de Gaulle concluded: "Ne cherchez jamais de convictions chez les Slaves."<sup>19</sup> A rather bold claim to make, given that it seems to have been based entirely on this conversation with a single Russian officer. This disparaging comment seems to confirm Lacouture's claim that the Polish élite had a negative effect on de Gaulle's thinking. It is important to remember that their long-standing antipathy towards the Russians was greatly increased by the



war of 1919-20; the war probably had a similar effect on the traditional Polish aversion to Jews. Since de Gaulle spent most of his time with Polish officers, it is likely that some of their prejudices began to affect his own outlook. This cannot be verified, however, because de Gaulle's (official) correspondence and writings do not contain any reference to Jews before this period.

An assessment of the relationship between the "Connétable" and Émile Mayer will round off this examination of the de Gaulle's ideas and attitudes toward the Jews before the outbreak of the Second World War. Mayer was one of de Gaulle's first 'companions' before his arrival in London in June 1940.<sup>20</sup> Mayer was born in 1851 in Nancy of a modest bourgeois family.<sup>21</sup> Although he was a man of obvious talent, his ideas ran counter to those that were then supported by the officers of the French army. He believed that military tactics would soon have to take into account newly developed weapons and technology. In 1890, for instance, he predicted that the classic war of movement would be replaced by a "guerre d'immobilité." Lacouture suggests that he may have also been hindered by his Jewish origins. The fact that he was a dreyfusard as well did not help his prospects. And his ideological mentors and friends, such as Taine, Jaurès, and Romain Rolland, did not win him any supporters within military circles.

De Gaulle became well acquainted with Mayer's ideas because the latter held discussion groups on a regular basis

in his residence in the 1920's and the 1930's. Although de Gaulle began to attend these meetings regularly only after his return from the Middle East in 1932, the two men corresponded for the first time in 1925.

Lacouture notes that the relationship of the two men always remained cordial, even though they often had substantial disagreements on military issues. De Gaulle always adopted a respectful tone towards this profoundly republican man; he saw Mayer as a mentor. This can be seen nowhere more clearly than in the dedications that de Gaulle wrote to Mayer in his books and articles. To illustrate this point, Lacouture reprints these two examples: "Au colonel Émile Mayer, hommage respectueux et reconnaissant d'un disciple, Charles de Gaulle" and "Au colonel Mayer, hommage d'un très respectueux et très reconnaissant dévouement, son élève, Charles de Gaulle."<sup>22</sup> As Lacouture aptly points out in a note, unlike the dedications that he made to Pétain, those addressed to Mayer were made for a man to whom de Gaulle owed nothing and from whom he expected nothing.<sup>23</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the two men did not always agree, and had vigorous debates on such issues as tanks (de Gaulle was strongly in favour, Mayer doubted their ability to surmount certain obstacles) and air strikes (Mayer believed they would be effective, de Gaulle was unconvinced of their accuracy or their ability to terrorize civilians). As time went on, however, Mayer began to acknowledge the validity of de Gaulle's arguments, particularly after the invasion of

Czechoslovakia and the Munich agreement. The last text that he published stressed the need for the French army to create strong tank divisions. Mayer died on 25 November 1938.

After the fall of France in May 1940, evidence of the Connétable's anti-Semitism (or lack thereof) was an important issue due to the persecution of French Jewry, which resulted in a large exodus of Jews from France, many of whom desired to join the general's Resistance movement. De Gaulle position towards the Jews was also significant because it indicated to what extent he rejected the Vichy regime.

From the summer of 1940 to the spring of 1942, the Free French made numerous references to the persecution of the Jews, although their comments were often quite nuanced.<sup>24</sup> After the persecution had taken on new dimensions in the summer of 1942, the denunciations were much more direct. For instance, on 1 July, one of the Free French announcers on the BBC, Yves Morvan (alias Jean Marris) spoke of the massacre of 700,000 Jews since the beginning of the German occupation of Poland.<sup>25</sup>

Our examination of de Gaulle's public speeches revealed that de Gaulle said very little about the situation facing France's Jews. Although de Gaulle must have been informed of the ill treatment of the Jews in France as well as in other countries in Europe, we were unable to find any explicit reference in the war years to the Jewish situation. Even after the repressive measures of the Nazis and the

Vichy government towards the Jews became widely known, de Gaulle spoke only indirectly of the Jewish question. The following speech of 3 September 1943 is a fairly typical example: "L'Allemand, à mesure qu'approche l'échéance de son désastre, s'acharne davantage sur ceux de nos frères qui n'ont point d'armes pour se défendre. Jamais il n'a tant fusillé, emprisonné, torturé, déporté, de Français." In the same speech, de Gaulle referred to the number of the French that had died in armed combat, executions, and in camps, once again without reference to the persecution inflicted upon the Jews.<sup>26</sup> However, when de Gaulle spoke of "our brothers without weapons," he was making an unmistakable reference to the non-combatants, which included of course large numbers of Jews, who were being deported and killed and he was clearly emphasizing their status as French citizens.

To put de Gaulle's silence somewhat in perspective, however, it should be pointed out that between the start of the war and September 1942, L'Humanité, a clandestine Communist publication and the most important Resistance newspaper inside France, mentioned the persecution of the Jews only seventeen times. Furthermore, in this period, references to specific events were usually vague and the persecution was always linked to class struggle.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know if and how the invasion of the unoccupied zone of France, and the subsequent escalation of the persecution of the Jews, affected the tenor of L'Humanité's statements

about that persecution

In the last year of the war, de Gaulle made some speeches that were much more directly aimed at France's Jewish population. In 1944, for instance, de Gaulle said that

La journée nationale des prisonniers et déportés, la journée du 21 mai, c'est l'affirmation, c'est la preuve que nos hommes détenus par l'ennemi font partie intégrante de l'unité nationale. C'est le salut échangé entre les combattants des trois fronts français, tous responsables d'une parcelle du destin de la patrie. Car chaque Français, où il se trouve, même et surtout s'il est au cachot, peut ajouter quelque chose à la grandeur de la France.<sup>28</sup>

His reference to the national identity of the deportees was unmistakable. Nevertheless, although he was making a specific reference to the Jews, he did not explicitly name them.

And in a conference held on the issue of de Gaulle's relationship to the Jews, a Jewish member of the Resistance insisted that none of the general's speeches were ever discriminatory.<sup>29</sup>

In his Mémoires de guerre, de Gaulle spoke much more directly of the persecution of Jews. On at least three occasions,<sup>30</sup> de Gaulle referred to them directly. On the last occasion, he said that in the months preceding D-Day (6 June 1944), "les honteuses horreurs de la persécution juive [s'étaient étalées]." In this passage, de Gaulle's sense of shame for his fellow-citizens was evident; he seems to have been mortified that such a large number of Frenchmen had willingly participated in the barbaric events of the Holocaust.

This point is reinforced by this very ambivalent reference to the victory of the Allies:

l'épreuve, si elle fut marquée, pour nous Français, par une gloire tirée du plus profond de l'abîme, n'en a pas moins comporté, d'abord, des défaillances désastreuses. Avec la satisfaction causée par le dénouement, elle laisse,--c'est pour toujours!--une douleur sourde au fond de la conscience nationale. Au reste, d'un bout du monde à l'autre, les coups de canon de l'armistice sont accueillis, certes, avec un soulagement immense, . . . mais ils le sont sans transports, car la lutte fut salie de crimes qui font honte au genre humain.<sup>32</sup>

The "crimes that shame human kind" clearly go beyond the crimes that are usually associated with armed conflict, and certainly included the events of the Holocaust.

To round off our look at de Gaulle's attitude towards Jews in the period of the Second World War, it will be useful to look at his relationship with Georges Mandel. A deputy from 1928 to 1940, Mandel was, on numerous occasions, Minister of War. In the Reynaud cabinet of 1940, he was Minister of the Interior and was one of the few French politicians to oppose the armistice. He was eventually arrested by the Vichy regime and was delivered to the Germans in 1942. De Gaulle was very concerned about his deportation, and wrote a letter to this effect to the British Secretary of State Anthony Eden on 3 March 1943. In this letter, he sent the text of a secret message about Paul Reynaud and Georges Mandel (both of whom were imprisoned in Bordeaux) which said that the two former ministers were living in very poor conditions. He then said that the Free French would support any actions aimed at saving their lives and that "je vous serai personnellement reconnaissant de

tout ce qui pourra être fait dans ce sens."<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately for Mandel, no rescue ever came; he was assassinated by the Milice in 1944.

De Gaulle's personal and political relationship to Mandel can be gleaned from a speech he gave at a commemoration at Lesparre (Gironde) on 24 September 1949. On this occasion, the general claimed that Mandel's "attitude personnelle, à ce moment-là [juin 1940], fut pour [moi] . . . non seulement un réconfort mais une orientation pour la suite."<sup>34</sup> Recalling the last time he saw his colleague, de Gaulle said:

Je vois encore cette attitude de Georges Mandel simple, ferme, calme, absolument résolue et j'entends encore ces paroles de lui me disant: 'Vous êtes un des rares . . . qui, dans le drame que nous traversons, peut servir purement la France.'<sup>35</sup>

De Gaulle also indicated in this speech that Mandel wrote him letters of support, saying that everything must be done to make France re-enter the war on the Allied side and that the regime set up in Vichy must be completely removed. Furthermore, Mandel observed: "Quant à moi, je n'ai souffert . . . de toutes les persécutions dont j'ai été l'objet, que parce qu'elles m'ont empêché de seconder votre effort. Je n'ai d'autre ambition que rattraper le temps perdu."<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately, he never got the chance to make up for lost time.

