FRANCE UNDER THE ARMISTICE

By PAUL - FRANÇOIS CARCOPINO

"I desire Germany's victory," said Pierre Laval, the Chief of the French Government, a few days ago, almost exactly two years after France signed the armistice with Germany in the forest of Compiègne. In these two years France has not held the limelight of world politics. The attention of the world was directed mainly at the states still involved in the struggle or those about to enter it. Only now and again did she appear on the front page, when German and Dakar, Syria and Madagascar were attacked, when bombs fell on Paris, or when Laval entered Vichy.

During the bitter years following a military catastrophe, France was occupied in building something new from the wreckage and, above all, in trying to find her bearings. The road from the traditions of 1789 to co-operation in a totalitarian Europe, the choice between old ideas which, though discredited, were still dear to them, and the recognition of new facts, were not easy for the people of France. With their former enemies there is an armistice, not yet peace. Their former friends are dropping bombs on them and, piece by piece, are robbing the only thing they managed to save unscathed from the collapse—their colonial empire.

France's path during these two years is described here with great outward restraint, which makes this article appear almost like a document, and at the same time with deep inner emotion. It is written by a young author living in East Asia, who as a French patriot renders in it an account of these two years.

Important documents related to the article, to which we particularly call the attention of our readers, will be found in the appendix.—K.M.

PRELUDE

If one wishes to understand the essentials of the French foreign as well as domestic policy of the last two years, it is worth while bearing in mind some of the previous tendencies of French public opinion. This was characterized by three main trends: first, an Anglophile intellectual orientation, a consequence of the Franco-British alliance of 1914-18, persisting in spite of a certain anti-English feeling on the part of those who were well acquainted with their own and England's history; secondly, a very strong anti-German sentiment among many war veterans, to whom the victory of 1918 did not bring the realization of the promises which it was held to contain and who watched with anguish the specter of a new conflict arise; thirdly, social agitation, skillfully maintained and exploited, frequently of foreign origin but all too often amply justified by the selfishness and narrow-mindedness of the leading class.

France was torn into many camps. There were those who supported "war at any price" or "the war to end war"; those whom propaganda managed to convince of an inevitable war and who preferred to have it at once, all the more so since they hoped—thanks to the Maginot Line and the blockade—that it would be without real fighting. There were those who accepted Munich, not as a disastrous "capitulation," but as a step towards new agreements, towards a readjustment of international relations, either out of sympathy for the new forms of government of the neighboring coun-
tries or, above all, out of a reflex of the instinct of preservation, because they vaguely sensed the weakness of French preparedness and the danger of Anglo-Saxon selfishness. Finally there were those of no fixed opinion—a dangerous majority which let itself be tossed about and maneuvered from one direction to another, and which believed in turn in the success of all policies, from Briand’s to Poincaré’s, from Pierre Laval’s to Léon Blum’s, and which rejected them in turn with the same haste, usually without awaiting the results. In these masses, most of them of the working class, one tendency was discernible: “We have tried everything except Communism. Why not this?”

Beside these currents others were flowing which were expressed by the following violent feelings:

Against Laval who made himself unpopular by his policy of deflation and by the signing of the Italo-French agreements;

Against the Jews, who, through the coming into power of their coreligionist Léon Blum, were enabled rapidly to invade the brain of the State—Ministries, Chief Administrations, etc., and against the Freemasons, who were compromised by the Stavisky Scandal;

Finally, against the regime itself, of which the most reasonable among competent French politicians had for many years urged that reform was indispensable.

Arising from these contradictory currents of thought France successively saw the bloody demonstrations of February 6, 1934; the attempted reform and fall of the Doumergue Government in the same year; the campaigns for and against the policy of sanctions against Italy during the Abyssinian war; the elections of 1936 with the slogan, “Bread, Peace, Liberty,” and their result—the Popular Front; the strikes and the military occupation of factories; the Munich agreements; the war of 1939; and the catastrophe of 1940.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE ARMISTICE

For eight months after the outbreak of the war, very little had happened along the Franco-German frontier. But on May 10, 1940, the German attack began. The German armies moved with unexpected speed, and within a few days the position of the Allies became critical. New leaders were needed. On May 16, Marshal Pétain, French Ambassador in Spain, was summoned to the Government by Paul Reynaud. On the 18th he was in Paris. On May 21, General Weygand, recalled from Syria, took over the High Command of the Allied forces. He immediately realized the hopelessness of the situation. But just as in 1938-39 there had been a party of “war at any price,” so in May and June 1940 there was a party of “war to the bitter end.” It was against this party that the Marshal had to support General Weygand’s point of view regarding the request for an armistice. Urged as inevitable by Weygand since May 25, it was demanded in writing on June 6 but constantly refused by Paul Reynaud.

