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The United States Foreign Relations with the Vichy
Government, 1940-1942

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1. Background and the Beginning of the War

When the United States turned its back on Europe in the spring of 1919 with the defeat of the Treaty of Versailles in the Senate, it thought it had succeeded in putting the problems of Europe behind a barrier of an ocean three thousand miles wide. Each time it had an opportunity to, or found the necessity to, look across its shoulder toward the Old World, there were found problems which had grown larger partly because of this wish to rid ourselves of responsibilities which unaccustomed leadership had forced upon us. In the twenty year breathing spell which the world enjoyed between the two wars, the United States was forced to mature and accept its new role in world affairs. That maturity was not gained without a few final spasms of puberty.

It is somewhat difficult to ascertain the real causes for the isolationist sentiment following the Great Crusade. Perhaps it was caused in part by disillusion with the peace, perhaps in part by partisan feelings, perhaps in part by the age of "wonderful nonsense" in which this country tried to forget the past and to enter a new age of prosperity. And yet, the past could not be forgotten, for the United States had been since its founding, a nation committed to isolation and internal expansion. Harding was possibly very correct when he preached a return to "normalcy". In the instance of the twenties and the thirties, however, it was a return to normalcy with more money and external development. Nonetheless, the War had so disrupted the ways of living, that there would be henceforth a constant play of opposite and conflicting feelings in the American outlook. Coupled with the desire to return to the past, the unfitting garment, was the

overgrown child. There can be discerned during the two decades of peace manifestations of this pull between the opposing forces. In the contacts and relations with foreign countries, and more specifically with France, about which this paper is concerned, the contrasting influences are visible until the United States gradually became of age and assumed the position which had been offered, but declined, in 1919.

Diplomatic relations with France, having undergone a period of harassment during the early twenties owing to complications arising from the rejection of the Security Treaty and the problem of the inter-Allied War Debts, were strengthened by overtures for an agreement between that country and the United States for the "outlawry of war". The original idea, having sprung from a suggestion by an American professor to Foreign Minister Briand,¹ was proposed by the latter to the United States. Public opinion carried it to the attention of the State Department whereupon Secretary Kellogg gave a note to the French echoing American enthusiasm for such an idea. The ensuing conversations finally worked out an arrangement whereby other nations were invited to join in the treaty, and the terminology was made to fit the League provisions for a defensive war. A great deal of publicity was given to the treaty, and world opinion solidly favored it. The nations gathering in Paris in August of 1928, signed the treaty which renounced war as an instrument of national policy.² The Pact of Paris or the Kellogg-Briand Pact was one of the factors leading to a restatement of Franco-American friendship which was due to experience some buffeting during the Depression.

International affairs were of secondary importance during the economic crisis which gripped the world in the 1930's. Small efforts were made to solve the problems on an international basis, but the national outlook was

of primary importance. The Hoover Moratorium proposed by the American President in October, 1931, was approved by Congress later that year, and world finance appeared to be in a better situation. The French, however, did not accept this relief as was expected, for there was no guarantee that Germany would be required to resume the reparation payments after the holiday was over. Having these assurances, France finally agreed to the idea. In October, 1931, with the United States and France as the only two leading nations still on the gold standard, Pierre Laval, of which there will be more said later, arrived in Washington to discuss with President Hoover policies which they might use to bring recovery. The conferences labored and only brought forth a vague statement that Germany should have to take the beginning steps in finding a relief from the reparations payments. The optimism which greeted the later conference at Lausanne was due to the understanding that the reduction of reparations would be accompanied by a similar scaling down of the Allied debts carried on American books. The conference agreed to a drastic reduction of reparations but made it hinge on a like readjustment in debts. The stir of criticism in the press of the United States caused Hoover to declare that there was no inter-relation between the reparations and debts. The applause of this country was almost drowned out by the wrath of a Europe which had hoped for a general cancellation of the long-term payments. The end of the moratorium only resulted in an outright default on the part of six nations including enraged France.³

Further attempts at naval disarmament which was begun in Washington in 1922, were of no avail at the second London Naval Conference of 1935. A weak treaty was signed by the United States, Britain, and France, but the many escape clauses only tended to weaken further an agreement made ineffective by the non-adherence of Japan and Italy.⁴ The naval race which

ensued between the various nations in an attempt to protect long coast lines and far-flung possessions was diligently pursued by France, Britain, and the United States. The assurance of peace was not made in the last endeavor to disarm, but the resulting buildup, allowed by the general statements, was to be of greater importance in waging a war which was to come within four years. The fleet which France developed under the careful eye of Admiral Francois Darlan was to figure not only in military affairs but also in diplomacy waged as an attempt to safeguard American interests.

The rise of the dictatorships had no small effect on the lessening of differences between the democratic countries. First faced with aggression in Asia by Japan, the former Allies tried to bring about a stable situation through the League of Nations. Failure of these channels brought more instances of expansion of power by Japan, Italy and Germany. The Ethiopian crisis and the Spanish Civil War, from both of which the United States sought to remain aloof, embroiled France in a series of conscience-troubling decisions. Hoping for an Italian alliance against the growing threat of Nazi Germany rearming, France found itself having conflicting interests with the government of Mussolini and following the policy of Great Britain in opposition to Italy's venture into Ethiopia. The combination of German and Italian forces intervening in Spain to help their Fascist friend Franco put France on the opposite side of sympathies, but the position was not honored by having Russian aid to the Loyalists. Holding a hatred for Bolshevism only exceeded by that of National Socialism, France took a neutral position in the dress rehearsal for World War Two. There was no doubt that her sympathies lay with the Republican forces, although she was not in a position to help them militarily. Lacking true justification for military interference and unable to marshal public opinion in the manner

which the Fascist states could, the United States, Britain, and France saw the Spanish Republic disappear under the forces of the Falange aided by the Nazis and Italian Fascists.

The Sudetenland crisis in September of 1938 was, by far, the closest threat to war since Versailles. Hitler's demands on the Czechoslovakian government would have embroiled Europe in a general conflict. Casting the double interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine aside for a moment to prevent war, President Roosevelt sought to intervene diplomatically to ask Mussolini to work for a conference between the powers. Czechoslovakia being sacrificed on the altar of peace at Munich, the crisis was passed, but a lesson in armaments was learned; nations hurriedly making preparations for war in case Hitler made more demands.

The occasion was not long coming. Hitler, having secured his eastern problems through a pact with Russia which astounded the world, began his demands on Poland for the city of Danzig and the Polish corridor to the sea. War was inevitable owing to British and French alliances with that nation. Roosevelt, as spokesman for American opinion siding with the democracies, urged a revision of the Neutrality Act to allow shipments to belligerents on a cash and carry basis, but the isolationist element in the Senate prevented its change. Adding this feather to his cap, Hitler ordered his divisions over the Polish border at dawn on the morning of September 1, 1939. Britain and France followed with a declaration of war two days later; one day later, under the laws designed to keep America out of a European war, Roosevelt declared the United States technically neutral. The sentiments of the people and governmental officials were not sympathetic with the principle. There was neutrality in words, but certainly not in thought and deed.

In the attempt to remain out of the conflict, the American republics met in Panama while Poland was being defeated and proclaimed the Hemispheric Safety Belt extending around the neutral nations. In trying to reduce the chance of American merchant ships from being torpedoed in combat areas, Roosevelt asked Congress to re-enact the "cash and carry" clause of the Neutrality Act of 1937 which had expired during the spring. In early November, after a heated debate between the isolationists and the interventionists, a compromise measure was passed enabling the Allies to purchase arms and munitions on the old basis but which forbade ships to enter combat zones.

With Poland defeated within three weeks, the real fighting settled down to a "Sitzkrieg" between Germany and Britain and France. Matters were enlivened later in the fall by the Russo-Finnish war which Russia began in order to safeguard her northwestern borders, but the western front was quiet. American feelings were with the Finnish people and aid was promised. Despite a startling resistance by the small nation, Finnish forces were forced to capitulate on March 30, not helped by either France, Britain or the United States.

In order to carry on the war effectively against the British Navy, Hitler violated Denmark and Norway on the ninth of April, marching across borders and forcing the Danes to submit in a day, while using invasions by sea on Norway. The hasty British landing to aid the Norwegians was too late to be of any assistance, and Hitler's forces stood all over Norway within two weeks to harass shipping lanes. Stunning the Allies as well as the neutral powers, Hitler had disregarded territorial integreties and worried the world with fears where he might strike next. His mighty armies were soon to astonish the imagination within the next few months.

2. France Falls

French military minds had planned a mighty defensive line against Germany in the years between the wars, and believing themselves safe behind the genius of Maginot, the French were entirely unprepared for the sudden change of tactics which von Runstedt forced upon them. Disregarding declarations of war and pledges of nonaggression, as the Germans had done previously, Nazi armies moved with speed across the frontiers of Belgium, Luxemburg, and Holland on May 10, 1940. With this surprise maneuver, the Maginot Line was out-flanked, and French and British armies were forced to fight in an undefended area. The Low Countries were overrun in a few weeks; Holland was completely swamped in five days and Belgian armies surrendered on May 26 at Leopold's orders. Hitler's menace to the United States suddenly became a realization. If France and Britain were as quick to be defeated, the whole Atlantic as well as the Mediterranean would be occupied by a hostile force. The overseas threat became real when it was understood that even European possessions in the Western Hemisphere might become areas for German infiltration and fifth column movements directed against the United States.

The disasters to the Allied armies produced necessary changes in the governments. On May 11, in Britain, the man who had returned eighteen months before with "peace in our time" was exchanged for Winston Churchill, long a bitter foe of fascists and communists. Promising only "blood, toil, sweat, and tears" the new Prime Minister formed a coalition cabinet and vowed to fight to the end. In France, Premier Reynaud, in office since March 21, was forced to strengthen his cabinet in order to meet the crisis. On May 18, Marshal Pétain, home from his post as Ambassador to Spain, was named Vice-Premier, Daladier, formerly the Premier, and more recently the Minister of

National Defense, was named in charge of the foreign office while Weygand was appointed Commander in Chief of the Army.⁵ Placing Pétain and Weygand in these posts, Reynaud sought to inspire public confidence; they were the two most venerated figures in France.⁶ Although their appointment did this, it also did not inspire too much optimism on the part of military minds. Both were old men, one eighty-five, the other seventy-two, and both had been identified with the defensive attitude of military tactics. Pétain was known for his belief in authoritarian government as was Weygand, who was even more conservative. Not much was known about Pétain's defeatist attitude of the other war. His action at Verdun, nonetheless, had designated him as a hero in the public eye. Although both men assumed their positions out of patriotic devotion, the situation which they faced was well-nigh hopeless. If a surrender became necessary, it was thought that these men, being international figures as they were, could stand up to the Germans and make the French position a little more tenable.

The efforts of Weygand to prevent a German break-through on the Belgian front, and the sudden surrender of Leopold's troops opened the northern frontier to a rush of German forces. The retreat almost turned into a rout. Although fighting steadily and a little more successful at holding back the German tide than had been believed by Reynaud, who had expected Paris to fall in the middle of May, the Allies could only hold off the enemy for a little while longer before being pushed into the sea. Heading for the French ports on the Channel, the Germans pushed the British troops to the small port of Dunkirk where a nearly miraculous evacuation took place from May 30-June 4. Appealing to President Roosevelt early in June, Reynaud asked for more planes in order to press his fight to the finish. At this time, Reynaud was determined to carry on the war, if necessary, from North Africa. It was impossible

for the United States to aid the French and British forces enough to hold the line. Reynaud pleaded for everything--from planes to a declaration of war--so desperate was the situation.⁷

Mussolini, the despicable hand holding the dagger, declared war on France and Britain on June 10, further adding to the crisis; France now had an enemy to contend with at her rear while her front had nearly collapsed. Roosevelt's pleas for Italian neutrality were of no avail during the month of May, for the dictator had planned as early as May 9 to declare war before it was too late to salvage the scraps from the German table.⁸ Anxious to complete Italian hegemony in the Mediterranean and Africa, Mussolini could not afford to let the Nazis become contenders for the Italian Mare Nostrum.

The French government hastily leaving Paris on June 12 moved to Cange after leaving the American Ambassador William C. Bullitt as virtual mayor of the city. Against the wishes of Secretary Hull, but with the approval of Roosevelt, Bullitt stayed in Paris to do what he could to prevent a popular revolt which he believed in the making. His replacement accredited to the peripatetic French government was former Ambassador to Poland, Drexel Biddle. Although the latter was capable, he did not have contacts with influential French statesmen in order to impress upon them the necessity of remaining in the war. Knowing the personalities as he did, it is possible that Bullitt might have had some effect on the decision to ask for an armistice had he been present, but this is speculation.⁹

On June 14, Paris lay open to German troops and the city fell while the government moved farther away from the enemy into Bordeaux. The next day, having received Reynaud's message that the government would retreat

into Africa, Roosevelt cabled to reassure him and to state the policy that the United States would not recognize territorial gains through military conquest nor would it recognize an attempt to infringe on French territorial integrity.¹⁰ As the situation continued to worsen, the cabinet began to discuss the possibilities of surrender or continued fighting. Within the group, Reynaud seemed to be the one man who was determined to take the government and war to Africa. Pétain and Weygand were the main contenders for the idea of an armistice, although the former supported the proposal by Reynaud on June 15 whereby the army would ask for a cease-fire, after which the cabinet would move to the colonial possessions taking the fleet with it. It was hoped that this would win the support of the French people. This plan was rejected outright as dishonorable by Weygand.¹¹ (The different stands taken by the personages is elusive in determining since any idea might be seized for a moment and later dropped.) Briefly, the alternatives were either to capitulate or to carry on the struggle in Africa with the navy at the side of Britain which, as long as Churchill was in power, would refuse to admit defeat.