To sum up, de Gaulle's patriotism appeared to be open to all who had a genuine love of France and that the moral uprightness needed to be a good patriot could be achieved by

regardless of one's religious affiliation. His relationship with the Protestants of France seemed, on the whole, cordial, although that is impossible to completely ascertain since he spoke of them on only a few occasions. He referred to the Jews much more than to the Protestants, but his relationship to them was infinitely more complex, although it would seem that he was aware of their precarious position within Europe's nations and sympathized with their plight. Overall, then, de Gaulle accepted France's religious minorities as long as they were devoted to France.



## CHAPTER 3

De Gaulle's political ecumenism can be most clearly demonstrated by examining his relationship with the Protestants and the Jews who joined his entourage during the Resistance and the Liberation. A surprisingly large number of people who became prominent members of de Gaulle's organization were either Protestant or Jewish. Furthermore, an examination of each person's ideological and political background reveals that these were diverse, giving the term 'political ecumenism' a double meaning.

It is not our intention to provide an exhaustive look at all of the Protestant and Jewish figures who participated in the Resistance. Instead, we will only take a look at those individuals who worked most closely with the general or whose stature gave their collaboration special significance.

This chapter will be divided into two sections: the first will be devoted to the Protestants who rallied to de Gaulle and the second will examine the Jews who did so. For each, a brief sketch of their careers before the war will be given. In particular, we will attempt to assess if their past ideological tendencies or activities suggested that they were likely to join the Resistance. The manner in which each joined the Free French will be examined, and the reasons for their ralliement will be given. Finally, their posts in the Resistance organization will be described and, when possible, their relationship with de Gaulle will be

analyzed. It should be kept in mind that our examination will stop at the general's first retirement on 20 January 1946.

### Protestants

André Diethelm was born in the Gironde in 1896. In 1920, he became an inspecteur des finances. Between 1929 and 1933, he was director of Finances in Indochina. From 1938 to 1939, he was Mandel's directeur du cabinet in the Ministry of Colonies, and then in the Ministry of the Interior.

In June 1940, Diethelm joined de Gaulle in London. He was a member of the Comité national français created on 24 September 1941. While in London, he set up a radio listening post and a documentation service. By the end of 1941, he had set up a system that allowed the Free French to remain reasonably informed about the situation in France. From 1942 to April 1944, he was in charge of production at the CFLN. On 4 April 1944, he was named Commissioner of War. In a letter sent from Algiers on 10 April 1944,<sup>1</sup> de Gaulle indicated to Diethelm that all officers were henceforth to report directly to the Commissioner of War and that they were to take their orders only from Diethelm's office. As well as being in charge of all military operations during the Liberation, Diethelm was responsible for the reorganization of the shattered French army.

In a letter written after Diethelm had announced his desire to leave the cabinet, de Gaulle wrote to thank him

for his services to the Free French: "Vous êtes mon ancien compagnon; vous avez répondu parmi les premiers à l'appel du devoir, et animé du seul esprit de la résistance à l'ennemi, vous avez consacré tous vos efforts à forger l'armée de la victoire."<sup>2</sup> In this instance at least, de Gaulle was not stingy in his praise.

Another Protestant who joined the Resistance very early on was François Coulet. He began his diplomatic career in January 1936 when he was sent to Moscow to serve as Third Secretary at the French embassy. One event at that time clearly illustrates Coulet's propensity towards resistance: in his memoirs, he writes that he would have liked to join a contingent to defend the Spanish Republic during the Civil War. France's non-participation in this conflict left him "honteux pour son pays, plein d'envies et de craintes mal formulées. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

In 1937, he was sent to Helsinki to serve as Second Secretary. At this time, Coulet described himself as: "Bourgeois par son milieu, libéral en politique, universitaire de formation, incroyant mal assuré mais, au fond, conformiste. . . ."<sup>4</sup> While in Finland, he had turned himself towards religion and the Oxford Movement. He was, however, disappointed because the brand of Lutheranism practised in Finland was too bureaucratic for his tastes.<sup>5</sup> In sum, "pour cette fois, sa recherche à lui tourna court."<sup>6</sup>

Two events deeply marked Coulet while he was in Fin-

land. The first was the sell-out of Czechoslovakia in Munich in November 1938 during which the conduct of his country filled him with shame, so much so, in fact, that "il éclata en sanglots."<sup>7</sup> The second event that marked him while he was in Helsinki was the invasion of Finland by the Soviet Union. What impressed him most about the Finnish resistance to the Soviets was that it was automatic. He writes that in Finland, "Pas de séance tumultueuse au Parlement, ni au Gouvernement d'hésitation sur la conduite à tenir."<sup>8</sup> Since the Finns had been attacked first and without provocation, resistance was the natural and appropriate reaction.

Coulet remained in Helsinki until the fall of France, at which time he headed towards Africa to join the Resistance. He also hoped to meet a certain General de Gaulle, of whom he knew virtually nothing except a third hand account which described the general as "Très grand, d'une taille immense. Très intelligent. A l'Ecole de Guerre ses camarades le détestaient."<sup>9</sup>

In July, Coulet arrived in Cairo with a few companions and immediately sent a message to the "Connétable", expressing his, as well as his friends', support for the Free French. In reply, Coulet received the following telegram on 20 July 1940 from de Gaulle in London:

Je vous félicite de votre attitude et serai heureux de vous savoir en mesure de vous rendre en Égypte. Vous vous y mettrez à votre arrivée en rapport avec le comité français du Caire à qui je transmets directement des instructions. A vous et vos compagnons ma cordiale sympathie.<sup>10</sup>

After having received this telegram, Coulet decided to go to Fort-Lamy in Chad to volunteer in the French army. De Gaulle learned of Coulet's plans and sent a telegram asking him to visit Félix Éboué, governor of French Equatorial Africa, who had recently assured the general that he completely agreed with his decision to keep France in the war but had not yet officially rallied to the Free French. De Gaulle wanted Coulet to indicate to Éboué that "le fait de ranger effectivement et pratiquement le territoire à nos côtés serait d'une importance considérable et susceptible de conséquences à longue portée."<sup>11</sup> However, this mission never occurred because, as Coulet recounts, "le Tchad n'avait pas eu besoin de lui pour rallier la France Libre. [René] Pleven et Eboué s'en étaient chargés."<sup>12</sup>

In the latter months of 1940, Coulet was sent to Cairo by Pleven "en vue d'une importante mission à assumer en Palestine."<sup>13</sup> Thus began his tenure as director of the clandestine radio station Levant-France-Libre. The principal aim of the station was to counter Vichy's propaganda and to convince the French citizens, and in particular the soldiers, of the area to join the Free French. Essentially, Coulet's job at the station was to insure that programmes occurred on a regular basis and that the information being presented counterbalanced the pro-Vichy propaganda being presented by the 'official' stations in the region.<sup>14</sup> Coulet says that the station never deviated from its absolute rejection of the policy of Marshal Pétain. In his

first meeting with de Gaulle, Coulet asked the general if "Levant-France-Libre avait eu tort, d'un bout à l'autre, de condamner le Maréchal sans vouloir chercher une excuse."<sup>15</sup> De Gaulle scathingly replied "Pétain est un traître."<sup>16</sup> This answer greatly pleased Coulet and confirmed his attitude towards the Vichy regime.

Though Coulet's first audience with de Gaulle took place in May 1941 in Brazzaville, he had been appointed to the general's cabinet on 7 April. The young man was deeply impressed by his first meeting with de Gaulle. He says that one of the first first things that he noted about the general was that "jamais ce personnage singulier ne disait rien de plat."<sup>17</sup> In this conversation de Gaulle announced to Coulet that his mission at the radio station was over and that he would replace Geoffroy de Courcel as the general's chef de cabinet. After a learning period from May to July, Coulet took up his new post on 20 August and rejoined the general in London on the last day of that month.

Coulet says that he had a modest conception of his duties: "[il] se jura . . . de ne jamais outrepasser son rôle et de ne le remplir que dans les strictes limites qu'il se fixerait."<sup>18</sup> As well as being chef de cabinet, Coulet says he served as an aide-de-camp and as a translator for the general. His duties ranged from writing top secret letters and telegrams to choosing the menu of the day. In his memoirs, Coulet shows us a rarely seen side of the general, saying that the latter was "gastronome" and that

during his meals, or at lunch time at least, "Il n'était pas question de se hâter: un Français rentrait déjeuner, se reposer de corps et d'esprit en conversant avec des amis."<sup>19</sup>

Coulet remained aide-de-camp for about one year, and left for Algiers in the fall of 1942 to join a division of parachutists; a few weeks after having joined the division, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. However, it became increasingly apparent that this division would not see any combat for a long while.

Coulet did not have to wait long for new instructions. In a telegram dated 5 April 1943, de Gaulle asked General Georges Catroux, commissionnaire sans département, to retain Coulet in his mission "convaincu qu'il vous sera utile, et désireux de le trouver moi-même à mon arrivée. . . ."<sup>20</sup> Soon after this telegram, he was appointed Secretary General of Corsica.