It would be useless to look for anything in the request for an armistice but a military necessity. No one will deny the absolute sincerity, frankness, and loyalty of the Marshal, especially as they are confirmed over and over again by events. We recall his opinion:

“What must be emphasized first is the profound illusion which France, together with her allies, had concerning their true military strength and the efficiency of economic weapons at their disposal,” said Marshal Pétain on June 25, 1940, the day after the armistice; and several months later, on October 11, he added:

“On a day in September 1939, without even having dared to consult the Chambers, war was declared, a war practically lost in advance. We knew neither how to avoid it nor how to prepare for it.”

Against the coalition of “to the bitter end-ists,” Marshal Pétain and General Weygand succeeded, thanks to their firmness and perseverance as well as to the tragic rhythm of events, in getting together a majority even among the members of the Cabinet led by Paul Reynaud. On June 11 the Government moved to Tours. Up to the last minute,
Paul Reynaud allowed the French to hope for a resistance which the military leaders had recognized as impossible and in which he did not believe himself. On June 13, in the face of the inadequacy of British aid, Paul Reynaud made a last and vain appeal to America and addressed a telegram to President Roosevelt. On June 14, the Government reached Bordeaux. There were no signs of American aid. The following day, Paul Reynaud resigned. His place was taken by Marshal Petain.

THE ROAD TO COMPIÈGNE

The first government of Marshal Pétain, constituted on June 15, 1940, at 11 p.m., was a government of circumstance. Formed by a reshuffle of the Reynaud Cabinet, from which the supporters of "war to the bitter end" had been excluded and replaced by members of the Chambers who had been present at Bordeaux and who approved the request for an armistice, it was constituted with the utmost urgency in order to induce the enemy to commence the pourparlers which had already been too long deferred.

On June 16 Pétain informed the nation: "Tonight I addressed the enemy to ask him if he is prepared to seek with me, as among soldiers, after the battle and in all honor, the means of bringing hostilities to a close."

But the coalition of politicians had not said its last word. The days that followed saw a succession of various maneuvers which attempted to make the Government go back on its decision or to thwart that decision through a departure of the President of the Republic, which would deprive the Marshal of all constitutional authority.

It was during those tragic days that the political support of Pierre Laval made it possible for the Marshal to frustrate all intrigues. On June 23 he demanded from President Lebrun the nomination of Laval as Minister of State. Without the spontaneous assembly of the members of the Chambers, first at the Town Hall of Bordeaux, then at the Municipal Atheneum, without the resulting majority, without the insistent, ardent, impassioned action of Laval, the invasion would have been total and France deprived of her leaders in the hour of her greatest need.

Thus wrote Deputy Jean Montigny in his book, The Truth About a Tragic Month in Our History.

But simultaneously England stepped in. On June 22, Churchill addressed the French Government in inexcusable terms, dissociating in advance the French people from its Government and appealing to them to desert. The same day, over the same radio station, the former Undersecretary of State for National Defense of the Reynaud Government, General de Gaulle, who was on a mission to London and who had refused to return to France, supported that appeal and urged rebellion. But events took their course.

On June 22, at 6.50 p.m. (German Summer Time), the armistice convention between France and Germany was signed in the forest of Compiègne (for excerpts see the documentary appendix); and on June 24 that between France and Italy, in Rome at 7.15 p.m. On June 25, at 12.35 midnight, hostilities ceased.

VICHY AND MERS-EL-KEBIR

On June 27 Marshal Pétain reshuffled his Cabinet; Pierre Laval remained Vice-
President of the Council. On June 29 the Government left Bordeaux and established itself for two days at Clermont, where once Pope Urban II had proclaimed the first Crusade. On July 1 it was installed at Vichy.

On July 3 a British squadron opened fire on French units anchored at Mers-el-Kebir (Oran). Against a France for whose defeat it carried a great share of responsibility, her ally of yesterday aimed its cannons. The tragedy continued. Professor Georges Portmann, French delegate to the Armistice Commission of Wiesbaden (formed on the basis of the armistice convention), hurried to Vichy. Received at once by General Weygand, he put before him the necessity of an immediate change-over of French policy. "The British," he said, "have made the gesture which releases us from their grasp—let us profit by it."