After conferring with the British Prime Minister concerning the agreement not to make a separate peace, Reynaud received unwilling permission, but was begged to continue if at all possible. The next day, June 16, Reynaud resigned as Premier, a beaten man, whereupon Pétain took his place. Reynaud had been under pressure from many (afterward Nazi collaborators) to admit defeat and ask for an armistice. His mistress, Madame de Portes, was one who urgently pressed upon him the point that further fighting was useless, and that the German demands would not be severe.¹² Not the least of these was Pétain himself who seemed to think that all Hitler would ask for would

be the Alsace-Lorraine provinces. Carrying the war to the African colonies having been abandoned and Reynaud having resigned, President Albert Lebrun invited Marshal Pétain to form the new government. The Marshal designated the fascist Paul Baudoin as Foreign Minister, François Darlan as Minister of Marine, and Weygand as the Minister of National Defense. Laval had been offered the Ministry of Justice portfolio and post of Vice-Premier, but had refused both unless he were to be in charge of the Foreign Office as well. As a result, he was not appointed to either; Camille Chautemps became Vice-Premier.¹³

The issue whether to request an armistice being well-nigh settled by the appointment of Pétain, the Council deliberated for a while on the night of June 16 concerning the British offer of union. The matter was soon dropped.¹⁴ Late that night, it was decided to ask the Spanish Ambassador to find out what the terms of an armistice would be.¹⁵

Although resigned to the French proposal for an armistice, the British made strenuous requests that if the French naval forces were demanded that the government would refuse to come to terms. On June 17, Biddle passed on to Admiral Darlan a note from Secretary Hull, probably one of the strongest ever penned by that man. Showing the urgent fear which the President and the Department of State had for the disposition of the fleet, the note very probably influenced the Council's later decision that afternoon. Outlining the policy, the President warned the Admiral that if efforts were not made to protect the fleet that

"...the French Government will permanently lose the friendship and goodwill of the Government of the United States."¹⁶

That day the Council decided that an armistice would be sought, but if the

fleet should be demanded, the terms would be rejected outright. That same day, fears for the fate of France prompted the United States Senate to pass a resolution embodying the note which Roosevelt had sent Reynaud several days before. Extending the Monroe Doctrine even further, the Senate resolved not to recognize any transfer of territory in this Hemisphere from one non-American power to another.

In their request for the armistice, the French made it contingent upon an immediate halt of German troops. This factor was to be an important item in the resulting months. Since France had not been completely overrun before the surrender, the German occupation did not cover the entire country. This was to prove an asset for the Germans in that they did not have to subdue the populace and drain their resources in feeding an antagonistic nation. Aiding them further would be prominent members of the French Government who would be willing to take a part in the unification of Europe under Nazi Germany. A divided France ultimately worked against the Germans, however, for although the Vichy regime would soon begin to do the bidding of the conquerors, the fact that the citizens had a government of their own which had control over the colonies and the fleet gave them a position higher than that of the other conquered nations of Europe. Even in Denmark and Holland, completely under the domination of Berlin, there was sabotage and resistance. Claiming a brand of autonomy, limited as it was, the French could not but fester no matter how many hostages were shot or prisoners held.

In addition, it would have been politically unwise for Hitler to have acquiesce in Mussolini's desire to force strong terms on the French. French colonial possessions would prove to be useful when under the control of a strictly French government. Imposing too harsh terms for an armistice on

the French might cause their rejection; a flight of the government was still possible, no matter how many defeatists there were. Frenchmen, touchy about national honor, would not accept complete submission. France had been too strong a power in Europe for too long a time for its spirit to be broken by humiliating terms.

In the forest of Compiègne, in the same railway car where a French Empire and a German Empire had each signed away its existence in two previous wars, the Germans met on June 22, to accept the armistice requested of them by Pétain's government. The terms had been presented the day before for the cabinet to consider. Included in the document was the occupation of northern and western France, all the area which had been vital to the French economy; political refugees from Germany were to be returned. The clauses regarding the disposition of the fleet were carefully examined to see whether dishonorable demands were to be made or whether there might be a chance for German treachery in the future. This provision required that the fleet be assembled and disarmed in French ports except those to be used in the defense of colonial possessions. The Germans declared that they did not intend to use the fleet nor did they expect to do so at the conclusion of a peace treaty.¹⁷

The terms were rather lenient when compared with those that other conquered nations were forced to accept. Analyzing them more directly, however, it is seen that France was under a terrific burden. Her entire manufacturing and industrial areas were under occupation which was to prove to be an exacting force on her economy during the war. Much of the food producing areas were also unavailable across the line of demarcation. An enormous occupation fee, actually a charge of reparations, was also to be extracted from the unoccupied area.

Concerning the fleet, there were to be left several ships armed and under the jurisdiction of the French government for the defense and protection of the empire. Many skeptics asked the question, defense against whom? Britain? All factors considered, this is probably the answer which the Germans had in mind. Already in need of gathering his troops for a consolidation of forces in order to control France, Hitler could not use German troops to supervise and protect them. In addition it is probable that the colonial areas would have given strong resistance to a move involving an invasion across the Mediterranean, even if the government in metropolitan France had allowed it. Assigning to France responsibility of colonial control, Hitler relieved himself and the German army of a task nearly impossible to perform. In doing so, however, he also set the stage for events which were later to prove disastrous.

3. The Formulation of A Policy Toward Vichy

With Germany in control of three-fifths of France and almost all of North and West Africa under the control of a government which could either be subservient to or allied with the conqueror, the United States naturally became alarmed. Dakar, on the western tip of Africa was only several hours flying time from the hump of Brazil: its port facilities could easily become fueling stations for German submarines plying the South Atlantic. In addition, the fleet, the second largest in Europe, was considered by Hull as a "cocked gun". Having given all aid possible to the Allies and alienated the dictators, the United States could not afford such a force to be delivered to the enemy. The French fleet added to the German and Italian naval forces could drive Great Britain from the Mediterranean and perhaps from the Atlantic.

Placed in this position, the United States formulated a policy toward

conquered France which the State Department considered to be in the best interests of this country as well as Britain. As in the case of other nations, France's assets in this country were frozen immediately.¹⁸ Steps were taken to increase American influence in the colonial possessions; a consulate in Dakar, closed for ten years, was opened in August without the usual permission from Vichy to do so. Thomas Wasson was nonetheless well received as consul by the governor of West Africa, Pierre Bosisson.¹⁹ From the end of the fighting in June, 1940, until the American invasion in November, 1942, the disposition of the fleet and the control of the colonies by neutral or pro-Allied influences became the main concerns of the American Vichy policy. In the effort to prevent pressure or enthusiasm from carrying the actions of the French beyond the bounds of the armistice, the United States had to exert strong pressure such as the note of June 17, 1940. At times, the fears were to be found too great; and the situations proved not to be as bad as once thought. At other times, only by forethought on the part of the American policy-makers was a severe threat to the status quo averted. On a few occasions, pure circumstantial luck prevented a German encroachment on Africa or a severance of Franco-American relations.

The British government, expecting an invasion across the channel at any moment, was far more concerned with the fleet than in asking for assurances concerning its surrender. On July 2, the French squadron at Oran (Mers-el-Kebir) received a note from the British officer commanding ships just outside that port. Either he was to join his ships with the British to fight the Axis, or agree to hail to a British or American port and be disarmed, or scuttle his ships. Under orders from Pétain not to submit for fear of German reprisals, the French commander refused these alternatives. The British opened fire and sank or disabled most of the ships there. Seizing

French ships in Alexandria and British home ports, they felt that the immediate danger to them from a German action of the same sort was passed. Pétain protested this action vigorously; relations were immediately broken off between the former allies on July 5. Thereafter, exchange between the two countries, small as it was, was handled by the United States or through various channels in Spain. It was not realized until this time how desperate the British situation was. American opinion was awestruck; the Nation considered the action at Oran "...justified, but caused deep resentment in France."²⁰ That it did cause a wave of Anglophobia throughout France could not be denied. French planes made a short bombing run against Gibraltar in reprisal and Admiral Darlan raised a bitter attack in protest against the British for treachery which some of the French believed had started in May with the refusal to send more planes. The Anglo-French clash was understandable, but unfortunate; it showed, however, in its implications, just how desperate the British considered the situation.

Considering what some have termed the revolutionary aspects of the Second World War, the Vichy government is a rather good example of the attempt to reconstruct, not only France, but the rest of Europe. The Third Republic had been in turmoil in the years between the war, and authoritarians such as Laval, Pétain, Baudoin, and Yves Bouthillier undertook to create a government which could maintain the French position in Europe under the hegemony of Nazi Germany. Using Pétain as a figurehead under which to unite the people into acceptance of the situation, Laval became the Vice-Premier and Pétain's heir-apparent in mid July.²¹ The Third Republic voted itself out of existence and bestowed upon Pétain extraordinary powers as Chef d'Etat. Scrapping the old motto of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, the National Revolution was constructed on the basis of Work, Family, and Fatherland.

Receiving the cooperation of wealthy bankers and industrialists against the latent fear of Bolshevism, as Hitler himself had, Pierre Laval began the task of binding French economy to the German war machine. The commercial interests of both Vichy France and the African colonies were intermingled by trade across the Mediterranean; banks extended credit, and in the occupied zone, automobile factories began to turn out war materials. In its political aspects, the Vichy regime was trying to be an entirely new state built on the ruins of the Third Republic.²²

Using fascist principles, Pétain was the head of the state, passing on all measures concerning foreign and domestic matters. Distrusting parliamentary and democratic principles, the Vichy government was a second rate version of French national socialism. By necessity, it was oriented into the Axis direction. That it did not become fully allied with the Germans and Italians in the war is possibly attributed to the extremely weak position which it held economically. Lacking most of French manufacturing power, Vichy was dependent upon the African trade for much of its stability. Its citizens had barely enough food to keep them submissive. Caught in a serious dilemma, Vichy could not be anything more than a temporary state. Its neutrality, at least in words, was one of the means of its existence. Axis alliance would immediately bring about a revolt of the African possessions and the loss of the fleet. These two items comprised its reasons for being. Too much cooperation with the Allies or with the United States would bring about any number of German countermeasures. These could be complete occupation, permanent retention of prisoners of war, or the entire scrapping of the government for one which would do the German bidding. Pétain realized that his power, limited though it was, was by courtesy of the "Boche"; there were many who were willing to sell France's

soul to the Germans for the power which Hitler might give them in return. Pierre Laval was only the fastest runner. Even he could be tripped once; Pétain did it, but only once.

Pétain's position was beclouded to the outside world and, to an extent, to his own subjects, by carefully planned maneuvers by his ministers who issued orders without his knowledge. Placed in awkward positions, such as at Montoire, Pétain had to salvage French respect. The man's self-importance was almost Messiah-like. He considered himself the saviour of France. Using the royal "we", Pétain tried not to allow the subjection of France; in doing so he would lose the allegiance of his people, his job, and the dream of a France second only to Germany in Europe should the British be defeated.

Now enters one point upon which a large part of the controversy rests. In suing for the armistice originally, did France expect also to go down in defeat? Weygand reputedly said England would have "her neck rung like a chicken." As the war continued, however, the Vichy figures maintained that they did not desert England in the time of need, just in order to salvage what they could from an early capitulation. Their actions so imply, no matter what refutation emanated from Vichy, that French military men looked expectantly, although without wishing to do so, for the defeat of Britain in the near future. When the planned invasion of the British Isles did not come about and Hitler was forced to come to the aid of Mussolini in Greece and North Africa, as well as attend to his own work in the east against Russia, French speculation was proved wrong. It became the job of American military and material aid coupled with American diplomacy to impress upon the Vichy government that Germany was not going to win the war, and neither was Britain going to accept a stalemate.

It was almost accidental that the Vichy regime came to be recognized by the United States immediately after the fall of France. Biding time to see what type of policy the offspring of defeat would have, the United States came to the conclusion that maintaining diplomatic interchange with Petain's government would be of vital necessity to the interests of this country. Not only were the African possessions in close proximity to South America, but there were also French islands in the Caribbean at the front door of the Panama Canal which would easily become more than a speculative threat. At Martinique, especially, the aircraft carrier Bearn and some smaller ships were docked with more than a hundred American planes originally destined for France, but which never arrived.²³ In charge of these warships as well as the keeper of \$245,000 in gold bullion,²⁴ was Admiral Robert. Although very much pro-Pétain, Robert cooperated with the United States in a limited way. While the Act of Havana in July had made arrangements for a special committee made up of American nations' representatives to assume control of "any colonial possession threatened by change of sovereignty" or any one nation to take immediate action if necessary,²⁵ the United States did not wish to give Vichy an excuse for collaboration.

Due to the instable nature of the Vichy government in the summer of 1940, The United States could not afford to alienate Pétain or to give the underling fascists arguments for it. During the month of July, after the attack at Oran, observers reported British ships patrolling Martinique. This brought a warning from Secretary Hull that there would be serious trouble between the United States and Britain if the latter attempted to seize the planes. Intervening to prevent an unpleasant situation from arising, Hull sent Admiral Greenslade to confer with Roberts. In the attempt to deflect the ships, planes and gold to the United States for the remainder of the war,

Greenslade only evoked a vague answer. In the meantime, Roosevelt had ordered a cruiser and several destroyers to the area to prevent a clash.²⁶ There were also reports that the naval facilities at Martinique were being built up along with air and submarine facilities. Suspicious, Roosevelt called in the Vichy Ambassador Gaston Henry-Hays and told him that there must not be any change in the status quo in the Western Hemisphere. If such a guarantee could be made publically, and American observers allowed at Guiana, Guadeloupe and St. Pierre-Miquelon, then the United States would unfreeze French funds monthly to defray the costs of its diplomatic and consulate offices.²⁷

Greenslade's mission had only produced a gentleman's agreement regarding Martinique and the Caribbean area. Promising to give ninety-six hours notice before any ship movements, Robert also agreed to allow a naval and air patrol. In return, the islands were supplied with food from the United States, paid for also by the French funds.²⁸ Robert had tried to get Greenslade to agree that the United States would guarantee the maintenance of Vichy institutions and personnel in possessions in the Western Hemisphere, but he was unsuccessful.²⁹

Although the Greenslade mission was only partly successful in obtaining the items desired, it was felt that a Franco-British clash had been averted and that with proper supervision, the French islands would not become either a threat to the American Gulf states nor to the canal. In case anything unexpected should arise, Marines were sent to the Guantanamo base for maneuvers; an invasion of Martinique could be made if necessary.³⁰ The policy toward Robert and the Vichy government concerning Martinique could have been a strong one considering its nearness to vital interests and also to the distance from Vichy. A strong position was not taken, however,

because of Pétain's meeting at Montoire with Hitler. Too much pressure might have caused more collaboration than resulted. Concessions were made on the Martinique question after Pétain had reassured this country that he would not go beyond the armistice but would retain his freedom of action.³¹ This idea was accepted in principle by the State Department, but Hull harbored some skepticism. Remarking on the Greenslade-Robert agreement, he said, "I think that the French are playing the German game one hundred percent over there at Vichy and I'm not concerned about helping them to do it."³² If the State Department accepted the agreement and Hull was skeptical, the Nation was not at all. Commenting on the release of French funds, the liberal magazine believed that these funds would only be used to strengthen the island against an attack---by the United States.³³

The Martinique policy did seem to be a weak beginning to the French government. But for the circumstances of Pétain's talk with Hitler, there would have been a strong stand taken. Mr. Hull's remark seems to indicate this. The ease with which military action could have been taken gave the United States a strong hand; at the time, however, Pétain also gave consideration for thought. Because of Montoire, the course of least resistance was taken.