In mid-December, Coulet was promoted to the post of Prefect and was also in charge of "la préparation administrative de la Libération. . . ."<sup>21</sup> On 12 June 1944, de Gaulle very suddenly appointed him Regional Commissioner of the Republic in Normandy, the first zone to be liberated by the Allied armies. Coulet indicates that he became Commissioner because Bourdeau de Fontenay, the government's choice for this post, had been unable to elude the German military authorities in France.<sup>22</sup>

In 1944, Coulet was responsible for all administrative

decisions in the liberated zone; in essence, he became the top government representative of the area. A very telling incident occurred soon after his arrival in Normandy. The Commissioner wanted to have a Te Deum sung at Notre-Dame de Bayeux cathedral to commemorate the fourth anniversary of de Gaulle's message of 18 June. When he saw the bishop, Monsignor Picaud, on 16 June, the reception was, to put it mildly, frosty. The prelate communicated to Coulet his mistrust of the general's movement.<sup>23</sup> More interestingly for our purposes, however, the old prelate criticized the new Commissioner by saying:

Vous êtes protestant . . . et vous avouerez que je puis légitimement m'étonner que pour administrer une région aussi profondément catholique que la Normandie, le général de Gaulle ait fait un choix d'une personne appartenant à la Confession d'Augsbourg. . . .<sup>24</sup>

The level of the arch-bishop's hostility clearly indicates that religious intolerance was far from dead, at least among the clergy. Coulet nevertheless obtained the promise from the bishop that a mass would be sung.

Coulet remained Commissioner until August 1944, when he accompanied the general to Africa. In 1946, he was named director of Europe at the Quai d'Orsay.

Jacques Soustelle is yet another Protestant who rallied early to de Gaulle but did not join him in London until 1942. He was born in Montpellier in 1912. Between 1929 and 1932, he studied at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. He then began an academic career as an ethnologist, effecting field work in Central and South America between 1932 and



1939. He became assistant-director of the Musée de l'Homme in 1937 and one of the directors of the Ligue des intellectuels anti-fascistes.

As could be expected, Soustelle immediately opposed the armistice and rallied to the Free French in July 1940. He was a representative of de Gaulle, and then the Comité national, in Mexico and in Central America from March 1941 to May 1942. When he finally left South America to join de Gaulle in London in June 1942, Soustelle remarked: "Quitter l'Amérique à cette époque pour aller à Londres, c'était folie!"<sup>25</sup> On 10 June 1942, he was named Director of Information for the Fighting French; in July 1942, he became the Commissaire national à l'Information. Between 20 November 1943 and February 1945, he was the General Director of the Special Services, and then of the Études et Recherches. In May 1945, he became the Commissaire de la République in Bordeaux. He served as Minister of Information between May and October 1945. In October 1945, he was appointed Minister of the Colonies, a post he held until de Gaulle's first retirement on 20 January 1946.

In the war years, Soustelle was one of the general's closest associates. From the start, he was quite impressed with the "Connétable". Speaking of their first meeting, Soustelle wrote "J'eus dès l'abord le sentiment que cet homme ne 'jouait' pas. Il était lui-même, simplement, et ne songeait pas à se composer un personnage."<sup>26</sup> He added: "je fus profondément ému de me trouver enfin devant un homme qui

'sentait' la France à tout instant, sans illusion mais avec amour."<sup>27</sup>

Soustelle was quite aware of his dual 'Protestant' nature--cultural (he was not pratiquant) and political, because of his resistance to the Vichy regime. For instance, he indicated "De mon enfance de petit protestant, il m'est resté le souvenir de ces 'colporteurs évangéliques', qui, de famille en famille et de ville en ville, avec leur valise bourrée de Bibles et de brochures, répandaient la foi. . . ." <sup>28</sup> From this childhood memory, Soustelle drew this interesting parallel: "J'ai souvent pensé à ces colporteurs lorsque, bien des années plus tard, je parcourais moi-même le monde, comme eux léger de bagages et riche de foi, pour répandre une autre bonne parole."<sup>29</sup> As well as indicating Soustelle's cultural affinity to Protestantism, this passage indicates the importance he attached to de Gaulle's mission and its success.

De Gaulle expressed his satisfaction with Soustelle's work early on. In a telegram sent on 18 February 1942, de Gaulle commented about Soustelle's mission as the director of French Information in Northern Africa (Brazzaville): "J'attache à cette mission la plus haute importance et c'est pourquoi je vous ai choisi."<sup>30</sup> In fact, after the two met in London for the first time, de Gaulle retained Soustelle as Director of the Information Services to replace Étienne Dennerly, who had rejoined the French fighting forces in Egypt. The Information Services had many responsibilities,

which included the operation of a press service, issuing of daily directives, sending daily correspondence to the Free French and the Allies, publishing Resistance documents and papers in France as well as in Allied countries, organizing conferences in England and of manifestations in France, and formulating French-language broadcasts on British radio.<sup>31</sup> This list is a clear indication that de Gaulle and the entire Free French organization relied heavily on Soustelle's abilities.

De Gaulle clearly indicated this in a letter to Soustelle on 24 October 1944:

En raison du succès de la Bataille de France, succès auquel ils ont tant contribué! nos Services spéciaux voient arriver à son terme une partie de leur tâche: l'action en territoire métropolitain.

Sous votre direction, les Services ont, maintenant, à s'organiser et à agir en vue d'un rôle extérieur, non point nouveau pour eux, mais très élargi; en même temps, il leur appartient de veiller à la sécurité militaire du pays.

This letter clearly underlines the importance of Soustelle's role in the newly formed government of France and indicates that it was expanded after the Liberation.

The next four Protestants on our list joined the resistance immediately after the fall of France in 1940, but did not actually rally to the Free French and de Gaulle until 1942. As we shall see, each had his own reasons for delaying.

Paul Bastid was a Radical-Socialist deputy first elected in the Cantal in 1924, a seat he held until the advent of the Vichy regime. In 1935, he presided over the

Foreign Affairs Commission. One of his tasks in this capacity was to find a solution to the crisis created by Italy's invasion of Abyssinia in October 1935. A month later, he made public statements asking Germany to help the League of Nations solve this situation; he argued that if they did so, the Germans would be proving their desire for peace.<sup>32</sup>

In the Popular Front (June 1936 to April 1938), Bastid served as Minister of Commerce and Industry. In this post, he was of course concerned with the development of French industry, but his position required that he negotiate and sign a number of high-level financial and trade agreements with foreign governments at a particularly critical time in the economic and diplomatic history of Europe. For instance, he signed special economic accords with Yugoslavia in December 1936<sup>33</sup> and with Czechoslovakia in March 1938.<sup>34</sup> During his ministry, Bastid also requested, on three separate occasions, a report detailing the state of the German economy.<sup>35</sup> He was thus well acquainted with the international situation, a fact that was to be of service to him throughout the war.

Bastid joined the interior Resistance in 1940 and left for London in 1941, where he was named to the Délégation générale. In the spring of 1942, de Gaulle created the Comité général d'études which was founded to be both the brain trust of the Resistance and the embryo of the Senate or the Council of State of the Free French.<sup>36</sup> Bastid was one of the first people that de Gaulle appointed to this

committee which would decide the make-up of the government after the liberation of France. Bastid was thus one of the major architects of the Fourth Republic.

De Gaulle wrote him a letter on 20 February 1943 which praised his efforts and commented positively on an unspecified warning<sup>37</sup> that he and his colleagues had issued several months earlier:

Des rapports que je reçois de France . . . ont, depuis longtemps, attiré mon attention sur votre courageuse attitude et sur votre activité patriotique.

Je regrette de n'avoir reçu qu'en janvier la lettre que vous-même et plusieurs de vos collègues du Parlement m'aviez adressée en août 1942. . . . Le danger que vous m'y signalez ne m'avait pas échappé. . . . [Pour] nous qui voulons la destruction du régime de Vichy et la disparition des responsables, ce danger est, après l'expérience du débarquement allié en Afrique, plus grave aujourd'hui que jamais. Vous pouvez donc compter que nous partageons vos vues et que nous agissons en conséquence.

Je n'ignore pas le grand travail que vous avez fourni personnellement dans l'étude de certains problèmes très importants. . . .<sup>38</sup>

In 1943, Bastid became a member of the National Council of the Resistance as a representative of the Radical-Socialist party.

After the Liberation, de Gaulle was of course bombarded with a number of proposals about the nature and make-up of the institutions that should replace those instituted by the Vichy regime. As a Radical-Socialist, Bastid felt understandably attached to the institutions of the Third Republic. He thus recommended that the constitution of 1875 should be re-established before making any changes. The surprising aspect of this is that de Gaulle was more receptive to this suggestion than expected; in London, the gen-

eral had made no efforts to hide his disdain of the Third Republic.<sup>39</sup> De Gaulle, 'l'homme de circonstance,' was clearly aware that flexibility was an essential requirement for political success.

Pierre Viénot was born in Clermont (near Paris) in 1897. He served in the First World War and was seriously wounded in 1918. He was cited twice and received the Légion d'honneur. After the war, he studied law, and entered the civil cabinet of the Résident général of Morocco, Marshal Lyautey, in 1921. He returned to France in 1923 and began to study for the Foreign Service examination.