Weygand agreed. Portmann saw Laval, whom he found favorable to his suggestion. Then, with Laval, he went to Pétain, whom Portmann's arguments did not take by surprise. It was obvious that he had already visualized the possibility now opened up to him. From that moment on, the idea of collaboration with Germany was retained by the Marshal: "I would have to meet Hitler," he said. Then, turning to Portmann, he added: "I will go and see him where he wants, where he wants; for I am sure that France will derive lasting benefit from such a meeting."

THE MARSHAL'S PROGRAM

The outlines of the Marshal's policy were already appearing. It was going to be necessary "to learn the lesson from lost battles": at home, to reinstate order, to break definitely with the errors of a recent past, to search for solid foundations before beginning to reconstruct; abroad, to direct the country towards the defense of her interests, "towards a national egoism which years of democratic education and propaganda have taught her to forget."

On July 11 the Marshal outlined his program:

The Government is facing one of the most difficult situations France has ever known. We must re-establish the country's communications, send every man back to his home, to his work, ensure food supplies. We must negotiate and conclude peace . . . . France, vanquished in heroic battles, abandoned yesterday and attacked today by England, for whom she had made so many and such hard sacrifices, remains face to face alone with her destiny.

The Marshal also formulated the motto of the new France: "Le Travail, la Famille, la Patrie" (work, family, country).

The armistice left France defeated, cut in two by a line of demarcation. Ravaged cities, disrupted communications, millions of human beings dispersed, destroyed provisions—everything proclaimed an almost irremediable defeat . . . . Because she had neglected to negotiate more quickly, as her military leaders had advised her, and also because she was anxious to do nothing which could have repercussions on her defaulting ally, France had to accept severe terms. [E. Fabre, Sueter Testimonial: France One Year After the Armistice.]

It was necessary to act quickly and to set to work immediately.

THE FIRST GOVERNMENT OF THE NEW STATE

In a constitutional manner Marshal Pétain obtained, on July 10, the necessary powers for the reconstruction of France from the regime which the military disaster had brought with it, i.e., from the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, sitting together as a "National Assembly" according to the constitution of 1875. On that day, Marshal Pétain became the Chief of the new "French State."

His second government (the first one of the new state) still included, under military leadership, some politicians. It was a government, however, already clearly directed towards making use of competent men whom the former parliamentary regime had not sufficiently utilized because of conditions and regulations which forced upon the President of the Council the constant worry of keeping a majority.

To the difficulties of every kind resulting from the war was added the campaign of disunion among the French, a campaign led abroad by other Frenchmen, some of whom may have been acting in good faith but the majority of whom were only serving their own interests. But, after a period of confusion...
and discouragement, order was reinstated. Frenchmen began to breathe and live once more, to “live as usual.” And if it is there that, according to some, the miracle was accomplished by Marshal Pétain, this miracle was accomplished without the French being conscious of it, without France clearly realizing what, in all her misfortune, was exceptional and privileged in her lot.

A reshuffle of the Cabinet removed from the Government the last of the politicians—with the exception of Pierre Laval—who were now replaced by experts. Ripert, Dean of the Faculty of Law of Paris, for instance, became Minister of Public Instruction, and Berthelot, the Director General of the National Society of Railways, was made Minister of Communications. General Weygand left the Ministry of National Defense, which was abolished, and was charged with co-ordinating the administration and defense of French Africa in the capacity of General Delegate of the Government. The work of rehabilitation and renovation already undertaken was continued at home, while Laval conducted important negotiations with Germany.

PRESERVING THE UNITY OF FRANCE

The French, influenced by the supporters of the fallen regime who were beginning to hope once again for God knows what return to the past, did not all realize as they should the difficulties and the extent of the task to be accomplished. On numerous occasions Marshal Pétain tried to clarify their opinions:

I want them to know too that I understand their impatience, their exasperation even, at the all too frequent inadequacy of the remedies brought to their ills... I have on many occasions discovered with real pain that the Government’s intentions were travestied and distorted by base propaganda, and measures ripey reflected upon were prevented from bearing fruit by the inertia, inability, or betrayal of too great a number of the agents who were to carry them out. [August 13, 1940].