In September, just before the Montoire meeting, Japan began to exert pressure upon the French government to allow Japanese bases of operation in Indo-China. Vichy asked for American aid to prevent this encroachment on its Far-Eastern possession. Since Vichy had to maintain a semblance of control over its overseas empire in order to have an air of legality, this matter was of importance to it. The United States had an interest in the Japanese demand also; the proposal, if granted, would give Japan a closer base of

operations in the war against China, as well as increase its chances for hegemony over Southeast Asia. The protest was made against Japan, but further action was difficult. Vichy did not inform the Charge d'Affaires Freeman Matthews as to the latest developments as they happened, and thus by the time we were informed, the time had passed for effective diplomatic action. It does not seem from the accounts of the interchange that Vichy was under any pressure from Germany to give in to the Japanese demands. However, the weakness of the colony and the great distance involved in its defense made the French position rather hopeless. In the agreement finally granted, Japan had the use of three airfields and permission to station several thousand troops in the colony; permission was also given for the right of transit for more troops up to twenty-five thousand. The final arrangement was less than the original Japanese demand, but the United States still protested the action as detrimental to its interests and Far-Eastern policy. However, under the circumstances, the action was already a fait accompli; if France did not have the means to defend the colony, neither did the United States. 34

4. General deGaulle

As if to becloud a simple understanding of the American policy toward Vichy, the dissident movement headed by General deGaulle existed to challenge Vichy's authority over Frenchmen. Soon after the fall of France, deGaulle made his famous speech to rally refugees and the resistance to the cause. Under the tutelage of Britain, deGaulle became a symbol of the French desire not to admit defeat. Setting up his headquarters in London, he made regular broadcasts to the French on the continent and in the colonies to throw off the Vichy domination and to join his group, first known as Fighting France.

Anxious to reap military victories as well as those of morale, the British and deGaulle's group planned an expedition to the port of Dakar, to seize the city and rally the area of West Africa to the French military figure. In September, 1940, a British squadron, accompanied by the few ships which deGaulle had under him, set out for Dakar. The original plan had been to appear with as large a force as possible and to send envoys to Governor-General Boisson telling of the peaceful intentions of the mission and to ask him to join the movement and bring the colony with him.³⁵ DeGaulle overestimated his following and also the allegiance of Governor Boisson to Marshal Pétain. As the leader of the fighting movement, he was considered as a traitor by the rest of the military men who had obeyed the orders of the Vichy government.

On the morning of September 23, the group appeared off Dakar and prepared to ask the cooperation of the officials. The representatives sent ashore were threatened with arrest and as they headed back to the ships, fire from the coastal batteries was directed toward the deliverers. The fog being heavy, the British did not answer the fire until the next day; the Richelieu, disabled during an attack simultaneous to the one at Oran, was damaged further. Although desirous of taking the colony, the British were not ready to have a pitched battle for it, nor were they willing to have Frenchmen fighting one another for its allegiance. On the twenty-fifth, not being able to persuade the colony by peaceful intentions, nor convince it by force, the ships withdrew;³⁶ the French ships and troops went on to Duala where they were welcomed by the populace.³⁷

The failure of this expedition and the heated contest of the one to Syria in June of the next year exhibited the distrust and animosity which

the Vichy-controlled areas had for deGaulle and his movement. It also indicated the necessity which the Vichy government felt for the defense of its colonies, especially those in North Africa. If the areas defected to the British or deGaulle, or if they did not defend themselves against such attacks, the Germans could step in and take over the colonies in order to keep them from falling under the control of Britain. The failure may also be accounted for by security leaks. The deGaulle group had many former Cagoulards in its entourage. This neofascist group had been somewhat of a Franco-German movement and, although many had broken with it when its pro-German leanings were learned, there were still a few who had pro-fascist tendencies and who were in the Fighting France movement purely for espionage purposes. In fact, the British intelligence was so suspicious that they arrested two members who had been close to deGaulle. ³⁸

The war situation in the fall of 1940, while not suspicious for Britain, was not going as well for Hitler as he had planned. The R.A.F., those "so few", had beaten back the Luftwaffe's attempt to soften up the British Isles for an invasion. These plans dropped for the present, Hitler sought other ways to beat the British into submission. Realizing that a combination of submarine warfare on the Atlantic and the closing of the Mediterranean at its western entrance would severely restrict the British campaign against Italy in Greece and Egypt, Hitler began to feel out Spain and Vichy France in order to obtain their cooperation in his struggle.

5. Montoire and After

On his way to confer with Franco at Hendaye, Hitler stopped at Montoire October 22, to grant Laval an audience. Laval had been expecting to confer with Ribbentrop concerning more collaboration with the Germans

when his surprise was presented. ³⁹ Agreeing that a British defeat was inevitable, Laval told Hitler that collaboration would be possible if France received a decent settlement for her efforts. Hitler insisted that the settlement could come only at the conclusion of the war; meanwhile Germany would safeguard French interests. ⁴⁰ Inviting Petain through Laval for a discussion concerning further collaboration, Hitler continued on his way to confer with the Generalissimo. The Hendaye talks with France were a disappointment for Hitler. Forewarned of the intent of the interview, Franco held off from Hitler's requests. the Führer's main attempt and reason for the talks were to persuade Franco to join the Axis and declare war against Britain.

Franco's price for his meager aid was large. Naturally he wanted Gibraltar; he also wanted a great deal of French North and West Africa, especially those areas adjoining Spanish Morocco. Hitler was over a barrel; if he wanted Spanish help, he ran the risk of effective collaboration or, perhaps, an outright coalition by Vichy France. If he attempted to satisfy Spanish demands by the territory requested, French possessions would surely revolt and he would lose more than he might gain by the aid of Franco. In addition, Italy was expecting the lion's share of French possessions in North Africa and Mussolini would surely object to the deal. This would be certainly true when it was considered how little the advantages would be from a Spanish alliance. German troops would probably have to support the Spanish army against the French colonial army, small as it was, and it might be necessary to occupy all of France should an uprising occur in the colonies.

On the other hand, Hitler could not order his army to occupy Spain either. Resistance to such a move would surely be offered, and the nearly

starving Spanish people would become another burden to his food supply. His best chances lay with trying to talk France out of some of his demands and thereby quiet French fears, and at the same time, to try to convince Pétain that a German victory was in the making and France would profit by her collaboration.

France held forth for eight hours against Hitler's arguments, surely a record! He also had arguments of his own. Impressing upon the Nazi the extreme position that Spain would be placed when the British blockade was extended to her coasts, Franco pressed for assurances that Germany would forward supplies of food and materials. His territorial demands in compensation for Spanish cooperation have already been outlined. Allowing for a defeat of the British Isles, France feared a flight of the government to Canada and a continuation of the war with American aid.⁴¹ Gaining virtually nothing from the interview except a clear realization of the Spanish demands, Hitler left Hendaye a weary man. He later told Mussolini that rather than go through such a session again, he would prefer to have three or four teeth pulled.⁴²

Returning to talk with a reluctant Pétain, Hitler tried to get the Marshal to define the areas and extent of collaboration which he, as the chief of state, was prepared to agree to between the two nations. Although he agreed to collaboration in principle, Pétain begged off a clear-cut statement about its limits.⁴³ The Montoire conference was probably no more successful than the one held the day before as far as getting concrete results for Germany. Pétain rather shrewdly held off committing himself and Vichy to a specified arrangement. The Montoire agreements, when drawn up, were stated in rather vague terms.

Nonetheless, the publicity given the meeting and the secrecy surrounding the agreement brought understandable anxiety to the American State Department and to President Roosevelt. Churchill had also received word that the conference had something to do with collaboration. Having been requested by the British Prime Minister to do so, Roosevelt summoned Henry-Haye and spoke in strong terms as a protest against the action of the French moving beyond the armistice agreement. The President pointed out that although a conquered nation, France did not have to serve the conqueror against England. The protest was embodied further in a note to Pétain in which Roosevelt went on to state that if France actively helped Germany against Britain then the United States "...could make no effort...to insure that France retained its overseas possessions [at the end of the war]" ⁴⁴ He added that if the fleet were allowed to fall into German hands despite American warnings against this that to do so would "...definitely wreck the traditional friendship between French and American peoples." ⁴⁵ The reply to this note came a few days later from Vichy. Pétain renewed his assurances about the fleet, but expressed a tone of righteous indignation at Roosevelt's suggestion that France might not have any liberty of action. ⁴⁶

The strength of the American note was somewhat displeasing to the Vichy government, but Secretary Hull believed that a note of this type would restrain Pétain from going further in the direction envisioned by Laval. ⁴⁷ The Italian setbacks in Greece and the recent defeat of the Italian fleet by the British navy caused both Vichy and Madrid to realize that the war was not to be as short as was once thought. ⁴⁶ Still the secrecy about the talks produced consternation, no matter what the attitude in Vichy at the time.

If Hitler had gained no results from the Montoire talks, it would soon

be obvious that France did. Laval's conduct as the Vice-Premier had earned him the enmity of Pétain. Suspicious that he was not being informed of all that was taking place, Pétain decided to maintain the position of the Vichy government as best he could; to do this, Laval would have to go. The developments began to show that Laval was working to reduce the Marshal to the position of mere figurehead while he, Laval, would assume the power and position that Pétain presently held. The redecoration of an old mansion near Paris, where Pétain might be induced to live, produced further suspicions.

The final touch came in early December with the German gift of the ashes of Napoleon's son to France. Hitler would be present at the solemn affair as would Pétain. Laval had made all the arrangements without the Marshal's knowledge. When informed of the ceremony and his required presence, Pétain refused to go. Calling a cabinet meeting the night of December 13, Pétain asked for the resignation of all his cabinet, but only accepted Laval's and another minor minister's. In a rage, Laval berated the old man, but Pétain refused to allow his return, even after pressure from Otto Abetz, the German Ambassador. Although he insisted that the cause of the dismissal was Laval's domestic policy, it was evident that Pétain was dissatisfied with Laval's plans for a new foreign policy embracing full collaboration, and the threat to his own position.⁴⁹ Placed under arrest, Laval was replaced as Foreign Minister by Flandin and as Vice-Premier by Admiral Darlan.⁵⁰ Supporters of Pétain maintain that the dismissal of Laval proved his hatred for the Germans as well as his distrust of collaboration. In addition they believe that this also proved his "resolve to defend France at any risk... against the establishment of a...German appointed government."⁵¹

While it may have taken courage on Pétain's part to be rid of the second strongest man in the Vichy government and run the risk of alienating

German sympathies, it seems more evident that he was insuring his own position and that of the French people against going beyond the terms of the armistice which he had declared that he would defend. In the dismissal, Pétain had the backing of an overwhelming majority of the French people who, like himself, considered Laval a bad Frenchman. Not only at home, but abroad also, Pétain relieved many minds. Laval had been responsible for the death of the Third Republic, and it was now possible that Pétain might embark on a course of semi-independence from Germany. ⁵²

6. The United States and Vichy

It is necessary to pick up several strands of events before the end of 1940. After the Anglo-Vichy break following the attacks at Oran and Dakar, there was no contact between the former allies except through American or Canadian channels. Realizing that some sort of workable arrangement or understanding between the two governments would be of benefit, Louis Rougier, having received the permission of Pétain beforehand,⁵³ went to London in October to confer with either the Foreign Office or Churchill himself. Almost at the same time Pétain was talking with Hitler about more collaboration, this special mission was trying to make for better relations between Britain and Vichy. The conferences produced an agreement by which Britain would undertake to restore the integrity of France if Vichy did not aid the Axis. The British would ease the blockade to allow food shipments between North Africa and France proper, and restrict deGaulle's radio attacks against Vichy if France promised not to cede any bases to Germany nor allow the fleet to fall into Axis hands. Britain further stated that there would be no attempts to seize French colonies claiming allegiance to Vichy if Pétain agreed not to try to reconquer those already under the control of deGaulle. ⁵⁴

With Laval as Foreign Minister, Such an agreement had to be secret and necessarily would be binding on only Pétain. It was only a gentleman's agreement, of course, but its clauses underscored the general objects for which the British were willing to fight on the French behalf. It also indicated a hopeful note in that Pétain approved the provisions and accepted the agreement. 55

A tacit recognition of the Vichy government had been given by the United States with the receiving of Gaston Henry-Haye as the Ambassador in July, 1940. During the summer and fall, however, American representation to Vichy had been handled by the Chargé d'Affaires Freeman Matthews. There were two alternatives with regard to the sending of a full-fledged Ambassador to Vichy. Either the United States could maintain the embassy without an ambassador to show its dislike for the policies and people connected with Vichy, or it could send a strong personality to influence France to stand up to the Germans. 56