Viénot was an ardent defender of a rapprochement between France and Germany. He made several trips to Germany and, in 1926, founded the Comité franco-allemand d'information, and served as its French delegate in Berlin.<sup>40</sup> This organization was composed of French and German industrialists, politicians, and writers. In a note published on 6 February 1928,<sup>41</sup> he commented on the German military budget of 1928. His basic point was that the French press was using inexact information to attack this budget, to such an extent, in fact, that "les 'révélations' de la presse française ont perdu toute créance en Allemagne."<sup>42</sup> He feared that this, in turn, would lead to a cooling off of relations between the Germans and the French. This situation was worsened, in his opinion, by the fact that an important segment of the population of France actually believed the reports they were reading in the press. How-

ever, after the arrival of the Nazis in 1933, the comité completely lost hope in Franco-German co-existence and was disbanded.

Viénot became deputy of the Ardennes in 1932 as a républicain socialiste; after his victory, however, he joined the Groupe du parti socialiste français. In 1936, he was re-elected and joined the Union socialiste et républicaine. Between 4 June 1936 and 22 June 1937, he served as Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Blum government; he was in charge of Muslim affairs, which included Syria, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Morocco. He unsuccessfully attempted to grant these countries a measure of autonomy. It is only after the fall of the first Blum government in 1937 that he joined the SFIO. In September 1939, he once again joined the army and served until April 1940, at which time Paul Reynaud named him director of the German service in the Ministry of Information.

Viénot did not accept the Armistice and left France in June 1940 aboard the Massilia, which was headed for North Africa, in the hope of pursuing the resistance. Instead, he was court-martialed for desertion and could not leave France until 1942. At that time, he joined de Gaulle in London and was made a member of the Comité français de la libération nationale. He was then appointed ambassador of the CFLN at London in 1943, a post he held until his death on 20 July 1944. Although de Gaulle's correspondence with Viénot is of a professional nature, it reveals that the former relied

heavily on his services.

One of the times that the general did express a message of a personal nature was at Viénot's death. In a letter to Camille Paris, a chargé d'affaires at the French Foreign Services in London, de Gaulle said: "J'apprends avec une grande tristesse la mort de M. Pierre Viénot. Il meurt après avoir travaillé pour le pays jusqu'à l'épuisement de ses forces. En lui la France perd un serviteur et l'Angleterre un ami."<sup>43</sup> Lacouture echoes this sentiment: Viénot "allait beaucoup manquer à de Gaulle, et à son pays."<sup>44</sup>

Louis Vallon was born in 1901. In the inter-war period, he was an electrician and a radio producer. In 1923, he joined the SFIO. In 1934, he was one of the people who signed the famous 'plan du 9 Juillet.' This document was also signed by, among others, Jules Romains, A. Fabre-Luce, P. Frédéricix, A. Hoog, P. Olivier-Lapie, and Paul Marion. They argued that, in order to improve the disastrous economic situation of Europe, it was necessary to prepare for "une fusion économique des pays de l'Europe occidentale avec les régions du nord et de l'Ouest de l'Afrique . . . [et] une Fédération politique du bloc européen-africain."<sup>45</sup> The defenders of this plan said that it would have the further effect of turning Europeans away from their border disputes by putting their energies into a common project.<sup>46</sup>

In 1936, the Blum government named Vallon head of the émissions économique et sociales de la Radiodiffusion. He also wrote for the left-wing press and belonged to the Ligue



des Droits de l'Homme. He was mobilized in 1939 and was imprisoned by the Germans in 1940. He was liberated and returned to France in 1941, and was one of the first participants in Libération-Nord, a resistance organization that operated in the occupied zone of France.

In 1942, Vallon rallied to the Free French and joined the general in London. From July of that year to February 1943, he was director of the non-military section of the Bureau central de renseignement et d'action militaire. He served as Chef d'état major adjoint of the first division of the Free French from February to May 1943 and was named a delegate to the Assemblée consultative provisoire in November. At the same time, he was part of the first French commando group (in Algeria) and participated in the Alsace campaign between May and December 1944. Immediately after this campaign, Vallon was named assistant director of de Gaulle's cabinet, a post he held until the general's first retirement in 1946.

It is strange that, in light of Vallon's apparent importance to de Gaulle, there are few details of his role in the Resistance. The issue is further complicated by the fact that the "Connétable" had very little correspondence with him, and none of a personal nature.

André Philip was born in the Gard in 1902. Throughout his life, he defended a philosophy which essentially claimed that socialism was the political philosophy which most closely approximated Jesus's teachings. His PhD thesis on

guild socialism was completed, following research work in London, in 1924. He became a professor of law at the Université de Lyon in 1926, the same year that he joined the SFIO. He was the only practising Socialist Protestant (or Christian) among the Socialist deputies in the Chamber during the pre-war years. In fact, Philip's political commitment rested "sur la primauté qu'il accorde aux valeurs chrétiennes. . . ."47 In the early 1930's, he defended a few Protestant conscientious objectors. In 1934, he set up a radical Christian front against fascism, together with Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhöffer. And in September 1938, Philip urged Premier Léon Blum to reject Munich and put up an effective fight against Hitler.

Philip was a committed socialist and internationalist. For instance, in 1937, he made several appeals for greater European co-operation in Vigilance, the official publication of the Comité des intellectuels anti-fascistes.48 He believed that one way of effecting this was to generalize both the systeme des mandats and the octroi de crédits, a measure that favoured German re-colonization of Africa.49 As late as 8 June 1938, he suggested the formation,

avec le Togo et le Cameroun, le Nigéria et le Kenya britanniques, l'Afrique équatoriale française, l'Angola portugais et une partie du Congo belge, [d'un empire colonial centre-africain à l'administration et à l'exploitation duquel toutes les nations européennes participeraient sur un pied d'absolue égalité.50

Essentially, his argument was that, while the Europeans were busy exploiting the African continent, they were far less likely to be shooting at each other over border disputes.

He also believed that this would address Germany's legitimate grievances towards the Treaty of Versailles. It is interesting to note that this argument is virtually identical to the one defended by Vallon.

Philip was one of only eighty deputies to refuse to grant full powers to Pétain on 10 July 1940. He entered the Resistance immediately after. He was, among other things, one of the founders and organizers of 'Libération-Sud,' a resistance movement in Lyon. He was personally involved in a number of very dangerous acts, including the hiding and secreting away of Jews. At the same time, he was the editor of Libération, a Resistance paper. Eventually, his resistance activities could no longer be overlooked by the authorities and, pursued by the Gestapo, he left France to join the Free French in London on 10 July 1942.

The tone of Philip's relationship with de Gaulle can be gleaned from the following incident: when the latter arrived in London in late July, a reporter asked him what he thought of the general. He answered: "Le général? Je m'en fiche. . . . Je viens rejoindre le sous-secrétaire d'État à la guerre du dernier gouvernement libre, donc légitime, de la IIIe République!"<sup>51</sup> This incident demonstrates Philip's lack of diplomacy, a fact that was re-confirmed on a number of occasions, including his disastrous meeting with Roosevelt on 20 November 1942.<sup>52</sup> More importantly for our purposes, however, this declaration also illustrates that Philip was much more attached to the Resistance and to

democracy than to de Gaulle.

From the start, relations between de Gaulle and Philip were difficult because of their political differences. Philip made no secret about an eventual parting of the ways. Years later, he related to Lacouture that:

Le général me fit pendant trois heures la plus belle des leçons d'agrégation sur l'État et la Nation. Dès qu'il se tut, je lui dit: 'Mon général, sitôt la guerre gagnée, je me séparerai de vous. Vous vous battez pour restaurer la grandeur nationale. Moi, pour bâtir une Europe socialiste et démocratique. . . <sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless, de Gaulle promptly named him Commissioner of the Interior, a post he held until June 1943.

De Gaulle soon indicated that he attached a great deal of importance to Philip's ralliement. On 13 September 1942, the "Connétable" wrote a letter from Beyrouth to Jacques Soustelle (who was at that time in London) that strongly defended Philip's first radio broadcast:

A propos de l'allocution radiodiffusée de [sic] André Philip du 11 septembre, je vous signale que la dépêche envoyée ici par l'A.F.I. [Agence française indépendante] a délibérément tronqué le texte de Philip. En particulier la partie de l'allocution où il a si justement condamné l'ancien parlement est complètement omise dans la dépêche.

Tout dans cette dépêche a cette fausse apparence que Philip glorifie [le président du Sénat, Jules] Jeanne-ney et [le président de l'Assemblée nationale, Édouard] Herriot sans aucune réserve, ce qui produit ici une impression fâcheuse.<sup>54</sup>

In other words, de Gaulle did not want Philip's reputation to be tarnished, in large part because Philip was one of the authentically democratic figures in the Free French movement. The fact that Philip, in this speech, had so closely followed the general's own ideas about the Third Republic

probably also explains why de Gaulle so promptly defended him. Such a message clearly indicates the importance with which the general viewed Philip's collaboration.

After June 1943, Philip was named Commissioner of Labour, a post he held until November of the same year. He was then made minister of the interior until his departure from the ministry in September 1944. In a letter dated 9 September 1944, de Gaulle wrote:

Mon cher ami,  
 Vous avez été, au sein du Comité national de Londres, le premier représentant de la Résistance. Vous avez su animer et guider cette Résistance pendant de longs mois. A Alger, au Gouvernement, vous avez continué à montrer, dans une mission délicate, vos hautes qualités de coeur, d'esprit et l'éloquence [sic]. . . . Je penserai toujours à notre collaboration avec regret.<sup>55</sup>

Philip's candid comments about de Gaulle's nationalist vision notwithstanding, it is clear that the general greatly respected his Protestant colleague and valued his services to the Resistance.