But if he succeeded in touching the hearts and minds of those who made the effort to understand, which he asked of them, there still remained far too many who, although in good faith, refused to understand.

To eliminate them, or to coerce them, would doubtless have accelerated a disunity which dissenting propaganda is still trying at great cost to maintain. With great wisdom, Marshal Pétain employed moderation, even when this might have appeared—a priori and to some people—unfavorable to the interests of the nation. From the very beginning, unity was what seemed to him fundamental. He never ceased to desire it, to urge it on every occasion:

The salvation of France, which would be endangered by our discords, will be the reward of our union. [August 13, 1940.] France has lost the war... But her unity—a unity forged by a thousand years of effort and sacrifice—must remain intact. It must not be compromised. [September 3, 1940.]

The results were not long in appearing:

Three million refugees and two million mobilized men have been sent back to their homes. The majority of the bridges destroyed by war have been reopened to traffic. Transportation has been re-established almost entirely. In less than six weeks, an immense legislative task, a task which no government would have dared to undertake, has been accomplished... The new regime is national in foreign policy, hierarchic in domestic policy, co-ordinated and supervised in economics, and, above all, social in its attitude and in its institutions. [Radio address, October 9, 1940.]

Thus, from July to October 1940, although he had to reinstate order among
people and things, the Marshal nevertheless already accomplished the essence of the most urgent reforms which for several years the majority of public opinion had been crying for: reform of the Government, purging of the administration, measures against Freemasonry and Jews, social justice.

At the same time he studied and laid down the outlines of his plan of action. But before starting on its realization, he no doubt preferred to feel himself supported, in this task by the enthusiasm of the French. By frequent appeals for unity, by as many personal contacts as possible, by journeys through the unoccupied zone, he sought to obtain this support, for, he realized: "A revolution is only accomplished if the nation understands and calls for it, if the people follow the Government on the path of necessary renovation."

Marshal Pétain presented his plan of action to the people of France on October 11 in a message which, because of its fundamental importance, is reprinted in English among the Documents of this issue. Here for the first time the idea of European collaboration was clearly expressed, as well as the problem of Franco-German relations, toward the solution of which Laval had been working since July.

THE HANDSHAKE OF MONTOIRE

On October 24, 1940, Chancellor Hitler and Marshal Pétain met in the Führer’s special train at the little station of Montoire. Six days later the Marshal, in a radio speech reprinted in the appendix, informed the people of France of what he called "the first step towards the rehabilitation of our country."

In order successfully and with the indispensable authority to carry out his negotiations, Laval received from the Marshal on October 28 the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. On November 10, the Laval-Göring negotiations and conversations in Paris bore their first fruits in the form of repatriation of the soldiers interned in Switzerland, release from captivity of fathers of four or more children, and other alleviations. On November 18, Deputy G. Scapini, who had been blinded in the Great War and who is in charge of the administration of prisoners of war with the rank of ambassador, was able to announce appreciable headway concerning the question of prisoners of war; but he said:

The war is not yet finished. If the French still regard Germany as an enemy, it is childish to ask her to release prisoners of war. Moreover, how can one know whether France has understood the harsh lesson which history has just given her?

Urgent voices were raised, like that of the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, Monsignor Baudrillart, on November 20:

The Marshal has pronounced words which are not pleasing to imaginations too long poisoned by ready-made phrases which are not considered opinions. These words which the Marshal has let spring from his upright and well-informed conscience are words of co-operation and collaboration. In the mouth of a man of honor so absolutely disinterested, who would really have desired nothing in the world but a little rest instead of endless battles, such words cannot fall under suspicion.

But for the people to follow the Government on the path of necessary renovation it was necessary for the Marshal once again to modify his Government: "For high reasons of domestic policy," he dissociated himself on December 14 from Laval, whom he replaced by Pierre-Étienne Flandin, "who seemed to him more suited than his predecessor to follow with the support of public opinion a policy of rapprochement with Germany."

(Communiqué of the Ministry of Information at Vichy, December 15.)

Communist and de Gaullist propaganda, in spite of the Marshal’s precise declarations, made haste to interpret the event as a change of direction and a halt in the policy of collaboration. Would that
interpretation influence German opinion? It really seemed as if Flandin would not be able to resume, as he doubtless wished, the negotiations which had been broken off.