The basic considerations for the American ambassador would be to see that the French Fleet was not lost to the Axis, to prevent German or Italian use of bases in French colonial possessions, and to aid honest French attempts to keep either Germans or quislings from going beyond the terms of the armistice. 57 The situation at Vichy seemed a little more favorable toward the Allies in the late fall. As yet, the Montoire conference had not produced any definite collaboration, and the appointment of the violently anti-German Weygand as Governor-General of North Africa seemed to indicate a strong desire to defend the French colonial possessions against encroachment. 58 The favorable situation was further strengthened by the December dismissal of Laval. 59

Roosevelt wanted to appoint a military figure who could be on a personal

relationship with Marshal Pétain. General Pershing, an ideal choice, was not able physically or mentally to assume the demanding post; at the suggestion of Sumner Welles, Admiral William D. Leahy, Governor of Porto Rico, was quickly named Ambassador on December 20,⁶⁰ In his letter to Leahy requesting his services as Ambassador,⁶¹ Roosevelt stated that there was needed someone who could gain the confidence of Pétain, the one influence at Vichy which prevented a full selling out to the Germans.⁶² Believing that his naval rank would influence French naval officers who were anti-British,⁶³ Leahy was asked to do what he could to impress upon the entire Vichy regime that the United States would support the British against the Germans, who, if victorious, would dismember the French Empire and reduce France to a vassal state.⁶⁴ In his instructions,⁶⁵ Roosevelt asked Leahy to exert his influence and prestige as the Ambassador of the United States to prevent any French aid to Germany beyond that required by the armistice agreement. In addition, he was to insist that the status quo be maintained in the Caribbean; that is, the warships there would be immobilized and the gold kept from any use beneficial to the Germans. Realizing that Pétain could not trust Laval or Darlan, Leahy was instructed to tell him any information which he (Leahy) might learn that the Marshal's ministers might be keeping from him. He was also told to assure Pétain that the United States Red Cross would send food to the children in the unoccupied area, and that the American government was prepared to assist in the improvement of the economic conditions of the African territories and the maintenance of French authority there.⁶⁶

The appointment of Admiral Leahy was received with general approval; Churchill said he "was glad...the United States sent an Ambassador to Vichy...Here at least was a window upon a courtyard to which we had no other access."⁶⁷ Even the Nation approved; it called the appointment of Leahy,

who had "a reputation for speaking frankly,...not good news for pro-Axis French." 68

Leahy's reception at Vichy was not so gracious as his American departure. The German-controlled Parisian papers called the new Ambassador a "tool of Jewish bankers, an ex-British agent, a Freemason" and accused him of giving an ultimatum to Pétain requiring Darlan's appointment to his new position. 69 The situation was discouraging in other ways also. Leahy's first meeting with Pétain made him aware that there would be much work ahead in the way of diplomatic negotiations in order to hold him to his promises. Leahy considered the Marshal too weak to do all which the United States expected of him. Seemingly having resigned himself to Darlan's collaboration too, Pétain called deGaulle a traitor and feared that, with British aid, he would attack North Africa and cause a clash between France and Britain. Claiming he had no real power to resist the increasing German demands, Pétain explained that the Germans claimed final interpretation of the armistice terms. 70

Leahy's work began immediately. In January, after his arrival, the embassy received reports and information about a projected invasion of Britain from the Dunkirk region. 71 Relaying the information on to Washington, the contacts at Vichy began their important work of furnishing the United States and Britain with intelligence material. Although Roosevelt had not mentioned this aspect of the Vichy appointment, it nevertheless came to be one of importance. The invasion never was launched, of course, but in the reports, friends in the French War Ministry passed on information about the disposition of German troops in the occupied zone. 72 Later in the spring, the embassy staff received word that German "tourists and scientists" were visiting in Morocco and were spreading anti-British propaganda; 73 this factor increased the fears for the safety of the region against Axis infiltration and inter-

vention.

In analyzing the instructions which Roosevelt gave Leahy, it seems that he expected the Ambassador to place himself in an interposition between Pétain and the French people on one hand, and the Vichy government, excluding its Chief of State, on the other. Skeptics during the war and even now dispute the reasoning behind this plan. They have claimed, and rightly so, that Pétain's leadership was one based on authoritarian principles with rather little regard for the wishes of the people. The eternal question about Pétain's leadership is whether his advanced age and the fact that his ministers did go about collaboration without his knowledge prevented his leading the French people in a way which would best ease their defeat. Still more questionable is the assumption that Pétain could or would be influenced by pressure to safeguard American interests. Of the primary considerations, perhaps the fleet was the safest. It was a symbol of French power which was safe from Axis and which had not known defeat. Pétain had sworn to scuttle it before handing it over to Germany or Italy. Yet, in view of the German tactics of piecemeal requests, the sum total of which would be refused, there was still cause to have fear over its ultimate control by the Axis without either Pétain or the United States being in a position to do anything to prevent its happening.

Another primary consideration which Leahy sought to impress upon Pétain was the control of the African possessions by Vichy. Also a symbol of French power, the complete control of these colonies by France was not in danger; German infiltration and use of air and naval bases was a danger, however, Pétain and anti-German governors might try to prevent such an occurrence, but these obstacles could be removed. It might be possible for the Germans to force the appointment of a true enthusiastic collaborationist who could give the Nazis what they wished beyond the armistice terms. Critics

of the Vichy policy maintain that to place so much confidence in Pétain and to gamble on his ability to prevent collaboration (if he wished to do so) was a serious mistake. They continue that the United States should have placed its confidence in a stronger man. But in Vichy there was no such person. They answer back, why not deGaulle? But deGaulle did not have control of the fleet and the colonies, and Vichy did. And so the debate runs around and the full circle had been completed.

In the final analysis, however, the decision to send Leahy as Ambassador took advantage of a situation which was favorable and used the abilities of a man who could discern the important total strategy involved in the Vichy policy while dismissing some of the minor discrepancies. At the end of 1940, with the continent of Europe overrun by the Nazi army and Britain standing alone for what seemed to be a long struggle, the only possible course at that time was the course taken. It was not possible to ignore the entire Vichy government and the French people, for whom there was a genuine feeling, without alienating those forces which had control over two highly important considerations in the war. That these factors not be used in the waging of the war by the Axis powers was to the basic interest of the United States, and to effect a favorable solution to the war, it was necessary to seek any possible means available. The critics of the policy have not offered any alternate solution which would have achieved the results expected by the State Department at the end of 1940. Faced with the situation of to ignore or to recognize fully, the United States took the course which was dictated by a self-answering question.

The promise of American aid to unoccupied France was soon to be fulfilled. There had been earlier drives to supply food to the defeated nation through the winter, but the British had refused to allow ships through the

blockade. Insisting that this was in reality only aid to the Germans, Britain had allowed the United States to send only medical supplies during the winter months.⁷⁴ Leahy's talks with Pétain had impressed upon him, however, the plight of the French people, especially the children. Anxious to cement Franco-American relations, the Ambassador suggested to Washington that aid in the form of food, clothing, and medical supplies would lessen the chance for unrest and thereby give either Germany or Italy an excuse for intervention into Vichy governed territory.⁷⁵ Pétain went as far as to say that food was necessary to prevent a popular overthrow of the Vichy government. Darlan told Leahy, however, that this was not true; the food supply was sufficient, but there were no transportation facilities to distribute it. He then requested Leahy to see if it would be possible for the United States to supply Vichy with lubricants and gasoline for the trucks to pass around the food.⁷⁵ Not quite so naive as to fall for this, Leahy thought it would reap more benefit with the French people for the United States to send the food directly and to oversee its distribution through the Red Cross. While the American government could achieve a little favorable propaganda in the arrangement, Vichy would also be relieved of some of the criticism that the German and Paris presses had scored for the regime's not being able to feed its own people.⁷⁷ The French people in both the occupied and unoccupied zones had suffered from the German presence throughout the winter, and they were becoming increasingly in favor of a British victory.⁷⁸ It was, after all, the French people whose morale the Americans were trying to build up; a way had to be found to convince the British to ease the blockade.

The shipment of the aid was to be in French ships interned in the United States, in order to keep all available American ships free for convoy duty to Britain. The Wiesbaden Commission (the board having final decision

on Vichy conduct) executed a rather astute move in this regard, however. The two ships which had left the United States filled with food for France were seized in Marseilles; they were not to be released until two more ships headed for France. In this way, by having simultaneous departures, France, and thus Germany perhaps, would have two ships more than previously, if the United States should seize or intern the ships again.⁷⁹ When several ships were stopped by the blockade, Darlan threatened to use French navy escorts to convoy the ships through in defiance of the British.⁸⁰ Ignoring the suggestion by the Nation that the United States should counter this threat by refusing to sell the food to France,⁸¹ Roosevelt decided not to defeat the purpose of the shipments, but to intercede with the British to allow the French ships through. After Hull implied that he would authorize the ships to go through the blockade without prior British permission, Churchill gave way to a combination of pressures from the State Department and President Roosevelt and agreed at the end of March to let the Red Cross packages go to unoccupied France.⁸²

Some have expressed surprise that Britain finally allowed the shipments in that the occupied zone had formerly been the food-producing area but now it had been left for complete German utilization.⁸³ Actually the food shipments were small, relatively speaking, and the trade between the two zones was so restricted that it was unlikely that any food from the occupied area would have been allowed by the Germans to go to the Vichy area. By the same token, it is also unlikely that any of the Red Cross shipment filtered through to the German-controlled zone. It is also unlikely that baby layettes, milk, or vitamins would have materially aided the German war machine. Thus it cannot be accepted that "82% of the United States shipments of food [was] directly transhipped to Germany."⁸⁴ Leahy said that due to the

watchful eye of the parents whose children were recipients of the food, there was no leakage to the Germans. ⁸⁵

From all the reports, the food shipments had a good effect. French morale seemed to have been given a boost, and crowds gathered in Marseilles for the arrival of the first ships. Leahy was on hand and was encouraged by the gratitude that the people showed him. Stating his own endorsement of the relief program, Leahy believed that it had shown the humanitarian attitude of the American government while at the same time it had retained the confidence of the French people showing them that they had not been completely abandoned. ⁸⁶ After the Red Cross shipments demonstrated their good effect and the sincerity of the Vichy government in the retention of the materials in the unoccupied zone, other shipments of various kinds were instituted. Later in April, shiploads of wheat were destined for France. Although the assistance was primarily for the French people, the continued aid was used as a lever with the Vichy government. In the instance of the wheat shipments, the flour was converted into bread and distributed to the people on their usual rations tickets. ⁸⁷ While this did not increase too much the supply of bread available to the ordinary Frenchmen, it did increase the dependence of Vichy on the United States for this supply. As a result, whenever there seemed to be more collaboration with the Germans than necessary or when instances seemed to point to such action, the State Department informed Leahy to tell Pétain or Darlan that the shipments of aid would be continued only upon demonstration of their resistance to pressure. Such leverage was used in the spring of 1941 after Vichy became accustomed to receiving the much-needed wheat.

Reports had filtered in from various sources that storages of oil and gasoline in North Africa and France were being used by the Axis forces in the Mediterranean area. It was reported, in addition, that Germans were

infiltrating into North Africa. As a result, Leahy told Petain early in April, even before the shipments became numerous, that the Vichy government could help the continuation of these shipments by quieting the rumors of French escorts for supply ships, stopping oil shipments, and investigating German movements into the African region.⁶⁸ These rumors had created a protest in public opinion in the United States which accused Vichy of being secretly aiding the Axis while taking assistance from the United States at the same time. However, reports that Germans were visiting North Africa and that oil was being supplied to Italy were forced into triviality late in the spring of 1941 with the more serious accounts of Darlan's talks with Abetz culminating in the Paris Protocols of June. This will be discussed after an examination into the subject of more aid for France through economic assistance to North Africa.

7. Aid to Africa: A Calculated Risk

The importance of North and West Africa when considered strategically has already been discussed. The Mediterranean, long considered a British lake as much as the Caribbean is considered an American lake, was dangerously threatened by an Axis closing German preponderance in Africa, in addition to cutting of the Suez life-line to Britain, would be a source of worry for the safety of the Western Hemisphere. As early as July of 1940, the Germans had "requested" the use of at least eight air bases, a railroad, and the weather stations in North Africa. The Vichy government refused to do so even though Laval went to Paris to confer with Abetz about other areas of collaboration. As a result of this attempt to observe the armistice terms, the demarcation line, heretofore just a border between two zones, was severely tightened allowing very little, if any, intercourse from one part of France to the other. An additional reprisal was the sending of captured French

prisoners to Germany to an unknown fate.⁸⁹ Thereafter, Vichy was understandably wary of alienating the Germans in order to prevent similar demonstrations of power.

Formulating the policy of assisting those who were opposing, or who might oppose, the Axis, the State Department had envisioned some sort of economic and material assistance to the French colonies in Africa. This plan would involve commercial trade between the United States and these areas with a favorable balance toward Africa. There would be advantages in an arrangement of this sort. Having North Africa dependent on the United States for gas, sugar, clothing, and tea (for the Arabs) would necessarily make it less dependent on Vichy France and the Axis nations for trade.⁹⁰ Aiding the economic and financial stability of the region would also have the effect of strengthening the area for resistance to Germany, which despite Hendaye and Montoire, might still make a strong and surprising move across the Mediterranean. It was possible too, as Paul Guerin, a Moroccan railroad official, pointed out to men in Washington that Spain might try to "bit^e off" a section of French territory bordering on its own colony.⁹¹ In such an instance, having the region strong enough to resist the Spanish army would be of obvious good. In addition, having the good will of the Africans and the army there would make them more disposed toward the United States when and if it ever became involved in the war.