The last two Protestants on our list joined the Resistance quite late. In fact, both René Massigli and Maurice Couve de Murville served, at least nominally, under the Vichy regime. Both, it would seem, would defect only when it became clear that the Germans were controlling the government of France. It should be noted that, initially at least, Couve de Murville did not commit himself until de Gaulle's rival, General Henri Giraud, had clearly lost the power-struggle with the "Connétable" to lead the Free French.

René Massigli was born on 22 March 1888 in Montpellier.

He attended the Ecole Française de Rome between 1910 and 1913. He was a chargé de cours at the University of Lille in 1913-14. He became interested in the world of diplomacy while working for the information bureau opened by the French during the First World War.<sup>56</sup> His task consisted essentially of analyzing the Swiss press, as well as the German press in Central Europe. He began his long and distinguished diplomatic career in 1920, when he was named General Secretary of the Conference of Ambassadors. Between 1924 and 1928, he served as Maître des Requêtes at the Conseil d'État.

In 1928, Massigli became the head of the Service français de la Société des Nations. This organization had numerous responsibilities, one of which was to act as a liaison office between the League of Nations and the French government. The service also studied all of the issues addressed by the League and guided the government's responses in these matters. And finally, it insured that all French diplomatic posts in foreign countries were kept up to date on the relevant issues discussed at the League.<sup>57</sup> In this post, Massigli played a significant role in the elaboration and enactment of French foreign policy. He was particularly active at both Conferences of Disarmament (1932-33) and in the debates of the League over such issues as the invasion of Abyssinia by the Italians as well as the violations of the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles by the Germans. Throughout this period, Massigli

advocated a policy of effective resistance to Hitler.

On 24 March 1933, Massigli was named Assistant Director of Political Affairs at the Quai d'Orsay while still serving at the League. In 1937, he became Director of Political Affairs, a post he held until October 1938. This meant that he was essentially the principal figure of the Quai, at least in political and diplomatic matters (there was also a director of Commercial Affairs). In his tenure as director, Massigli did much to oppose German designs and was, for instance, opposed to Munich. On the first day of that conference, 19 September 1938, Massigli said that Czechoslovakia must not be partitioned, nor should it lose any of its territory, under any circumstance.<sup>58</sup> He argued that a weakening of the Czech state would have disastrous effects on France and that, as a result, it should not accept any compromise proposed by either the British or the Germans.<sup>59</sup> He concluded that any agreement with Germany, rather than encouraging peace in Europe, would have the opposite effect and would encourage Germany to once again use the threat of force to acquire yet more territory.<sup>60</sup>

Massigli's opposition to Munich made him a number of enemies, including the Secretary General of the Quai, Alexis Léger. As a result, Massigli was removed from his former post and was named ambassador in Ankara, on 24 October 1938. This was the position he held when France fell to the Germans. Apparently, the Nazis wanted him recalled to France because they had discovered some 'compromising' telegrams he

had written.<sup>61</sup>

Massigli thus emerged as a prime candidate to join the Resistance. And yet, he did not join the Free French until after the invasion of Vichy France by the Germans. When he did break from Vichy, he did so at great personal risk: he had to go into hiding for a number of months and his trip to England was almost fatal.<sup>62</sup> He finally joined de Gaulle in London on 12 January 1943.

In June of the same year, he became a Commissaire national général. He was one of seven commissioners appointed by de Gaulle and was joined by another Protestant, André Philip. He then served as Foreign Affairs minister until September 1944, at which point he was named ambassador in London.

Tensions between Massigli and de Gaulle emerged after his London appointment. They culminated on 4 January 1946, a few weeks before de Gaulle's resignation. In a letter to his Minister of State and Interim Minister of Foreign Affairs, Francisque Gay, the general wrote:

Les Affaires étrangères actionnées par M. Massigli et par M. Chauvel nous ont engagés dans un soi-disant accord avec les Anglais qui tourne à l'escroquerie.

M. Massigli pousse maintenant ses pions pour nous amener au but que poursuivent les Anglais et qui est notre départ total de Syrie et du Liban, eux restant en force en Palestine, Irak et Egypte. . . .

Je désavoue formellement en tant que chef du gouvernement et ministre de la Défense nationale les "propositions" que Massigli nous adresse par son télégramme du 3 janvier.<sup>63</sup>

It is very interesting to note that in the Mémoires, a different version of this letter is printed:



Les Affaires étrangères nous ont engagés dans un soi-disant accord avec les Anglais qui apparaît comme une tromperie.

On pousse maintenant les pions pour nous amener au but que poursuivent les Anglais et qui est notre départ total de la Syrie et du Liban; les Anglais, eux, restant en force en Palestine, en Irak, en Transjordanie et en Égypte. . . .

Je désavoue formellement les propositions que l'ambassade de Londres nous adresse par son télégramme du 3 janvier.<sup>64</sup>

There are two important things to note about this 'new' letter. The first and more obvious difference is that de Gaulle did not once mention Massigli's role in the negotiations. Secondly, by removing the quotation marks around the word "propositions" and by replacing the word "escroquerie" with "tromperie", de Gaulle seemed to be transforming the actions of his ambassadors from a 'crime' to an 'error.' It is almost as if de Gaulle had, in the fulness of time, reassessed Massigli's policy in the Mid-East and had decided that, although it had been harmful to French interests in Africa, it had not been consciously designed to benefit the British, nor had Massigli been duped by them.

Maurice Couve de Murville studied at the law and literature faculties of the University of Paris, as well as the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques. In 1932, he came first in the concours de l'Inspection des Finances, after which he became the financial attaché at the embassy in Brussels. In 1937, he became assistant-director of the Mouvement général des Fonds, which oversees all of France's foreign financial affairs. In this position, he often participated in international negotiations in financial matters. He was, for

instance, involved in the discussions that led to a financial and military agreement between Poland, Great Britain, and France in July 1939.<sup>65</sup>

Couve de Murville remained in the Treasury Department after the Fall of France. In fact, he was promoted, in September 1940, to the directorship of the Mouvement and thus became the president of the finance sub-committee of the Armistice Commission. He remained in this post until his dismissal by the Vichy regime in the spring of 1943, at which time he joined the Free French in Algiers via Spain. When he reached North Africa, he rallied not to de Gaulle, but to General Giraud, the "Connétable"'s rival for the leadership of the Free French. It was Giraud who nominated Couve de Murville to the newly formed Comité français de la libération nationale, in early June 1943. Not surprisingly, he served as Commissaire national aux finances, a position he kept until November 1943. De Gaulle then appointed him the French delegate at the Conseil consultatif pour l'Italie. It was at this time that his conversion from the realm of finance to the realm of diplomacy began. In 1945, he became ambassador to Italy.

Unfortunately, De Gaulle's correspondence reveals little of the general's personal opinions about Couve de Murville, but his appointment to the cabinet clearly indicates that de Gaulle valued his participation. That he was appointed to the CCI was a clear sign of de Gaulle's respect for him because it was this organization that permitted

France to have a say in the post-war situation in Italy after the capitulation of the Italians to the Allies on 3 September 1943.<sup>66</sup>

In an interview given in November 1990, Couve de Murville succinctly assessed the general's long-term political aims. According to the Protestant statesman, the term 'political philosophy' cannot be applied to de Gaulle because "il était essentiellement un homme pragmatique. Cela dit, il avait ses convictions, naturellement, et la principale de ses convictions s'appelait la France."<sup>67</sup>

As Couve de Murville pointed out, the idea that de Gaulle was essentially pragmatic goes against the common wisdom. Nevertheless, it contains a kernel of truth which fits in nicely with our view that de Gaulle was a man who was willing to set aside the prejudices he may have gained from the Catholic and bourgeois milieu in which he was raised, especially when the interests of France were at stake. It is also clear that even during in the early years of his political career, de Gaulle possessed a fairly well-developed political judgement.

#### **Jews**

René Cassin was one of first people to rally to de Gaulle after the latter's famous message of 18 June 1940.<sup>68</sup> And until the Germans occupied all of France on 11 November 1942, he was one of the most distinguished. He had served in the First World War, and afterwards became the president of the Union française des Anciens Combattants. In the

inter-war period, he taught law at a number of universities including Lille and Paris. Between 1924 and 1938, he served as a French representative at the League of Nations.

In the spring and summer of 1939, Cassin effected a rather lengthy voyage in the Far East. Upon his return, he wrote a note<sup>69</sup> stating that he was greatly alarmed about Japanese militarism and the preponderance of the army in its political affairs. He also disapproved of the Japanese attacks on China and urged that the French government do as much as possible to assist the Chinese. It is clear, then, that Cassin was concerned early on with the direction that world events were taking and that his opposition to the capitulation of France to the Axis powers resided in long-held sentiments.