THE NEW STATE

The political crisis of December resulted in a campaign of the Paris press insisting on the convocation of the Chambers. The Marshal's reply to this was the creation on January 24, 1941, of a National Council, the 188 members of which were chosen by him. Among these were members of the Chambers; politicians such as de la Roque and Doriot; outstanding men of letters; musicians; savants; and churchmen. It was divided into committees, each with its particular field of study, as, for instance, Committee of Trade Organization, Committee for the Study of the New Constitution, etc., which only assembled when convoked by the Chief of State and which retained no legislative or executive power.

The beginning of 1941 saw the first renewal of contact between Marshal Pétain and Pierre Laval and numerous conversations. On February 10, Admiral Darlan was designated as possible successor to the Chief of State. The press foresaw great changes among the collaborators of the Marshal; and the conversations between Admiral Darlan and Laval in Paris gave rise to a belief in the early return of the latter to the Government.

On February 25 the new Cabinet was formed, in which Admiral Darlan retained the portfolios of the Navy, the Interior, and Foreign Affairs. From this developed a tendency towards reducing the political personnel, which from then on was composed, apart from the Marshal, of four members: Admiral Darlan, General Huntziger, J. Barthélémy, and P. Caziot, assisted by Undersecretaries of State. It really seemed as if the ministerial personnel had achieved the cohesion hoped for by the Marshal. From then on it only changed once, one year later, to make way for a new government, this time led by Laval. To show more clearly the differences between the organization of the Third Republic and the new state, we have prepared two charts.

FRANCE'S NEUTRALITY

France is not in a position to carry on an aggressive policy. She must depend almost solely on the generosity and understanding of those who were her friends or enemies; she must carry out the obligations arising from the armistices she has signed, even at the cost of renewed sacrifice of the lives of her children.

She has defended against British aggression her colonial empire when it was attacked at Dakar, in equatorial Africa, in Syria, and in Madagascar. She has signed economic and military treaties with Japan to safeguard her interests in the organization of Greater East Asia. She has authorized and supported the creation of a "French Legion of Volunteers against Bolshevism," which is taking part shoulder to shoulder with German troops in the struggle against the Soviets. She has negotiated special agreements with America regarding Martinique, Guiana, and the Antilles and the provisioning of North Africa, and she has not appealed in vain to the generosity of America, who has sent some food but with whom relations have been strained of late.

In a world torn by war, France's present neutral position is very precarious. There is no doubt that the momentary loss of more of her colonies would influence her attitude toward the nations involved.

Everything points to the fact that the growing intercontinental aspect of the conflict will hasten the creation of a European unity, which is inevitable; and the Franco-German collaboration accepted and followed by Marshal Pétain is nothing but an indispensable step towards its realization.

FREED FROM THE TUTELAGE OF MONEY

In the domestic accomplishments of the last two years, one must distinguish between those that are only of a temporary nature and those that will serve as a basis for the general reform of French institutions.
### THE THIRD REPUBLIC
(Constitution of 1875)

#### EXECUTIVE POWER

- **President of the Republic**
  - elected for a period of 7 years by the two Chambers united in the "National Assembly"

**Government**
- President of the Council (=Premier)
- called in by the President of the Republic
- Ministers and Undersecretaries
  - chosen by the President of the Council; remain in power as long as they enjoy the confidence of Parliament

**Administration**
- 90 departments, each headed by a prefect (a career official)

#### LEGISLATIVE POWER

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<th>Parliament (two chambers)</th>
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<td><strong>Senate</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chamber of Deputies</strong></td>
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<td>elected by limited suffrage. One third renewed every 3 years</td>
<td>elected for a period of 4 years by universal suffrage</td>
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#### JUDICIARY POWER
- Council of State
- Court of Reversals
- Courts of Appeal
- Tribunals

### "ÉTAT FRANÇAIS"
(Present Organization since April 1942)

#### EXECUTIVE POWER

**CHIEF OF STATE (Marshal Pétain)**

- Chief of the Government (Pierre Laval) responsible to the Chief of State
- Ministers, Secretaries of State
  - chosen by the Chief of the Government and responsible to him but nominated by the Chief of State
- Undersecretaries of State

**Administration** (under reorganization)

#### LEGISLATIVE POWER

**National Council** (under reorganization) divided into committees

#### JUDICIARY POWER
- Supreme Court of Justice
- Military Court
- State Tribunals
- Court of Reversals
- Courts of Appeal
- Tribunals
Among the first, let us note the provisional reorganizations in administration: attempt at decentralization; regrouping of several départements into administrative regions under the guidance of a “Regional Prefect,” a kind of provincial governor furnished with extensive powers but personally responsible for his administration; solutions brought to the problem of food supplies; economic reorganizations, the first experiment of which delivered them into the power of the trusts. This was contrary to the will of the Marshal, as was confirmed by his dismissing the Minister responsible. On August 12, 1941, he once again stressed the social nature of the struggle: “I intend that our country should be freed from the most despicable tutelage—that of money.” All these provisional reforms were destined more or less to undergo a thorough reshuffle after the country has been freed or after peace has been signed.