Any trade was subject, of course, to the British blockade, but it was rightly believed by State Department officials that North Africa could be classified as an area that would not help the Axis effort. Both General Weygand and General Boisson, Governor of West Africa, were violently anti-German; their regions would not be in danger as long as they remained in control. Moreover, the British had expressed a desire to trade in Africa

themselves. ⁹²

Anxious that the United States take advantage of Laval's absence from the Vichy government, Roosevelt sent, as a roving emissary, Robert Murphy to Algiers in January 1941 to confer with General Weygand about a possible trade agreement. ⁹³ The report from Murphy was favorable, but the British responded with a surprising move that almost sank hopes of a successful interchange. Maintaining that they did not place much faith in Weygand's ability or desire to resist the Germans (remembering his role in the surrender of France), British officials refused to lift the blockade around the coast of Africa except at Morocco. ⁹⁴ This plan would not include the areas of Algiers or Tunisia which the United States wanted strengthened, especially since the latter bordered on Italian Libya making it susceptible to easy attack. It is probably for the proximity of these two areas to Libya which caused the British to vote against a plan which could easily leak supplies to Mussolini's campaign toward Egypt. Insistent that all the colonies should have trade with the United States in order for the policy to be effective, the State Department informed the London government that it planned to work out an agreement and start this trade without British acquiescence if necessary. ⁹⁵

After the conversations with Weygand, Murphy signed a memorandum with the General on February 26 embodying the following provisions:

- 1) the shipments from the United States would not be stockpiled or accumulated in surplus,
- 2) the products would be consumed in French North Africa and not be re-exported in any form,
- 3) control by American representatives in railways and ports handling the supplies,
- 4) automatic termination of the agreement by the United

States in case of violation of any of the above clauses.⁹⁶

The frozen French funds in the United States paid for the shipments, incidentally, and they were not free gifts.⁹⁷ Technically the agreement could be classified as some sort of aid, for without it North Africa would not have received any supplies at all. The British were displeased over the Murphy-Weygand Accord and objected to the program for the reason that there was no quid pro quo arrangement with Vichy. Britain suggested that in order for the trade agreement to be implemented, Vichy would guarantee that there would be no collaboration, especially with regard to German infiltration into North Africa. London further wanted French warships in France and the Mediterranean colonies sent to African Atlantic ports of Dakar or Casablanca.⁹⁸ For this sacrificial undertaking, Vichy could have unoccupied France included in the same arrangement.⁹⁹ Hull disagreed with the British plan and thought it demanding too much of a prior stipulation for Vichy to agree to without provoking German wrath. The transfer of the ships would be against the 1940 armistice, and Vichy might junk the plan thereby wrecking the entire North African policy. Hull also had it from secret sources in the German War Ministry that Hitler was planning to launch a spring attack toward the east at Russia and the Balkans, hopefully surmising that the German's primary interest would fade in the west and be directed elsewhere.¹⁰⁰

Instead, Hull proposed an alternative plan whereby the wheat shipments would go to Vichy also while Leahy exerted pressure to get what the British desired as the quid pro quo.¹⁰¹ Still, this difference of opinion over which should come first remained a sore spot of contention for some time between Britain and the United States. It is somewhat amusing to note this

British stand in what they asked the United States to do the same thing later with regard to British food shipments to Spain.

As regards the provisions of the Murphy-Weygand Agreement, it is seen that astute diplomatic thinking was used to gain an advantage for the United States while formulating a policy which would still be beneficial to Weygand. These benefits, however small, were useful in building up the strength of North Africa to prevent German encroachment and again worked to yet another advantage for the United States. The first provision took care that there would be no cache of United States food in North Africa should the Germans suddenly change their minds and invade the colony. It also would help enforce the second provision should Weygand be replaced by a pro-Axis governor. As a final consolation, the people in North Africa needed the food rather badly, and so by this clause the agreement assured them that the aid would be received and the propaganda value would not be lost.

The second provision sought to prevent what the British were fearful of, that is, re-exportation openly or secretly to the Axis in its fight for the Suez. This also prevented the supplies from being transhipped to metropolitan France where they might fall into the hands of collaborationists or into the black market.

The third clause had many possibilities in its implications. The control officers were, ostensibly, to see that the first two provisions were carried out. This undertaking was welcomed by the French.¹⁰² It took the responsibility of fulfilling the agreement out of their hands and freed the populace from the well-known French red-tape in bureaucracy, as well as preventing attempts to aid the Axis. To the United States, it prevented a wealth of opportunities. The control officers would have to come from the United States thereby augmenting the consular staffs throughout North Africa.

It was fortunate that these men were chosen from sharp-eyed military intelligence officers. Working constantly in strategic railway centers and ports, these officers could collect information and data that would prove highly useful. In addition, they would be in a position to observe "tourists and scientists" of German origin who filtered in to spread propaganda to the willy-nilly Africans. Even from his post at Vichy, Leahy realized that these officers were actually spying. He believed that even Pétain and Darlan knew they were collecting military information. 103

The last clause of the accord provided the United States with a means to influence and pressure the North African colonial government to prevent the preceding provisions from being violated. It could also be used beyond the bounds of the accord to persuade Vichy, as well as North Africa, from collaboration in other matters. If it seemed that Vichy was pressured to go beyond the terms of the armistice, as she was in April of 1941 by Italy, the threat of a cession of shipments to Africa and relief to France could be used to stiffen the sagging resistance. In the incident mentioned above, Italy demanded 5,000 tons of gasoline from Algiers in April to help her in the disappointing war against Greece and in the second drive toward Egypt. Leahy, having heard of this, reminded Darlan that to comply would break his word to the United States that oil would not be delivered from Africa to the Axis. If there was a violation of this pledge, he went on to say the United States might find it necessary to halt relief and assistance to the colonies. Faced with this situation, Darlan told him he would try to persuade Italy to accept the oil from the occupied area rather than from Algiers. Leahy wondered to himself if this were not an attempt to weaken the position of Weygand through long-term strategy, but this factor seemed to have been refuted by Darlan's answer. 104

Through the Murphy-Weygand Accord, then, the United States had formulated a positive policy and had instituted safeguards to prevent its being used against its creator. Through international trade the State Department had sought to bring stability to the African colonies and prevent not only disorder, but also military weakness, both of which could openly invite interference by Germany.¹⁰⁵ The policy had opened up favorable areas for sympathetic feeling toward the United States as well as causing a dependence of those areas upon the continued goodwill of a nation which could stop the arrival of food if there were any moves in the Axis direction. When the French, both in Vichy and in North Africa, had satisfied the State Department that they were inclined to yield to the United States viewpoint, then the shipments were begun again.

This method of doling out food, stopping it and starting it again, caused some facets of American public opinion to condemn the policy as being weak and subject to the fascist whims of the men at Vichy. It was felt that North Africa had been tainted by the connection with the defeatists, collaborationists, and fascists of the Vichy government. In the minds of the attackers of the Murphy-Weygand Accord, this was no recommendation. To them, to have trade with Africa was bad enough in view of their conviction that all the food and oil went directly to the Axis, but when it was found out that the British had yielded to State Department pressure to raise the blockade to the ships carrying supplies to Weygand, a virtual howl was raised. (Churchill's permission for ships to go to unoccupied France covered North Africa as well, March 29, 1941.) The Nation was shocked; referring to the shipments of oil and other supplies, it stated, "The idea that Weygand can be weaned from Vichy by special favors seems to be as dangerous as the idea...that Mussolini might be weaned from the Axis..."¹⁰⁶ Addressing the British, it

went on to say, "We hasten to assure you that the average American isn't so stupid as to believe these 'guarantees' [not to reship] worth the paper they're written on. Vichy is ruled by men who betrayed their country."¹⁰⁷

This tends to become a valid point when it is recalled that Weygand was sent to North Africa only to get him out of the way of the Germans; if they did not like his conduct there, pressure could be brought to bear, as it was later, for his removal. Nevertheless, it was a hope and a possibility that North Africa might join the fight against the Axis sometime in the future. If Weygand was still in power, if the Germans did not get there before the British did, if the populace were sympathetic with the fight against fascism, and if Vichy did not sell out, then the building up of the African colonies would be proved to have been a success. The Murphy-Weygand agreement was, like many of the agreements between the United States and France during the war, a desperate gamble, a calculated risk.

In view of the fact, then, that the United States had committed itself to a policy of maintaining Weygand by food and materials, it is possible to contend that the fourth clause of the Murphy agreement with the General did not allow as much freedom of action as was originally thought. If the United States was definitely sure that North Africa could be held against German and Vichy maneuvers by these shipments, then it could not afford to halt them. In this instance, it must be admitted that there was not complete freedom of action. On the other hand, there is nothing to prevent the policy's evolving to one in which the termination of supply became only temporary until Vichy or the colonial government had given evidence that they were again willing to cooperate. This is, in substance, what happened. If, of course, there was a serious breach of faith on the part of North Africa or one involving a flagrant and unnecessary concession beyond the

terms of the armistice by Vichy, the agreement would have ended immediately. It was better to have the threatened halt of shipments to use as an instrument of persuasion against such occurrences, both large and small, than to insist upon an overly strict observance. The evolution of the policy to give it the flexibility which it assumed had much to offer over a period of time in which there were many different stresses and strains in American-Vichy relations.

Having investigated the aims and objects of the United States in the Murphy-Weygand Accord, it becomes necessary to check the motives behind Vichy's acceptance of the agreement. If the United States and Britain someday hoped that the standard of revolt would be raised in North Africa, would this not be either against Vichy control involving German reprisals, or against a German intervention? How then could Vichy sanction the agreement which would also necessarily require an additional German approval? Naturally it can be seen that by allowing the shipments to aid North Africa Vichy risked, in a small way, the chance that partisans in the colonies might break away from her authority. However, since the United States had made a gamble with the agreement, Vichy could make one too. Vichy took a gamble, not because the United States had, but because it seemed to her benefit to do so. The chance that the colonies might revolt after receiving American aid was, in Vichy eyes, rather small. However, without it, and the combination of having to rely on Vichy or the Axis for its supplies, probably not forthcoming, there stood a good risk that they might. Vichy could ill afford not to let the United States help her keep the colonies loyal and strong enough to resist a German or Italian move if it came. General Weygand, the Governor of North Africa, had sworn to defend the area against the Axis and it was expected that he would. His oath of personal allegiance to Pétain was extra insurance that the colony would remain under the Vichy regime.

Having received British permission to trade across the Mediterranean

with Africa, Vichy could rely on this area for replenishing certain foods and other materials which were scarce at home. With North Africa being stabilized economically through American assistance, Vichy could be helped by having her own population fed. The agreement also added to Vichy's prestige.

The German Armistice Commission has to be included in these considerations. Without its approval, surely the Vichy government could not have agreed to the provisions and policy entailed. It must have been gratifying to the Nazis to believe that North Africa would not become a resistance area against the Vichy government and reënter the war allied with the British. From their point of view, Weygand was an enemy, but at the same time he was faithful to the Marshal who had agreed to collaboration in principle at Montoire a few months before. If North Africa was stronger, this segment of the French Empire could be defended as Pétain had sworn to do. This area could be held without an outlay of German troops. Did the Germans approve of the agreement, it has been suggested,¹⁰⁸ because they thought that Vichy had 'put one over' the United States? This seems probable in view of Hitler's plans for the Vichy government.

As the Germans thought, had Vichy indeed duped the United States? Despite a fear of repetition, the advantages and disadvantages of the Murphy-Weygand Accord must be reviewed.

Basically a nation having a strong humanitarian feeling, the United States had helped to prevent the North Africans from want and hunger. In doing this, however, the Americans had also made the government of the colonies stronger to do the bidding of Vichy. The merits of this aspect of the policy have to be decided on one's opinion of whether it is better to be

hungry and under a liberal government or fed and under an authoritarian one. Nonetheless, fearing that Germany conceivably could take over North Africa either by troops or by Vichy-appointed Nazis, it was hoped that the populace and the army could better resist them if aided by the United States. A movement across the Mediterranean was a big step for Hitler to begin with; if it were stronger by American shipments, it might be impossible.

Although there were some leaks to the Axis of French materials in Africa in spite of the Vichy pledges against them, these can not be said to have been abetted by the Murphy-Weygand Accord and American shipments which resulted. Occurrences of this sort were bound to happen under a regime such as Vichy-controlled Africa. But this is not to say that they were going to happen in spite of the United States; far more such instances were prevented by the pressure and presence of control officers. Added to this is the substantial information concerning railway centers, telephone exchanges, military installations, and other strategic locations which was being gathered by the intelligence personnel placed there by the United States only because the Murphy-Weygand Accord had made it possible.

Because Weygand supported the regime of Pétain and took orders from him, and because Pétain had impressed Leahy as representing that element of Vichy which sought to oppose Nazi Germany, it was hoped, with good justification, that by supporting these men in their positions, their policies might become dominant, or, at least, a deterrent on the extreme collaborationists. It has been argued that the United States, by giving props to the Vichy colonial government, prevented the colony from declaring its allegiance to General deGaulle later.¹⁰⁹ This may have been so, but there are other considerations which make its arguments weak. Previous to the signing of the Murphy-Weygand agreement, deGaulle had shown no great strength; indeed, his

failure to convince the authorities in unaided West Africa in September of 1940 of his cause pointed up the futility of hoping that this might come about. British and American hopes that North Africa might come into the war again were based on the belief that it would do so by its own initiative or by a German affront, not by the pleas of deGaulle whom the colonial army considered a traitor. In addition, it was found out much later that only among the lower classes was there much enthusiasm for deGaulle. Unfortunately, it was not these elements who were the sources of authority in the colony, but the army. If the army, through the Vichy-controlled government held the people down, it was not because the United States had helped them in this respect. On the contrary, it was to these lower classes that the food and clothing was sent.

If, as it has been argued, the United States fastened the Vichy control more closely to the North African colony through the Murphy-Weygand Accord, it must be contended in refutation that the advantages which were gained outweighed the arguments attacking it. The British could not present a force necessary to conquer the neutral area; for the time being, the United States had to use diplomacy to make certain that it did remain neutral. It must be remembered that in the early months of 1941, there was no complete assurance as to which direction Vichy would go. American hopes were for a favorable decision. The Murphy-Weygand Accord was based on this hope and sought to make it a reality.

8. Crisis in the Near East: the Paris Protocols

In the spring of 1941, Hitler stood poised at the height of his power in Europe. At that time, he could have made a perfect decision and entrenched himself in Africa and the Near East. Had he done so, the war

would have lasted, by some guesses, at least five years longer than it did. This done, Admiral Darlan would have earned the infamous place in history as the man who had made the situation easier for the Nazis. Hitler's attack on Russia in June, however, released Darlan from this possible degradation and placed him in the position of a French opportunist who tried to regain his nation's position at a time in which the balance could have gone in either direction. Hitler's fatal mistake was what saved France and Darlan, not any special effort from the Admiral himself.