Throughout the Second World War, Cassin filled a number of posts, all of which were directly related to legal and judicial issues. The first task he faced after his arrival in London in June 1940 was the drafting of the documents that were to serve as the basis of Winston Churchill's verbal recognition of the Free French on June 28.<sup>70</sup>

Cassin's account of de Gaulle and the Free French stressed the fact that his relationship with the general was very good. For instance, Cassin recalled that, in one of his first meetings with the "Connétable", "Le Général m'accueillit ce jour-là, comme il devait le faire pendant quatre années consécutives, en m'appelant 'Monsieur le professeur' sur un ton empreint d'une certaine cérémonie, mais aussi de

réelle confiance."<sup>71</sup> Cassin added: "J'estimai . . . indispensable de lui faire part de mon origine juive, facteur important à l'époque."<sup>72</sup> While he did not indicate what the general's response was to this piece of information, Cassin reported that the general assured the leader of the World Jewish Congress that "tous les citoyens français décidés à participer à la libération de la France étaient égaux."<sup>73</sup> Given the context, it is clear that de Gaulle was referring to the Jews of France.

Cassin always insisted that de Gaulle was a very tolerant person. For instance, he observed:

dans les premières semaines de la France Libre à Londres un certain nombre de personnalités juives venues de France faisaient antichambre pour être reçues par le général de Gaulle et n'étaient jamais introduites. Lorsque le général de Gaulle l'a su, . . . il aurait à ce moment manifesté une très vive irritation et le fait ne se serait plus reproduit.<sup>74</sup>

Once again, little can be gleaned from the correspondence, but it is clear that Cassin was indeed close to the general and that his role was of the greatest importance to the Free French. In the Mémoires, for instance, de Gaulle wrote that the "abstention presque générale des personnalités françaises ne rehaussait certes pas le crédit de mon entreprise."<sup>75</sup> In the list of notables who did show up in London, however, Cassin's name appears first. The "Connétable" wrote: "Le Professeur Cassin était mon collaborateur,--combien précieux!--pour tous les actes et documents sur lesquels s'établissaient, à partir de rien, notre structure intérieure et extérieure."<sup>76</sup> It is clear that de

Gaulle fully appreciated Cassin's role and that his expert advice helped the Free French to gain some much needed legitimacy.

In a speech given by de Gaulle on 30 October 1943 on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Alliance française, de Gaulle said that some of France's best known writers and thinkers had remained in France to defend the Nazi regime. He continued by saying "C'est un fait, cependant, que la dignité de l'esprit fut sauve-gardée malgré toutes épreuves. Elle le fut, d'abord, par les plus grands."<sup>77</sup> Some of the great minds in his list include: Philippe Barrès, Georges Bernanos, Henry Bernstein, Eve Curie, Père Ducatillon, André Gide, Joseph Kessel, Jacques Maritain, Jules Romains, and his close associate, René Cassin.

The other important Jewish colleague of the general was Pierre Mendès France. In the inter-war period, Mendès France was a prominent Radical-Socialist. In 1932, he was elected deputy in the Eure and served until 1940 as Under-Secretary of State at the Treasury. His Jewish origins as well as his public opposition to the armistice prompted his arrest by the authorities at Vichy and he was subsequently interned in a concentration camp. He escaped in February of 1942 and joined de Gaulle in London on 1 March. For the first few months, he served as fighter pilot for the French. He was recalled by de Gaulle in November 1943 and sent on an information mission to the United States. After this one

month mission, he was named National Commissioner of Finance and in September 1944, was appointed Minister of Finance. The return to France and the appearance of a new political dynamic within the French government, however, appears to have soured the relations between de Gaulle and Mendès France. In August 1945, three months after the general had asked him to remain a while longer, Mendès France resigned his post because of a fundamental disagreement with the financial policy of the government.

As mentioned earlier, Mendès France fought in an air squadron before joining de Gaulle's organization. Apparently, when his name was first mentioned, the "Connétable" exclaimed "Encore un juif. . . ." <sup>78</sup> Interestingly enough, Mendès France explained this comment by saying: "L'antisémitisme lui était étranger. Mais il [de Gaulle] était sensible aux équilibres et à l'opinion publique qui, elle, et surtout en Afrique du Nord, était de ce point de vue moins innocente que lui. . . ." <sup>79</sup> In fact, this is one of the reasons that compelled Mendès France to join the air force rather than serve the Free French in some political capacity. It was de Gaulle who insisted that Mendès France should play a more substantial role in the Resistance organization.

In fact, Mendès France was one of de Gaulle's close associates between 1943 and 1945. He was often privileged to hear some of the "Connétable"'s most interesting comments. For instance, Mendès France relates that after a

highly successful American trip, which had culminated in a triumphant tour of New York, de Gaulle said: "En somme, mes partisans, ce sont les Nègres et les Portoricains, les malbâtis et les cocus, les émigrés et les juifs?-- Eh oui, mon Général, fait Mendès, il faut vous y faire: vous voilà devenu le chef d'une manière de Front populaire."<sup>80</sup>

Although de Gaulle's tone was rather ironical, it is clear that after his initial surprise, de Gaulle accepted, and perhaps even welcomed, the diversity of his constituency, on the international as well as the national scene.

Although de Gaulle's acquaintance with Léon Blum dated back to at least 1934, we have chosen to place him at the end of our list of Jewish and Protestant personalities because it was he whom de Gaulle had selected to be his successor at the head of the French government. As a result, Blum can be seen as a bridge between de Gaulle's post-war years and his first retirement. A further reason is that unlike the other people dealt with here, Blum never became one of the general's colleagues, although he did indicate his support for de Gaulle fairly early in the war.

Blum was arguably one of the most visible Jewish political figures France has ever had. He was the leader of the SFIO in the 1930's and led the government of the Popular Front, a coalition of left-wing parties that included the Radicals, the Socialists, and the Communists, between 1936 and 1938. Soon after the fall of France, Blum recognised de Gaulle as the leader of the Resistance.<sup>81</sup> He was interned



in July 1940 and deported in 1942. He was freed from a German concentration camp by American soldiers in May 1945.

De Gaulle's first contacts with Blum occurred in the inter-war years and did not begin very auspiciously. In November 1934, Blum wrote a critical article on Vers l'armée de métier, in which de Gaulle advocated a further professionalization of the French army, including the formation of a specialized tank unit. De Gaulle says that Blum attacked his plan "non point en invoquant l'intérêt de la défense nationale, mais au nom d'une idéologie qu'il intitulait démocratique et républicaine, et qui, dans ce qui était militaire, voulait traditionnellement voir un menace pour le régime."<sup>82</sup> In a subsequent meeting in October 1936, the "Connétable" was no more able to convince Blum, even though the latter seemed more receptive to his arguments than previously.<sup>83</sup>

By the spring of 1940, however, the relationship between the two men took a new direction as Blum was now in agreement with de Gaulle's military strategy. In March of that year, de Gaulle was recalled to Paris and asked to write a terse note indicating his ideas about the reorganization of the French army. The note was read verbatim by the new premier, Paul Reynaud, "devant un Chambre sceptique et morne. . . ."<sup>84</sup> In de Gaulle's opinion, most of the deputies who addressed the government's declaration did so because they wanted to express their rancour about having been excluded from the cabinet, and not out of a concern for

the defence of France.<sup>85</sup> De Gaulle says that "Seul Léon Blum, à qui, pourtant, nulle place n'avait été offerte [au cabinet], parla avec élévation. Grâce à lui, [la motion de] M. Paul Reynaud l'emporta, quoique d'extrême justesse."<sup>86</sup>

Blum's correspondence indicates that he wrote several notes, after the general's departure to London, confirming his ralliement to de Gaulle. In a letter of 15 August 1942, Blum said that the government of France "ne peut avoir qu'un chef: l'homme qui a suscité et qui incarne en France l'esprit de la Résistance."<sup>87</sup> Who was this man? In this regard, Blum said "Ce qui fera l'unité de la nation, à l'heure historique, c'est la volonté de ressaisir à la fois son indépendance et sa liberté, et le général de Gaulle personifie aux yeux de tous cette volonté commune."<sup>88</sup> He added that "de Gaulle a pris des engagements publics et catégoriques à l'égard de la Démocratie, à l'égard des droits souverains du peuple, c'est-à-dire de la République."<sup>89</sup> He concluded by saying: "Je me repose absolument sur sa parole."<sup>90</sup>

De Gaulle's correspondence, as usual, does not provide much information on the personal relationship between himself and Blum. Nevertheless, we did find some material. In September 1944, for instance, de Gaulle clearly indicated that he wanted Blum in the highest echelons of the government of the Republic.<sup>91</sup> This wish was repeated when, as mentioned above, de Gaulle asked Blum to lead the government of France (in January 1946) because he believed that the

SFIO would, in all likelihood, become "l'un des plus nombreux [partis] dans la prochaine assemblée et, en outre, s'y trouvera dans l'axe de l'aile prépondérante."<sup>92</sup> And although the general had decided, at that time, that he was retiring from his role as leader of the Provisional Government, he nevertheless told Blum: "Je vous faciliterais les choses."<sup>93</sup> Blum refused the offer and the position saying that the vituperation he suffered during his stay in the Popular Front and his poor health (aggravated by his stay in a concentration camp) did not incline him to repeat the experience. Blum told de Gaulle that Félix Guin, a noted member of the SFIO, was the best choice because he was the French politician who most resembled Prime Minister Attlee, the British Labour leader who defeated Churchill in the 1945 elections. De Gaulle concluded from this exchange that "Blum considèrait sous la seule optique socialiste le grand problème national dont je l'avais entretenu. J'avoue que, pensant aux expériences que le pays venait de faire et dont lui-même avait été victime, j'en éprouvais de la tristesse."<sup>94</sup> De Gaulle's regret at Blum's decision seems genuine. Our evidence, thus, indicates that although the two men respected each other, they often disagreed on fundamental issues.