The chief measures destined to serve as a basis for the new construction refer to social organization: the Labor Charter and the rural corporations. The legislative work in this field is immense but still too little known to be discussed in detail. The Marshal summarized its leading principles in his New Year’s message of January 1942: “Pre-eminence of labor, hierarchy of values, sense of responsibility, mutual confidence within the trades.”

On September 15, 1940, in an article which appeared in La Revue des Deux Mondes, Marshal Pétain, after having successively rejected liberalism, capitalism, and communism, concluded: “The National-Socialist idea of the pre-eminence of work and of its essential reality as compared to the fictitious value of money is one which we have all the less difficulty in accepting as it is part of our classical heritage.”

On the following foundations, already practically in force since September 1939, French economy was reorganized: the franc has ceased to be based on gold; money is used only for domestic payments; inflation and rise in prices are avoided by strict State control, while the circulation of money is reduced by the enforced use of bank cheques.
September 4, 1939, from a state of peace to a state of war and in acts which have further aggravated the consequences of the situation thus created."

The first to be accused were Guy La Chambre and Pierre Cot, both former Ministers of Aviation; then Edouard Daladier, General Gamelin, Léon Blum, Georges Mandel, and Paul Reynaud were successively accused. On September 14 they were arrested and interned in the prison at Bourrassol.

But the preliminary inquiry in a trial of such dimensions, under particularly difficult conditions of investigation, entailed lengthy delays. Public opinion became restless at the delay in determining the extent of guilt, and the ensuing unrest decided the Marshal to intervene himself.

On August 12, 1941, he announced the formation of a "Council of Political Justice," which he charged with making a pronouncement before October 15 on the responsibilities incurred. On October 16 he announced: "The Council of Political Justice has handed me its decisions. They are clear, complete, and perfectly motivated." Therefore he ordered as political sanction the detention of Daladier, Blum, Gamelin, Reynaud, and Mandel at the Fortress of Pourtalet, while the other accused, whose responsibility was recognized as being less serious, were to remain interned at the prison of Bourrassol.

Meanwhile, the Court of Riom remained in session. On February 17, 1942, the trial opened. But in the first hearings devoted to the questioning of the accused the political atmosphere of the past regime reappeared within the frame of the Palace of Justice. The accused politicians tried to shift all responsibility for the military disaster onto the High Command and the Army, while General Gamelin refused to speak.

The questioning of the accused and the hearing of the first witnesses did not seem to have thrown any light on the proceedings. The litigious skill of the attorneys, the habitual political tricks of the accused, distorted the atmosphere and appeared to triumph over the desire for clarity expressed by Marshal Pétain.

On April 14, 1942, a decree of the Chief of State suspended the current proceedings after twenty-four hearings and ordered a supplementary inquiry to redirect the examination to the original starting-point—"the transition from a state of peace to a state of war"—instead of basing it solely on the responsibility for the military defeat.

**MORAL REHABILITATION**

"It is above all an intellectual and moral rehabilitation that I ask of you." In pronouncing these words in 1940, Marshal Pétain knew that he would have the entire approval of the French people in the execution of measures indispensable to the carrying out of the rehabilitation: punishment of deserters, prosecution of those responsible for the political and military disaster, revision of naturalizations, solution of the Jewish problem, etc.