Laval's dismissal had been a disappointment for the Germans. Darlan had to prove to them that he was willing to collaborate himself in order to prevent pressure for the former's reinstatement. The Germans had shown a definite desire to come to some understanding with the French and to draw up an agreement in which both sides would grant and gain concessions. Darlan therefore entered into negotiations with Abetz in Paris early in May. Out of these conferences came an arrangement whereby France granted to the Germans advantages in the Near East and in North and West Africa for vague concessions to the Vichy government. In regard to the French mandated area of Syria, Axis planes were allowed to be serviced and refueled at bases there; approximately three-fourths of French arms in Syria would be given to rebels against the British in Iraq with the transportation furnished; Axis ships were allowed to use Syrian port facilities and French officials found objectionable to the Axis would be removed. In addition, information on British installations in Iraq would be given to the Axis. 110

The protocol concerning the African colonies was just as serious in its implications. The Germans were to be allowed use of the Tunisian port of Bizerte to supply Axis troops in Libya; French trucks and guns were to be sold to the Axis and French transport ships in the Mediterranean trade could

be used to the German and Italian effort. Further grants to the Axis were use of the West African port of Dakar for submarines, French transportation facilities, and the recall, again, of objectionable officials. ¹¹¹

In return, Vichy received assurances of a vague nature concerning military, political, and economic areas. The clauses were worded in such a way that settlements would be discussed in the future. Nonetheless the Germans might relax the restrictions between the two zones in France, reduce the costs of occupation, and allow the rearmament of several destroyers and PT boats. As a further concession to Vichy, German permission was entertained for the strengthening of French forces in Syria, North, and West Africa with perhaps, permission given Weygand for the attacking of the French colony of Equatorial Africa which had transferred its allegiance to deGaulle. ¹¹² Included at the end of these agreements, known thereafter as the Paris Protocols, was an additional Protocol Complémentaire which was the sine qua non of the French and German discussions.

From the listening post at Vichy, the United States State Department heard of the discussions between Darlan and Abetz and gathered that they were of a collaborationist nature. Although the provisions were extremely secret, whatever they were, in view of the distrust for Darlan held by the United States and Britain, it was believed that they would work no good for the forces opposing the Axis. On the thirteenth of May, Leahy delivered to Pétain a note from President Roosevelt telling Vichy that the United States wished to relieve the distress in France by sending the two shiploads of wheat which had been requested, but could not do so if France persisted in going beyond the terms of the armistice. ¹¹³ Pétain replied that he did not know yet what Admiral Darlan had accomplished by his talks in Paris, but there would be no voluntary military assistance. ¹¹⁴

The crisis was rapidly coming to a head. On the fifteenth, after Darlan's return to Vichy, Marshal Pétain broadcast a message to the French people saying essentially that he approved of the meeting in principle (my italics), and that the public, badly informed and unable to judge, would have to follow blindly the policy which would restore France to her accustomed power. ¹¹⁵ On the same day, President Roosevelt issued a public statement appealing to the French people over the heads of the Vichy government to "uphold the democratic cause." ¹¹⁶

Pétain had said that he approved of the discussions, but it was because he hoped that it would ease the pressure for the return of Laval and might work to restore France in a new Europe. But finding out the specific provisions, he immediately summoned Governors Weygand and Boisson to find out their reaction to the Protocols. Threatened with the "permanent loss of friendship and good will of the American people toward France" ¹¹⁷ Pétain must have believed the provisions objectionable also to traditional French honor. Weygand and Boisson, upon arriving in Vichy, were vehement. Neither would allow the Germans in their respective territories and Weygand feared the announcement of the provisions would bring uprisings in Algeria. ¹¹⁸ The combination of American pressure and the protestations from the colonial governors killed the idea that the Paris Protocols would be ratified by Pétain. It was announced on June 6 that they were rejected. ¹¹⁹

Darlan could have easily been in difficulty with the rejection of these Protocols for effective collaboration. However, while at Berchtesgaden in the middle of May talking to Hitler himself, Darlan had been given the hint that war would break out soon between Germany and Russia. He therefore surmised that to continue the proposals and to make promises while Hitler was busy in the East might bring immediate advantages to France. ¹²⁰ This he did,

and turned the disadvantage into an advantage for France by negotiating on the provisions of the Protocol Complementary. Expanding the concessions under which the Paris Protocols were negotiated, Darlan sought permission from Germany for Vichy to govern all of France without the onerous costs of occupation and with the gradual release of all prisoners held by Germany. In addition he asked for assurances that Germany would have no designs on Syria, North or West Africa, and pressed for the reduction of the control commissions appointed by the Wiesbaden committee in the African colonies, 121 These were rather impertinent demands from the defeated French, but they put the Germans on the defensive. If these were the basic considerations before the French would discuss further collaboration, Germany could not accept them even if toned down. Knowing that Weygand, Boisson, and Pétain had been responsible for the rejection of the earlier agreements, Germany could not forcefully achieve the plans which were held for France without seriously alienating the African regions. Even if it gained the advantages forcefully of what Darlan had agreed to before but which had been rejected, there would be the disadvantage of almost certain revolt by the colonies. The German wishes were far beyond the terms of the armistice, but the only way they could be fulfilled was through Vichy acquiescence, not by a forceful move which would lose far more than what would be gained. 122

While Darlan was biding time, Germany turned to the East and went to war on Russia June 22. It was hoped that in attacking the colossus, Hitler would turn his main attentions away from the Mediterranean area. Not to take any chances, however, Roosevelt ordered the Coast Guard to seize all French ships. 123 This served not only as a rebuke to Vichy, for its recent behavior, but also to increase the convoys to Britain under the Lend-Lease Act.

Vichy protested, but their grounds were not defensible. After talking to Pétain and Darlan, Leahy figured out some of the clauses of the secret protocols. " Darlan almost said Germany had asked for use of French bases in North Africa by declining to say the Germans had not asked for them. 124

Although the Axis did not abandon the Mediterranean as a theater, they decided to give up gigantic schemes in that direction. The talks about full collaboration by Vichy had come to no avail. The demands by Darlan, of course, could not be accepted and the negotiations were broken off. 125 The Paris Protocols were forgotten, and the threat that France might join the Axis waned.

Darlan must be given some credit for trying to secure for France the position to which she was accustomed. The armistice of June 1940, hastily thrown together, was becoming outmoded as far as the relations between France and Germany were concerned. The designers of the Vichy government could not hope that their creation could live unless Germany would deal with them as, say, the United States had. If Germany were to be victorious in the war, Darlan, as Vichy's Foreign Minister, would have to use diplomatic negotiations in order to achieve for her the best he could. That he must be condemned for not opposing Hitler with all possible strength is admitted. It must be added, however, that in his dealings with the Führer, it seemed that he was working for the ultimate good of France should the Nazis defeat Britain. If, on the other hand, the Reich should be crushed by a combination of forces which opposed her, then France could still be strong enough to join in the fight. By pushing for the strengthening of Vichy forces in the colonies, he not only could tell Hitler that these were for the defense against Britain, but he could also say that they could be used against German intervention. By granting the concessions to Germany through the

Protocols, France might be relieved of her heavy cost of occupation and have her prisoners returned.¹²⁶ After the rejection of the Paris Protocols and the later cancellation of negotiations, France and Germany admitted that neither would grant the other what was wished. Since Germany had not been able to achieve the concessions through negotiations with Darlan, she would thereafter either try to find a Frenchman who would give in, or she would take them.

Knowing that the Paris Protocols were opposed by Pétain and Weygand and that through their rejection of Darlan's agreements Germany had not been allowed the use of bases in North Africa, the United States policy toward Weygand through economic aid stood justified.¹²⁷ Leahy's singling out Pétain as one who opposed granting the Germans concessions beyond the terms of the armistice without severe pressure also seemed to have been good judgment on his part. Knowing that not only would the aid to the colonies and Vichy be stopped, but that also there stood the threat of relations with the United States being broken, Pétain used his limited power as head of the government to deter Darlan. Whatever the advantages that might be gained by closer ties with Germany and Italy, they would be far less than those which resulted from having good relations with the United States. Leahy had brought strong pressure on Pétain and had let him know plainly that his government would not calmly allow France to help defeat Great Britain. In so doing, those elements which opposed full collaboration had caused the crisis to pass.

Meanwhile in the Near East, British troops had succeeded in putting down the rebels in Iraq. The oil-producing areas were still threatened by Axis penetration in Syria. The United States had already protested to Vichy

against the German usage of airbases in the mandated colony on the basis of its pledge when accepting it that it would not allow any influence in its sovereignty by any other power. ¹²⁸ The protest had come after the Germans had started using the bases, and had been a part of those hectic days between May and June. Vichy had made no satisfactory reply and the matter hung on. The British were not so passive about the threat to her lifelines of oil and the Suez canal. On June 8, a British force with Free French troops included ¹²⁹ invaded Syria. It was expected that only token resistance would be offered the invaders, but the presence of the deGaulleists increased the bitter fighting. Matters were not helped by a statement made by General Catroux commanding the Free French troops. In asking the Vichy troops to join the deGaulle movement, he also announced the independence of Syria from France. This put Vichy in the position of defending the empire while deGaulle was trying to give it away. Resistance was offered for almost a month before Governor-General Dentz signed the surrender on July 15.

When it appeared that Vichy would do more than offer token resistance in Syria, Hull denounced the action to Henry-Hays. Calling the fighting a "disappointment" for Americans, he took objection to Vichy doing "...Germany's fighting in the Syrian area." ¹³⁰ Vichy's action in the Syrian campaign does not call much defense to it. It was Darlan, bitterly anti-British, who ordered the resistance continued and this does not add to his reputation. Perhaps the only excuse that may be offered was his fear that unless Vichy defended her empire, Germany might step in to help. Darlan could not afford to allow that to happen especially in North Africa.

The United States had good cause to review the Vichy policy or to halt shipments to Weygand as a protest. This was not done, however, for

Weygand did not have control over Syria and he further had reassured the United States that he would try to defend North Africa against the Germans.¹³¹ There had been an attempt to lay the blame of the Syrian fighting to the United States recognition of the Vichy regims.¹³² The evidence is so flimsy as to merit its dismissal. However, for the record, if it be so, it is claimed that the High-Commissioner of Syria had issued a statement after the French surrender that he would support General deGaulle. On hearing that the United States had recognized the government of Marshal Petain, he tore up the directive to London, and entrenched himself in the area to follow the orders issued from Vichy. Thus the United States was blamed for the area coming under the influence of Nazi infiltration and the cause of the deaths of British and Free French forces trying to retake the area. This story apparently has never appeared anywhere save in this account (see footnote) and a brief mention by the same author in the Nation. Even the memoirs of Aglion, a French official in Syria, do not support this accusation. Besides, the army was the chief source of authority in Syria and it followed the commands of the Marshal. It is rather doubtful that the United States recognition had any effect on the army's decision to obey its orders from Vichy.

During all the turmoil about the Paris Protocols and the British action in Syria, there came an unusual offer from the Caribbean. Admiral Robert offered the United States base facilities on Martinique and French Guiana.¹³³ There had been clamor from the American public to break relations with Vichy over the attempts at collaboration and perhaps Vichy sought to soothe the State Department by offering bases which the United States could easily use. The bases in the Caribbean were a gift which was rather small when compared to what Vichy was planning to give Germany. In

addition, any agreement which Vichy attempted to conclude would have to be passed on by the Germans. The United States would not place itself in the position of allowing Vichy to lead her on only to be tyrrd by the mere order from Wiesbaden. ¹³⁴ Even on the outside chance that Germany would agree, it seems possible that Vichy would ask for a quid pro quo which the United States could not have honored. In either situation the United States would be scorned for having truckled to Vichy. The offer was outrightly rejected; Sumner Welles suggested that Vichy be asked whether she was planning to let Germany have control over the colonies rather than the United States. ¹³⁵

In July of 1941, Japan began to press the Vichy government further to allow Japan to have success to all parts of Indo-China and to complete that country's control over the French colony. French forces in the area were hardly up to resisting the Japanese ultimatum. ¹³⁶ Surely pressed by Berlin to comply, Vichy could take no other course. On the twenty-first of the month, Vichy and Japan signed a joint agreement for the "joint defence of Indo-China against all external aggression." ¹³⁷ The terminology could not be aimed at anyone except Britain. Washington protested strongly to Vichy for legalizing this obvious aggression. Perhaps Vichy hoped that Japan would recognize French sovereignty over the area after the conquest of China. In any case this was a weak excuse knowing Japanese designs over all of Asia. What irked Hull and the majority of American public opinion was the cloak of legality given Japan without even firing a shot of token resistance. The contrast between Japanese invasions and British invasions was not conducive to making friends in Washington or London. The action of the Japanese was almost forgotten in the rush to blast Vichy. Said Hull, " public opinion seemed more bitter against Vichy France for legalizing

the move than against Japan for making it." ¹³⁸

Freda Kirchwey, the editor and publisher of the Nation, launched into an attack against the State Department policy toward Vichy as well as at the government itself. Speaking of the Indo-China incident, she said, "It had also exposed beyond further concealment the status of Vichy and has demonstrated again the dangerous absurdity of treating Hitler's French functionaries as if they were the heads of a government." ¹³⁹ Recalling Vichy's pledge to defend its empire, she queried whether France would defend the African colonies as Syria and Indo-China had been defended. Perhaps "Vichy will beg its good neighbor Germany...to assist it in defending these outposts of empire." ¹⁴⁰

The relations between the United States and Vichy began to decline steadily during the summer of 1941 and never again regained the former status of sympathy. There was no one to blame except Vichy. Lend-Lease supplies had been going through Britain to the deGaullists, but the situation had not declined enough to cast off Vichy and to recognize the Free French. The fleet and the African colonies as well as military information were sufficient reasons enough to swallow Yankee pride; deGaulle had moral persuasion on his side, but not the Vichy colonies.