To sum up this section, it clear that de Gaulle accepted many Protestants and Jews into his movement of resistance and that, in fact, they sometimes became close associates. Their acceptance or refusal of the Vichy regime

was much more important to the "Connétable" than their religious beliefs. Persons such as Philip and Couve de Murville were included, even though the first had ideas radically opposed to the general's and the second had worked for Vichy, because they were an asset to the Resistance. De Gaulle clearly valued their services sufficiently to set aside some fairly important differences.

## CONCLUSION

Throughout the Third Republic, the degree of respect for the religious beliefs of others was one of the clearest indications of whether a tolerant society had been achieved or not. In general, although tensions did ease among the population, it is clear that a number of events helped to maintain a constant level of tension between practising Catholics and Republicans and, by extension, between the former and non-Catholics. In some circles, the idea that the Republic was created and maintained by non-Catholics remained. It should be remembered that this concept was often used as a smokescreen to give legitimacy to ideas that were in fact counter to French 'traditional' values. This is certainly the case of the many fascist groups that emerged during the 1920's and 1930's in France. Nevertheless, many Catholic circles, including the ones with which de Gaulle was associated in the early part of his life, were sincere in their beliefs.

And yet, a rapprochement between practising Catholics and the Republic did occur during the Third Republic, particularly with the advent of the First World War. The Spanish Civil War and, to a lesser extent, the Popular Front, seriously threatened this emerging 'religious détente.' And the disastrous events of the Second World War did not seem destined to ease the re-emerging tensions between the Catholics and the religious minorities of France, namely the Jews and the Protestants. The subsequent

resistance movement, however, did effect a change in the religious dynamics within France's political system: Catholics began to be seen as sincere defenders of the French Republic and non-Catholics were seen with much less suspicion than before by the Catholics.

This 'religious' rapprochement bringing many Jews and protestants to join the Free French cause was helped by the policies of Charles de Gaulle, who put aside the prejudices to which he had been exposed to ensure the effectiveness of the Resistance. Since many of the people who joined him were Jewish and Protestant, de Gaulle's willingness to include every French citizen in the Resistance was often put to the test. As we have seen, de Gaulle's organization was in fact open to everyone who was ready to fight the Vichy regime. In fact, many of the people who joined the general's organizations were of Protestant or Jewish origin; many became close associates.

It is also clear that de Gaulle's openness towards non-Catholics (practising or not) was not motivated by political considerations alone. His actions and statements indicate that he believed that religion was a private concern and that it was up to the individual to decide about matters of conscience. Coupled with de Gaulle's open definition of French nationalism, namely that anyone who was attached to France was (or could be) a full citizen, the "Connétable" was thus easily able to accept any French person into the Resistance effort, regardless of creed.

We have called this religious rapprochement 'French Political Ecumenism.' It is paradoxical that de Gaulle, a nationalist who had gravitated towards circles not known for their open-mindedness towards foreigners and non-Catholics, did much to transform the often exclusionary and xenophobic phenomenon of nationalism into a truly all-inclusive movement, one that would have gained the approval of the most radical and free-thinking Republican revolutionaries.

## ENDNOTES

### List of abbreviations

Works by Charles de Gaulle:

AÉ Articles et Écrits  
 PG Pendant la Guerre, juin 1940-janvier 1946  
 LNC Lettres, Notes et Carnets  
 MG Mémoires de guerre

Other works:

DDF Documents diplomatiques français 1932-1939

### Introduction

<sup>1</sup> The most thorough biography on the general is by far Jean Lacouture, De Gaulle, 3 vols., rev. ed. (Paris: Seuil, 1990). Although Lacouture does, on occasion, briefly look at de Gaulle's relationship with Jews, he never once mentions that a significant number of Protestants joined him in the course of the Resistance.

Michel Winock, Nationalisme, antisémitisme et fascisme en France (Paris: Seuil, 1990) briefly discusses de Gaulle's nationalism (part. 32-35 and 418-35). Winock believes there are two types of nationalism in France: one was open ("ouvert") to outside influences and to all, regardless of ethnicity or religion; the other was 'closed' ("fermé") to 'undesirable elements within society, and was usually xenophobic and anti-Semitic. Winock says that de Gaulle was the prime representative of open nationalism. He does not, however, dwell on the general's Catholicism nor does he examine any of his Jewish (or Protestant) associates.

<sup>2</sup> This is true of works such as: Pierre Accoce, Les Français à Londres 1940-1941 (Paris: Balland, 1989); Michèle Cointet and Jean-Paul Cointet, La France à Londres (Brussels: Complexe, 1990); André Gillois, Histoire secrète des français à Londres (Paris: Hachette, 1973). Yves-Claude Aouate, et al., Les Juifs dans la résistance et la Libération: histoire, témoignages, débats (Paris: Scribe, 1985) looks at the internal resistance. The same is true of Georges Wellers, André Kaspi, and Serge Klarsfeld, La France et la question juive, 1940-1944, proc. of a colloquium of the Centre de documentation Juive contemporaine, 10-12 Mar. 1979 (Paris: Messinger, 1981) 331-33.

<sup>3</sup> The third volume of Gérard Cholvy and Yves-Marie Hilaire, Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine (Toulouse: Privat, 1989) contains a chapter on the Christians and the Jews in the Second World War (66-125), but it concentrates almost exclusively on the interior resistance, and only briefly mentions Maurice Schumann's Catholicism and Philip's



Protestantism (77).

One of the most recent general histories of Jews in France is Annie Perchenet, Histoire des juifs de France (Paris: Cerf, 1988).

Recent publications on the history of the Reformed include: Jean Baubérot, Le Retour des huguenots: la vitalité protestante (Paris: Cerf; Geneva: Labor, 1985); André Encrevé, Les Protestants en France de 1800 à nos jours: histoire d'une réintégration (Paris: Stock, 1985); Philippe Joutard, ed., Historiographie de la réforme (Paris: Delachaux, 1977).

## Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> François Lebrun, Histoire des catholiques en France du XVe siècle à nos jours (Toulouse: Privat, 1980) 368.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in ibid. 370.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Baubérot, "Réforme et esprit républicain," Images de la Réforme au XIXe siècle, ed. Simone Bernard-Griffiths, G. Demerson, and Pierre Glaudes (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1992) 17-34.

<sup>4</sup> Michel Richard, "Les Ministres protestants du Cabinet Waddington (4 février-28 décembre)," Les Protestants dans les débuts de la Troisième République, comp. Encrevé and Richard 199.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 199.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Griffiths, "La Saint-Barthélemy et la symbolique de l'affaire Dreyfus" Images de la Réforme 196.

<sup>7</sup> Baubérot, "Réforme et esprit" 29.

<sup>8</sup> Maurice Larkin, Church and State After the Dreyfus Affair (London: Macmillan, 1974) 24.

<sup>9</sup> Lebrun 371.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 371.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 378.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 379.

<sup>14</sup> Alfred Cobban, France of the Republics 1871-1962, vol. 3 of A Modern History of France (London: Penguin, 1965) 63.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 38.

<sup>16</sup> Lebrun 379.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 39.

<sup>18</sup> Alexander Sedgwick, The Ralliement in French Politics, 1890-1898 (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1965) 153.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 154.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 154.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 152.

<sup>22</sup> Larkin 38.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 67.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 67.

<sup>25</sup> Lebrun, 374.

<sup>26</sup> Although the events of this case are interesting in and of themselves, we will not look at them in any great detail, except to say that the case involved a Jew, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, who was accused of giving French military secrets to the Germans. He was tried and convicted in 1894, but his case was brought back to court in 1898 because of the appearance of some new evidence. At this time, a polarization of opinion occurred between those who wanted a new trial and those who felt that to do so was to attack the integrity of the army and of France. The verdict was overturned only in 1906, however, and only because of the personal intervention of the President. For a concise account of these events, see Cobban 48-56.

<sup>27</sup> Gérard Cholvy, and Yves-Marie Hilaire, Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine, vol. 2 (Toulouse: Privat, 1986) 99.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in ibid. 100.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 97.

<sup>31</sup> Anne-Marie Mauduit, and Jean Mauduit, La France contre la France. La séparation de l'Église et de l'État: 1902-1906 (Paris: Plon, 1974) 317.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 317.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 321. Indeed, Pius made this abundantly clear in his aptly titled encyclical Vehementer Nos issued on 11 February 1906, in which he condemned the Separation as an event that was contrary to the natural and spiritual order of the Universe.

<sup>34</sup> Griffiths, "La Saint-Barthélemy," Images 190. Griffiths suggests that one of the reasons for this flare-up of anti-Protestant feeling was that many prominent Dreyfusards, such as Scheurer-Kestner, Monod, and Pressensé were Protestant (195).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. 200.

<sup>36</sup> Cobban 108.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 108.

<sup>38</sup> Larkin 216.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 217.

<sup>40</sup> Lebrun 403.

<sup>41</sup> Larkin 217.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 220.

<sup>43</sup> Cholvy and Hilaire 327.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> See ibid. 328-29.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 328.

<sup>47</sup> Aline Coutrot, and François G. Dreyfus, Les Forces religieuses dans la société française (Paris: Colin, 1965) 51-2.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 53.

<sup>49</sup> Samuel M. Osgood, French Royalism since 1870, 2nd ed. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1970) 97.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 98.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. 99-100.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 101.