The abuses of the defunct regime have given birth to a strong feeling on the part of public opinion against the Jews and Freemasons. The measures for the defense of race, family, youth, and trades taken by the new French State, shocking as they might seem to a spirit imbued with democratic doctrines, have none the less certainly been widely approved by the French; and it would not be correct to see in them—as Anglo-Saxon propaganda would have us believe—nothing but an attempt at alignment with the domestic policies of the Axis countries. In order to further this rehabilitation, Marshal Pétain appealed to the veterans whom he reorganized into the "French Legion of War Veterans" on August 30, 1940.
FOR YOUTH AND THE FAMILY

As early as 1934, the Marshal had expounded his ideas on the vital problem of education. From the very day after the armistice, it was one of the first reforms that he undertook. His principles were:

To aim at a genuine unity of education through abolishing the double form of primary and secondary education, the only result of which was to accentuate social differences;

To reimburse, first teachers, then pupils, with the sense of nationalism, which pernicious ideologies had dulled;

To reinstate religion in its proper position in the moral education of French youth through prescribing moral programs for public schools and through freeing private schools from the laws of exception which hindered their development;

Finally, to encourage the physical regeneration of the race through a reduction of the scholastic programs and through compulsory sports.

If vast changes took place and numerous reforms were carried out during the period from July 1940 to March 1942, this was much more in the technical and moral than in the political field. And if the different Secretaries of State for National Education were all chosen from the intellectual elite of the nation, the present holder of that office, Abel Bonnard, is almost the only one to have shown a clearly defined political tendency. In doing this, he is following the directions of the Marshal which appeared in La Revue des Deux Mondes of August 1940: “Life is not neutral: it consists in taking sides boldly.”

Finally, France has replaced the incredible “Ministry of Leisure” of the Popular Front by the Ministries of Family, of Youth, and of Public Health. The family, the chief cell in the new order, is receiving at the hands of the new State the protection and respect due to it. Youth, “springtime of the nation,” is no longer left to itself; it has become the constant care of the Chief of State and his collaborators.

The youth groups and organizations already existing are being simultaneously maintained and united. There are, for instance, the “Chantiers de Jeunesse,” vast open-air labor camps in which 90,000 young Frenchmen, demobilized under the armistice, are assembled, to work in the service of the country in fields varying in accordance with local requirements and consisting of forestry work, or the building of roads, trails, or stadia. Others reassemble the youth of France after school and strive to give it the social and physical training complementary to intellectual and sport education. They will make use of the nation’s youth for such social and national tasks as may arise.

These reforms and the principles which inspire them are nothing but the first spark setting off the gigantic task of the rebirth of a nation in the universal chaos of a world torn by a war which is being conducted on all its continents.

THE RETURN OF LAVAL

With the return of Pierre Laval on April 18, the functions of the Chief of State, Marshal Pétain, were separated from those of the Chief of the Government, Laval. The personnel of the Government henceforth represents a homogeneous policy approved by the Marshal, who remains the arbiter of the national destiny. At the same time, his chosen successor, Admiral Darlan, is placed by his direct orders outside the Government and receives among his powers the supreme command of all the forces of land, sea, and air.

While a million and a half of her sons are prisoners of war in Germany, France is forced to fight at home against Bolshevist propaganda which is exploiting all the difficulties growing from defeat and continued war, such as division of the country into two zones and difficulties of food supply.

After two months in office, equipped with the necessary political powers, and enjoying the confidence of the Chief of
State, Pierre Laval is now leading France towards a realistic policy.

"It is my desire to restore normal and confident relations with Germany and Italy," he declared in his speech of June 21. "A new Europe will inevitably emerge from this war. This Europe is often spoken of. It is a term to which France has not yet become very accustomed. One loves one's country because one loves one's village. As for me, a Frenchman, I wish that tomorrow we may be able to love a Europe in which France will have a place worthy of her. In order to build up this Europe, Germany is now waging gigantic battles. She, together with the others, must consent to immense sacrifices, and does not even spare her youth, which she is withdrawing from factory and field to throw it into the battle.

"I desire Germany's victory because, without it, Bolshevism will spread everywhere."

But, as does the Marshal, the Chief of the Government needs the support of the country, which alone "can turn a rational policy into a fertile policy."

It will prepare France to play her role in the new Europe in obtaining for her friendships in the world which will turn out to be of the greatest use in the days after peace is restored.

In this way, in one of the most tragic periods of French history, only the presence of Marshal Pétain made it possible to ensure the necessary continuity of views. Frequently repeated changes, which the enemies of the new State interpret as signs of weakness, are actually nothing but the reflection of successive efforts to carry out a well-defined, determinedly followed program, a program which must satisfy hopes which are purely French although it coincides with the way such hopes have been realized by France's neighbors.
Grape harvest in the Champagne
THE TRACKS OF WAR IN NORTH AFRICA

The Libyan Desert seen from the air after the passing of a motorized column.