With all the talk from the State Department about supplying Weygand, there had only been two tankers of gasoline sent to North Africa by the first of July. ¹⁴¹ Weygand had expressed to Murphy a desire to know how much military aid could be provided him. Neither Roosevelt nor Hull thought much of this plan. In the first place, the supply of material could not be directed away from Britain in order to take a gamble as risky as this one. ¹⁴² Secondly, this could be used as an excuse by the Germans

to invade the colonies ¹⁴³ or, perhaps, ask for the fleet. In any case, the effect of sending American boys abroad before war was declared would have brought down the wrath of America First and damaged American feeling of unity when the war finally came. It was also doubtful whether Weygand would take an independent military action at that time. ¹⁴⁴ Earlier, in January, the General had said he would employ military action only if ordered to do so (which Pétain had not done) or if Germany occupied all of France or attempted an invasion of Africa, or if the United States entered the war. ¹⁴⁵ None of the qualifying aspects had come into play either. Still, Weygand made no complaint about the United States not fulfilling his expectations of the Murphy Accord with him. ¹⁴⁶ While the United States had not been successful in every instance to prevent minor leaks of materials, this was still no justification for the meager shipments to North Africa if it expected Weygand to use them to keep out the Germans. In this regard, it must be pointed out that essential shipments at that time were to Britain; this prevented a larger allocation to the French colonies.

Even for its moral support and minute shipments to Weygand, the Vichy policy found no sympathy among the professional liberals. Again the Nation pointed out the foolishness of the approach to North Africa: "The combination of bribes and warnings applied to Vichy may for the moment strengthen the elements which oppose full and complete collaboration with Hitler in Africa. That it will fail in the long run is certain. Vichy will yield to Hitler when it must, as it yielded in Indo-China." ¹⁴⁷

The fall of 1941 saw no specific interchange between the United States and France. The crisis of the early summer months had eased and the relations were not to come under a strain again for some more months. The real

action developed between the press and the State Department. About middle way through the summer after deGaulle had been tested by the Syrian campaign, the push began for a recognition of the Free French movement. The New Republic analyzed the French situation and made some constructive suggestions. Maintaining that United States diplomacy was a failure, the magazine disputed that the policy toward Vichy had prevented the Germans from obtaining the fleet; the French sailors had done that. Vichy pledges to defend the empire were worthless; consult the Indo-China incident. Vichy, moreover, had not kept her pledges about naval bases in the colonies of Africa. The course to take should be to recognize deGaulle and keep only a "listening post" at Vichy.¹⁴⁸ The Nation advanced the thought that the continuation of relations with Vichy were detrimental to the fight against Hitler. It claimed that "Many persons in important positions who are now hesitating would never allow themselves to be identified with German fascism. They are undecided at present because Vichy still says that it is 'on excellent terms with the... Americans.'" ¹⁴⁹ Life caused an exchange of notes protesting an article which criticized Vichy and called the National Revolution "...a project of constructing a medieval authoritarian state on the ruins of a modern democracy;...modified fascism. The American diplomats...consider the Vichy government as slightly absurd."¹⁵⁰ Hull reminded Vichy when the latter article was protested that there was freedom of press in the United States.

When the British gave tacit recognition to deGaulle's Free French National Committee on September 24, the pressure from the press for the United States to follow suit began in a slow crescendo. The recurring theme was the need to break relations with a regime which was fascist. It has been pointed out, however, that the policy could not be based on ideology.¹⁵¹

Information was filtering through to Washington, also, as a result of the agents which circulated around and from the contacts which had been made. In the spring had come the report that men in the French army were hoping desperately for the Allies to win.¹⁵² Leahy himself had been curious about a naval attache in the American embassy at Vichy. It was not until later that he found out he was a secret OSS agent.¹⁵³ The Admiral also found out that spy messages were being sent through the consulate offices throughout France. Fearing bad repercussions if Vichy found out, he had it stopped.¹⁵⁴

Still supporting his belief that friends could and would be made by more relief shipments to the unoccupied area, Leahy made special efforts in September to have the Red Cross sponsor them.¹⁵⁵ By October, Weygand had received another tanker of gasoline and four cargo ships filled with sugar, coal, cotton and tea under the provisions of the Accord.¹⁵⁶

9. Exit Weygand

The situation in France was meanwhile coming to a head. As far as the Germans were concerned, Weygand would have to go. Admiral Darlan was somewhat sympathetic with their plans himself. By way of beginning, the relations between Germany and Vichy had deteriorated after the negotiations for the Paris Protocols to the point of their being broken off in August.¹⁵⁷ Germany's attack on Russia had provoked conflicting developments. Vichy had broken relations with Russia at the end of June,¹⁵⁸ but the resistance groups began a rash of assassinations and sabotage which had resulted in the execution of French hostages.¹⁵⁹ Darlan had to find a way to keep the Germans from ignoring the Vichy government and taking measures beyond the terms of the armistice without negotiations for concessions. His policy

was two-fold: to express his willingness to collaborate, and to grant the Germans minor concessions which could not satisfy them,¹⁶⁰ but which he hoped would hold back their demands while he bided time. In so doing, he alienated the United States by his blatant talk about collaboration and he also stirred up General Weygand in Africa. He granted to the Germans use of French trucks to transport supplies to Libya from Tunisia where they had been purchased by the Germans.¹⁶¹ When Weygand protested to the Admiral, it was decided that in order to continue this policy, the General would have to be dismissed.

Darlan was not alone in his personal dislike of Weygand; the Germans began a pressure campaign that would, sooner or later, demand his dismissal. Blackmail was resorted to; the Marshal could not discuss an improvement of relations between Germany and Vichy until Weygand was relieved of his post.¹⁶² Meanwhile, the shooting of hostages continued. Weygand was summoned to Vichy on the sixteenth and a momentous meeting of the cabinet occurred two days later. Presented were two alternatives: to defend Weygand and stand up to the Germans at the same time, or dismiss him. Darlan decided the choice.¹⁶³ General Juin succeeded Weygand, but other subordinate officials retained their positions.¹⁶⁴

The reaction in the diplomatic corps was immediate. Welles summoned Ambassador Henry-Haye the next day to tell him that the dismissal was regarded in the United States as proof the Germans would increase their control over Vichy and the colonies.¹⁶⁵ Leahy immediately sought and received an interview with the Marshal in which he conveyed American reaction to the dismissal as being beyond the terms of the Armistice and would probably bring about a suspension of the assistance being sent to the

French colonies. In addition, United States policy toward France and the colonies would surely be reviewed and there was a possibility that a re-adjustment might result.¹⁶⁶

Pétain could only express regret at the dismissal of his old comrade but admitted that it had been forced upon him by German insistence. Fearing they might occupy the rest of France and starve the people by requisitioning all the food in the area,¹⁶⁷ he defended his action as for the good of the French people.¹⁶⁸ His reply did have a ring of truth to it in that the Germans had resorted to blackmail to talk about the future relations with Vichy only after Weygand had been eliminated. Pétain could well express fears since Rommel was retreating into Libya and the German offensive into Russia was beginning to bog down in the winter. In order to continue the offensive, Germany might have to close the ranks on the western front and concentrate its interest in Africa for the winter.

To conjure up the desperate feelings which the United States was experiencing after the firing of Weygand, it must be recalled that the Japanese were making feints into the Southern Pacific and talks in Washington were making it clear that war might be the only solution to the Japanese-American difficulties. It was unknown what Germany might do next; anything could happen with Germany fighting a two-front war. All the planning for Weygand to take an independent action against the Germans had thus come to naught. Economic assistance to the colonies would have to be suspended while the policy was reviewed or terminated entirely.

The immediate reaction was to cancel the Murphy-Weygand Accord and to classify the venture as a failure. It seemed apparent that Vichy had bargained away her one trump of having Weygand in Africa to hold against

the Germans to prevent any move which might cause him to resume the fight. With this anti-German out of the way, it was feared that all of Africa might fall into the Axis hands. There were other possibilities to consider, however. If the United States eliminated itself as a source of supply to the colonies, there would be no other source available to them to prevent economic collapse except Germany.¹⁶⁹ Military intervention might be the next step.

Some action had to be taken in view of the feeling that Vichy had gone beyond the terms of the armistice in submitting to this German demand. Leahy had suggested a strong stand involving his recall for consultation and suspension of assistance while the United States waited to see what Vichy would do next with regard to further collaboration.¹⁷⁰ Murphy had quickly cabled the State Department not to make any hasty judgments on the recent events, especially until details were known.¹⁷¹ There were conflicting rumors about French concessions for military facilities in Africa; with the removal of Weygand, there seemed to be no effective opposition to German domination in the area. There only stood the resistance groups which Murphy had carefully cultivated to work against such a move. These might be a key to discouraging the Germans who would find an unfriendly population and the good possibility that this move could bring France back into the war by means of the colonies.

A wait of several weeks produced no definite moves either by Vichy or Germany, and consequently Leahy was cabled to ask Pétain to renew his assurances concerning the fleet and the colonies.¹⁷² Obviously placing all its confidence in Pétain, now that Weygand had left the scene, the United States had to rely on the element judged to be resisting the Germans

whenever it was possible. With only the word of the Marshal and the pleas of General Weygand in retirement to go on, the Murphy-Weygand Accord was reactivated in exchange for the repledge of Pétain's previous commitments to the United States not to allow the fleet to fall into German hands nor to turn over the colonies.¹⁷³ Any move of this sort would have to be regarded as an unneutral act giving assistance to an enemy.¹⁷⁴ The implications were clear. There was also a personal request from Roosevelt which found Pétain and Darlan agreeable; no naval movements would be made by Admiral Robert in the Caribbean.¹⁷⁵ All the requests by the United States were agreed to with the exception of allowing American disarming of French warships in the Western Hemisphere,¹⁷⁶ and the shipments were resumed.

If the United States had guarded its canal flank by assurances from Vichy, the State Department was not quite so safe. In a call for the overhauling of the department to get rid of appeasers, the Nation found fault with the Vichy policy for neglecting "...to prove to them that we mean business,...and that Hitler is not going to win this war, [and] that our friendship means safety for them."¹⁷⁷ In the same issue, it was noted that the American policy toward Pétain, of "holding his hand," was preventing the full force of the United States from being directed to deGaulle and toward the opposition to collaboration within France. Calling the policy discredited, the magazine supported closer ties with the Free French and thereby making it harder for Hitler to lure the French people to cooperate.¹⁷⁸ The lines would then be clearly drawn.

For Vichy, the sum total of Weygand's dismissal was nil. Pétain's conference with Goering on the first of December had been full of accusations and humiliating experience for the Marshal. Goering wanted no less than the full collaboration of Vichy; this neither Pétain nor Darlan would agree to.

The entrance of the United States had turned Darlan's head. In an interview with Admiral Leahy on the thirteenth of December, he expressed for the first time his skepticism of a German victory. Also for the first time he promised Leahy that the Germans would never penetrate into the African colonies.¹⁸⁰ His defeatist attitude with regard to Germany would soon cost him his job.

At the end of the year, Leahy brought to Darlan's attention that a report of French shipments of gasoline to the Axis would violate the agreements concerning the economic accord. His involved answer boiled down to a submission in face of an Axis threat to occupy Tunisia.¹⁸¹ It may have been a ruse or perhaps it could have been true. The Germans continually made startling threats in order to gain minor concessions, but it is doubtful that they would have risked several thousand tons of gas for the loss of the rest of Africa, or a serious fight in order to conquer the region should it revolt. Darlan was continuing his policy of little concessions in order to hold off the big demands.

Germany had found that in replacing Weygand, they had merely changed the names. Summoning Juin, his replacement, they had demanded supplies and an agreement to fight alongside Rommel if pushed to the Tunisian boundary as the quid pro quo for any relaxation of the burdens of occupation. Vichy refused without the granting of return concessions nearly as strong as those of the Protocol Completaire; the Germans broke off relations again.¹⁸²

10. The Teapot Tempest

On Christmas Eve, while Roosevelt and Churchill were trying to enjoy the holiday in spite of the recent disaster at Pearl Harbor and the global

war gloom, a small group of ships belonging to Free France beached at St. Pierre and Miquelon Islands. From this resulted what Roosevelt called a "teapot tempest" and which was expanded out of all rational proportions: the St. Pierre-Miquelon Affair. These islands, off the coast of Newfoundland, were mere fishing havens belonging to France. After the surrender, they were under the authority of Admiral Robert and the governor, Baron du Bournat. Only a powerful radio station on St. Pierre brought attention to the possibility that German submarines might make use of their location; weather news was continually broadcast, and ship movements might be.

The island populace suffered under the pro-Vichy rule with a stoic spirit and had made overtures to the Free French to be included into the movement. That they should be allowed to would have been noble, but a secret invasion without the prior endorsement of the United States creating an international incident was inexcusable.

The Canadian government brought to the attention of the United States the importance of these islands on the flanks of both nations. It was generally agreed that some sort of supervision should be given the radio, but owing to a patiently worked-out agreement with Admiral Robert to guarantee the status quo of French possessions, the move would have to be delicate.¹⁸³ The move would not be difficult since the islands were dependent on imports for survival and a blockade could force the issue on the governor. Careful planning would have to be made and good excuses would have to be invented to satisfy Vichy which could go either in the Axis camp or retain its neutrality depending on what the next German pressure might be.

Unhappy that any action might be taken on French soil without the inclusion of his forces, General deGaulle sent his rival for leadership,

Admiral Muselier, to Canada in November to investigate the situation and to make plans for the rallying of these islands to the Free French. Britain had already made overtures to the United States that such an idea might be entertained, but neither Canada nor the United States were receptive.¹⁸⁴ A quick look at the reasons behind this are necessary.