<sup>53</sup> Coutrot and Dreyfus, 58.

<sup>54</sup> Jean Lacouture, De Gaulle, rev. ed., vol. 1 (Paris: Seuil, 1990) 53.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. 173.

<sup>56</sup> Coutrot and Dreyfus, 69.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. 69.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 37.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. 37.

<sup>60</sup> For an excellent discussion of the PCF's policy of la main tendue, see Francis J. Murphy, Communists and Catholics in France, 1936-1939: The Politics of the Outstretched Hand (Gainsville: U of Florida P, 1989).

<sup>61</sup> This is essentially the argument presented in Paul Christophe, 1936 les Catholiques et le Front populaire (1979; Paris: Ouvrièvres, 1986).

<sup>62</sup> René Rémond, and Aline Coutrot, Les Catholiques, le communisme et les crises, 1929-1939 (Paris: Colin, 1960) 176.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. 177.

<sup>64</sup> Mauriac quoted in ibid. 179.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 183.

<sup>66</sup> Coutrot and Dreyfus 81.

<sup>67</sup> For an interesting discussion of Maritain and Simon in the late 1930's and in the Second World War, see John Hellman, "The Anti-Democratic Impulse in Catholicism: Jacques Maritain, Yves Simon, and Charles de Gaulle During World War II," Journal of Church and State 33 (1991): 453-71. Hellman's analysis of de Gaulle is different from ours; this is due in large part to the fact our secondary sources are different.

<sup>68</sup> Estimates range from 60,000 to 120,000.

<sup>69</sup> No details about the persecution of the Jews by the Vichy regime will be provided in this paper; several excellent accounts are available on this subject, including Robert O. Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944 (New York: Knopf, 1972) and Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton, Vichy France and the Jews (New York: Basic, 1981). On the Vichy regime, the Liberation and the Purge, see Robert Aron, Histoire des années 40, 10 vols. (Paris: Tallandier, 1976-77).

<sup>70</sup> Robert Zaretsky, "'Old Grudges and Atavistic Hatreds': Catholics and Protestants in the Department of the Gard, 1940-1942," Historical Reflections 17 (1991): 235.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. 265.

<sup>72</sup> Particularly by the aforementioned Robert Aron.

## Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup> Lacouture, vol. 1, 177-9.

<sup>2</sup> This term is used by Lacouture in his biography of de Gaulle. From the twelfth century to 1627, the connétable was the supreme commander of the Royal Army.

<sup>3</sup> LNC, vol. 1, 72-3.

<sup>4</sup> PG 20.

<sup>5</sup> LNC, vol. 3, 76.

<sup>6</sup> Lacouture, vol. 1, 444.

<sup>7</sup> LNC, vol. 4, 277.

<sup>8</sup> Lacouture, "De Gaulle entre Dieu et César," Notre Histoire Oct. 1990: 15.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 13.

<sup>10</sup> PG, vol. 1, 232.

<sup>11</sup> LNC, vol. 5, 407.

<sup>12</sup> PG, 208.

<sup>13</sup> LNC, vol. 2, 28.

<sup>14</sup> Lacouture, vol. 1, 102.

<sup>15</sup> AÉ 36.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 36.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 52.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 52.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 53.

<sup>20</sup> Lacouture, vol. 1, 191-92.

<sup>21</sup> All of the information on Mayer was taken from Lacouture, vol. 1, particularly 196-205.

<sup>22</sup> Lacouture, vol. 1, 202.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Georges Wellers, André Kaspi, and Serge Klarsfeld, La France et la question juive, 1940-1944, proc. of a colloquium of the Centre de documentation Juive contemporaine, 10-12 Mar. 1979 (Paris: Messinger, 1981) 331-33.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 334.

- <sup>26</sup> PG 321.  
<sup>27</sup> Wellers 273.  
<sup>28</sup> PG 406-7.  
<sup>29</sup> Wellers 337.  
<sup>30</sup> MG, vol. 2, 37, 89, 170.  
<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 170.  
<sup>32</sup> Ibid., vol. 3, 178.  
<sup>33</sup> LNC, vol. 4, 533.  
<sup>34</sup> LNC, vol. 6, 377.  
<sup>35</sup> Ibid. 377.  
<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 120.

### Chapter 3

- <sup>1</sup> LNC, vol. 6, 120.  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 120.  
<sup>3</sup> François Coulet, Vertu des temps difficiles (Paris: Plon, 1967) 23.  
<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 24.  
<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 60.  
<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 61.  
<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 64.  
<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 68.  
<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 73-74.  
<sup>10</sup> LNC, vol. 3, 45-46.  
<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 100.  
<sup>12</sup> Coulet 85.  
<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 89.  
<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 99-106.  
<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 112.

- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. 112.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. 107.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. 161-62.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. 163-64.
- <sup>20</sup> LNC, vol. 4, 563.
- <sup>21</sup> Coulet 215.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid. 226.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid. 234.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid. 234.
- <sup>25</sup> Jacques Soustelle, Envers et contre tout, vol. 1 (Paris: Lafon, 1947) 29.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid. 30.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid. 94.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. 203.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid. 203.
- <sup>30</sup> LNC, vol. 4, 206.
- <sup>31</sup> Soustelle, Envers, vol. 1, 276-7.
- <sup>32</sup> See DDF, 1st ser., vol. 12, no. 188.
- <sup>33</sup> See ibid., 2nd ser., vol. 4, no. 148.
- <sup>34</sup> See ibid., 2nd ser., vol. 5, 52.
- <sup>35</sup> See ibid., 2nd ser., vol. 4, no. 243, and vol. 5, no. 322. All three reports were sent to the minister in the first half of 1937.
- <sup>36</sup> Lacouture, vol. 1, 722.
- <sup>37</sup> We have been unable to determine the nature of the warning. The likeliest possibility, given the reference to the Allied disembarkment in Africa, is that de Gaulle was referring to a possible Allied invasion of France which would be effected without the help or permission of the Free French.
- <sup>38</sup> LNC, vol. 4, 523.
- <sup>39</sup> Lacouture, vol. 2, 188.

<sup>40</sup> A complete account of Viénot's participation in this organization can be found in Fernand L'Huilier, Dialogues franco-allemands 1925-1933 (Strasbourg: Publications de la Faculté des lettres de l'Université Strasbourg, 1971).

<sup>41</sup> Reprinted in L'Huilier 147-53.

<sup>42</sup> L'Huilier 153.

<sup>43</sup> LNC, vol. 5, 270.

<sup>44</sup> Lacouture, vol. 1, 800.

<sup>45</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, "L'Idée d'Eurafrique et le débat colonial franco-allemand de l'entre-deux-guerre," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 22 (1975): 446-75.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 446-75.

<sup>47</sup> Loïc Philip, "Le Portrait," introduction, André Philip, by A. Philip (Paris: Beauchesne, 1988) 20.

<sup>48</sup> Ageron 470.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 471.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 472-73.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Lacouture, vol. 1, 588.

<sup>52</sup> For a brief account of this meeting, see Lacouture 544-46.

<sup>53</sup> Lacouture 588-89.

<sup>54</sup> LNC, vol. 4, 391.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., vol. 5, 310-1.

<sup>56</sup> Jean Baillou, Les Affaires étrangères et le corps diplomatique français, vol. 2: 1870-1980 (Paris: CNRS, 1984) 354.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. 387.

<sup>58</sup> DDF, 2nd ser., vol. 11, 348-89.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 2nd ser., vol. 11, 349-53.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 2nd ser., vol. 11, 352-53.

<sup>61</sup> Presumably, these telegrams were critical of the Nazi regime; unfortunately, our source does not specify their content. Baillou 554.



<sup>62</sup> Massigli 15.

<sup>63</sup> LNC, vol. 6, 173.

<sup>64</sup> MG, vol. 3, 645.

<sup>65</sup> See DDF, 2nd ser., vol. 17, no. 108.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 691.

<sup>67</sup> Maurice Couve de Murville, "Entretien avec Maurice Couve de Murville," Journées internationales organisées par l'Institut Charles-de-Gaulle, proc. of a conference held at UNESCO, Paris, 19-24 Nov. 1990 (Paris: Institut Charles-de-Gaulle, 1990) 1-D039.

<sup>68</sup> De Gaulle usually included Cassin in his list of earliest collaborators. See, for instance, the speech he made on 27 February 1944, PG, 376.

<sup>69</sup> Published in DDF, 2nd ser., vol. 17, no. 197.

<sup>70</sup> René Cassin, Les Hommes partis de rien: le réveil de la France abattue, 1940-41 (Paris: Plon, 1975) 118.

<sup>71</sup> Cassin 118.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 118.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 138.

<sup>74</sup> According to an account given by Henri Michel in Wellers, 371.

<sup>75</sup> MG, vol. 1, 84.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. 84.

<sup>77</sup> PG 331.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 737.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 797.

<sup>81</sup> Léon Blum, La prison et le procès, 1940-1945 (Paris: Michel, 1955) 379, vol. 5 of L'Oeuvre de Léon Blum.

<sup>82</sup> MG, vol. 1, 15.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. 18-20.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. 25.

- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Ibid. 25.
- 87 Blum 357.
- 88 Ibid. 358.
- 89 Ibid. 360-61.
- 90 Ibid. 360-61.
- 91 LNC, vol. 5, 307.
- 92 MG, vol. 3, 259.
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 Ibid. 260.

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