Secretary Hull, sensitive over the public attacks on the Vichy policy, harbored a resentment against deGaulle who was the "darling of the liberals." The same viewpoint was not shared either by Hull or by Roosevelt who considered him "a narrow-minded French zealot with too much ambition for his own good and some rather dubious views on democracy."¹⁸⁵ Few people in Washington liked his attitude; to Hull "the very mention of deGaulle was enough to produce an outburst of skillful Tennessee denunciation...,"¹⁸⁶ and Stimson considered him "...a latter-day Joan of Arc."¹⁸⁷ In addition, a serious split had occurred in the ranks of Free France with Admiral Muselier and deGaulle struggling for control. The General's actions had produced many a difficulty between the United States and Britain, one of which had been caustic remarks about the United States and its relations with Vichy.¹⁸⁸ As a final cap to its shunning of deGaulle, the United States feared that by recognizing a single dissident French general as the government of France which already had a government, severe repercussions would result: certain breaking of relations by Vichy and the loss of perhaps the fleet and the colonies. To risk the loss of such carefully cultivated promises just to satisfy a vain and dictatorial leader could not be considered. The recurring theme of backers of the Vichy policy was to the effect that when the United States knocked out the props from underneath the anti-German elements in France, Vichy would be thrown willy-nilly into the arms of the Axis.

After Muselier had asked and been denied permission of the United

to carry out plans for the St. Pierre-Miquelon invasion, he asked his leader for further orders. Although deGaulle had been informed of the refusal on the part of the United States to allow the mission and had agreed that the mission would not be undertaken, he sent a cable to Muselier on the eighteenth of December: "...I order you to carry out rallying of Miquelon Islands before Canada destroys the radio station with the means at your disposal and without saying anything to the foreigners. I assume complete responsibility..."¹⁸⁹ Meanwhile the United States, Canada, and Britain had considered the matter ended for the present.

With four ships, the invasion was carried out with comic-opera similarities. Not a shot was fired; a plebiscite vote the next day upheld the Free French almost unanimously.¹⁹⁰ The recalcitrant governor was taken prisoner and the islands officially proclaimed allegiance to deGaulle. Then came official word from Secretary Hull that amounted to a slap on the hand.

The reaction of the State Department to the matter was expected to be one of official reproof for the record and perhaps indignation purely for Vichy's benefit. Instead, Hull was unduly worked up and overwrought that deGaulle should pull such a trick. His ire went beyond all expectations, and his choice of words was unfortunate. The statement by the State Department must be quoted to understand the reaction:

"Our preliminary reports show that the action by three so-called Free French ships at St. Pierre-Miquelon was an arbitrary action contrary to the agreement of all parties concerned and certainly without the prior knowledge or consent in any sense of the United States government.

"This government has inquired of the Canadian government as to the steps that government is prepared to take to restore the status quo of these islands." ¹⁹¹

That the action was against previous commitments was true; the United States had received a pledge of the status quo of Vichy territory in Africa and in the Western Hemisphere. Obviously it takes two to make an agreement and the United States found itself faced with a double-edged sword: it would have to guarantee the same thing. DeGaulle was not expected to make a demonstration in the backyard, however, and it seems that the agreement was aimed directly at Germany. It backfired and Vichy might use this as a pretext for giving ground to German demands which might ease its degraded position.

It was the phrase "so-called" which really stirred up the dust. Hull later tried to explain away the words by maintaining that he was not sure when the statement was released that the Free French had a part in it.¹⁹² This was a rather weak apology and it did not suffice. He received letters addressed to the "so-called Secretary of State" in charge of the "so-called State Department"¹⁹³ The above statement had been written by a subordinate in the department, but Hull had to pass on it; it was unfortunate that he should have overlooked such a slur. The "darling of the liberals" had been insulted and they flocked to his defence.

Meanwhile Hull tried to work out a policy which would allow deGaulle to save face and which would be acceptable to Vichy also. Henry-Hays agreed that it would be all right if the radio were closed down and the governor replaced, the two most objectionable items on the islands.¹⁹⁴ There was the understanding, however that Vichy would retain nominal sovereignty over them. The essential part of Hull's first plan was to thank deGaulle for securing the islands and then send experts to supervise the broadcasts. deGaulle and his forces would leave knowing that the people were not oppressed. Before this plan could be thoroughly hashed over, Churchill made

a speech in Ottawa which bitterly condemned Vichy and praised the deGaullists. To the American public this could mean nothing but obvious British approval of the St. Pierre-Miquelon action and that the United States was merely taking exception to save its face for the pro-fascist attitude toward Vichy. The conversation held between Hull and Churchill after the latter's return to Washington was classic. The reaction of public opinion to Churchill's speech had made the matter even more difficult to resolve. Hull minced no words. He requested the Prime Minister to have deGaulle stop his radio attacks on the United States and pointed out to him that the British had requested keeping the ties with Vichy; Churchill's denunciation had made it harder to do so.¹⁹⁵

To further irk the Secretary, Roosevelt refused to intercede with Churchill to clarify the inter-relationships of Britain-deGaulle-United States-Vichy. Hull was now receiving some of the criticism which had been directed previously to other members of the Roosevelt cabinet. His tender skin was not up to taking it. As stated above, the President considered the affair a "teapot tempest" and thought it somewhat amusing that Hull should get so excited about two small islands.¹⁹⁶ It was obviously a fait accompli which could only be settled by time.

Hull's main objections to the uproar that followed the action of the Free French was the impression conveyed wrongly to the public that the Vichy policy was stoutly defended by the State Department and that Pétain, Darlan and the entourage there in Vichy were considered great friends in spite of their actions. The strong words used toward Vichy during the previous months belied this impression. Intelligence reports and the hope that pressure from the United States to prevent a selling out were the main considerations in the Vichy policy at that time. It was admitted that

the United States had given ground in certain instances, but these were inescapable when Vichy was so far away and Germany was so near to them. Bribes and disappointments, unfortunately, had to be expected when the second largest fleet in Europe and half of the African continent were at stake. While Vichy was fed, tolerated, and bled dry of information about Europe and Africa, she was many things, but she was not loved.

Confusion, contradictions, and criticism whirled around Hull while he tried to solve the "teapot tempest" to the satisfaction of deGaulle, Vichy and Allied unity. The second proposal for the islands was their demilitarization and neutralization with Canadian and American supervision of the radio, the withdrawal of both the deGaulleists and the Vichy governor and a council set up for their government. Vichy accepted the idea, but deGaulle rejected it flatly.¹⁹⁷ After a threat to expel the deGaulleists forcefully had brought no reply from the General, Churchill had a long talk with him. After this, he agreed to accept the plan but wanted a secret provision to allow a Free French administrator to sit on the council and to take orders from deGaulle.¹⁹⁸ He had not insisted on this, but the United States silence seemed to indicate its disapproval of this also; he never did agree to the plan. The action of deGaulle with regard to the settlement seemed to verify many accusations against him for his designs more on political power than for military action.¹⁹⁹

There were several serious commitments on the part of the United States which had been violated by the deGaulleists action at St. Pierre and Miquelon. The guarantee to maintain the status quo of French possessions was working both ways, as stated above, but it was not possible for the United States to overlook the agreements without risking the chance that Vichy would do the same. German pressure, unpredictable, could have con-

vinced Petain again that concessions were the sine qua non before any relief could be expected with regard to the occupation. Darlan's policy of granting small requests might not have held out; it had irked the Germans considerably before. Darlan's stalling could provoke them into demanding his dismissal as they had Weygand's. Laval would surely be reinstated with unknown efforts at collaboration.

The Pan-American Conference at Havana had resolved that there would be no recognition of territorial transfer from one non-American power to another. Under the same act, the United States had upheld the principle that nations of the Western Hemisphere would assume the government of any colony if it became a threat by the area by orders from the Axis. Therefore, under this act and under the agreement with Vichy, the United States sought to maintain the status quo of all French colonies in the Americas, but at the same time had a means to prevent these colonies from falling under the power of Germany and thereby becoming a threat to the status quo. This policy was upset by the deGaullist seizure of the St. Pierre and Miquelon islands.

The fact that deGaulle undertook the rallying of these areas in defiance of and without the knowledge of the United States marks a serious breach of international conduct. DeGaulle was a protege of the British and it did not work for Allied unity that they should let him put the United States into such an embarrassing position. It is admitted that neither Churchill nor any members of his cabinet knew of deGaulle's plans because of their secrecy. What Hull could not understand was that they were not as upset over the incident as he. The Prime Minister's speech was not a welcomed commentary either.

There were few, if any, who were not in agreement with what deGaulle

had accomplished. The little islands, which most people barely knew existed, had given a sagging Allied morale a boost, but even deGaulle partisans, a few at least, disagreed with the methods used to achieve the ends. As so many of the developments during the war, the seizure of these islands received a happy welcome, but the resulting repercussions which might happen gave them pause at the same time. To relieve the populace of the objectionable governor Baron de Bournat and allow them to fight the Axis without restrictions from Vichy was admirable. That in order to do so involved violations of international commitments and a possible detriment of the North African policy was essentially what the distress in the State Department was about. The dislike of deGaulle by many members of the government from Roosevelt on down notwithstanding, the St. Pierre-Miquelon affair was viewed as an action which could upset the delicate relations with Vichy which had been so carefully worked out. With the British action against Rommel centering in the eastern part of the continent, the western area could become a vital area of the war. It was evident that Vichy had to be pressured and cajoled to prevent Tunisia from becoming a part of the Axis operations. It was not a concession to Vichy that the United States took the action it did with regard to the St. Pierre-Miquelon affair, but as a concession to itself.

Liberals did not see the ~~de~~deGaulle rebuff as anything but appeasement of the worst sort, and they flocked to the defense of their darling. Allowing no one but herself to lead off the attack against the action of the State Department, Freda Kirchway of the Nation demanded the resignation of Secretary Hull if he knew of the Department's denunciation of the Free French before the statement was issued. Because of this statement, she wrote, "...the United States stands disgraced." In addition, "...officials

[of the department] should be called to account...²⁰¹ Not to be outdone, the New Republic thought the State Department's reaction "...ridiculed the cause of democracy."²⁰² It gave particular attention to the phrase "so-called Free French" and declared, as did the Nation, that the Vichy policy of "appeasement" did not prevent Pétain or the other members of the government from collaboration or turning the fleet over to the Germans, but it was the French people and the sailors which prevented it.²⁰³

These remarks were only some of the opinions expressed by members of the press, and in the face of a critical public, the government had to retreat from its position of forcing the deGaullists from the islands. Vichy, furthermore, had not gained any friends from her apparent willingness to continue collaboration and the issue was considered finished. Welles reported later in February that the Act of Havana did not apply to the islands.²⁰⁴ When other news replaced the St. Pierre-Miquelon affair and the debate died down, Hull decided that to leave the situation as it was then until after the war would be the best solution.²⁰⁵ Never before had the Vichy policy come under quite as heavy a barrage as it did following the island affair. DeGaulle was allowed to keep the islands, even after they had caused such a strain in Anglo-American relations. It was doubtful, however, that he would receive much consideration in the future from anyone in the Department of State.

11. Laval Returns

If deGaulle had won no friends, neither was Vichy gaining any for her actions during the first few months of 1942. It was growing evident that Darlan would have to give the Germans more than he had been. In February the report came that French ships were transporting trucks and materials

from Marseilles to Tunisia. They were, in turn, going to the use of the Axis in Libya. Darlan had agreed to this plan to prevent a seizure of the port of Bizerte by Italy.²⁰⁶ The United States protested this as being beyond the terms of the armistice and contrary to the policy which Vichy knew as being aid to the enemies of the United States. The protest lodged at Vichy on the eleventh of February warned Vichy that if the shipments were not stopped the policy toward France would be re-examined and the Ambassador recalled.²⁰⁷ The first reply to this note was unsatisfactory and there followed another exchange in which the United States called for a clarification. Finally at the end of the month Vichy reassured Leahy that the fleet and the colonies would be defended and the shipments would be halted immediately. This was accepted in Washington as being as best a reply as possible at that time.²⁰⁸ The United States did not press this issue as much as it could have because of the lingering fear that if it relinquished all ties with Vichy, it would swing into the complete control of Germany. At that time, with the United States in the war and the British now beginning to retreat in the face of Rommel's advance, it was felt that North Africa would surely become a center of war. The chances of an invasion force being sent there had been discussed at the meeting between Roosevelt and Churchill in December, and it was hoped that by not making an issue of the truck shipments that the forces which opposed full collaboration could be assuaged. Developments were to prove, however, that these elements could not outlast the newest German pressure which was to break within the next weeks. Increased German press and radio attacks on the Vichy government were a hint that the present situation could not last much longer. Abetz had begun his campaign for the return of Laval to the government for the reason that Darlan could not "unite" the different factions within the government.²⁰⁹ Laval could, i.e. drive out all those who were not

pro-Axis. The effects of the pressure were felt and the sources within the Vichy government had passed it on. Consequently, Roosevelt sent a note to Leahy to deliver to Pétain. Observing the rumor that Laval might assume some post in the government, Roosevelt told the Marshal that "...the appointment of Laval to an important post in the Vichy government would make it impossible for America to continue its attitude of helpfulness to France."²¹⁰ The sending of this note was an unfortunate plan. Leahy delivered it to Pétain on the last day of March and Laval returned to the government on the fourteenth of April as the Vice-President of the Council, and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Interior, the National Economy and of Propaganda.²¹¹ Instead of strengthening the forces against Laval's return, this note had the opposite effect. This time the Germans were not going to be refused their demands and were more than ever desirous of obtaining use of ports in North Africa. The note had been delivered only a few hours when the Germans knew of its contents. Instead of dissuading Pétain from appointing Laval, it convinced the Germans that "...Laval must be their man."²¹² The test of strength between the United States and Germany found Vichy too weak to resist if the existence of the regime were to be maintained. The reaction of the United States was that which was suggested by Leahy himself when it was rumored that Laval might return: the American Ambassador was recalled.²¹³ It was obviously a protest against the return of Laval and the policies which he was known to advocate, but it was, as one writer has put it, "...a snub which Laval had certainly not foreseen."²¹⁴

Leahy was to leave Vichy immediately after Laval's assumption of power, but his wife was recovering from an operation and was not able to travel. In the interim, the first duty to which Laval devoted himself was his offer to act as mediator between President Roosevelt and Hitler for a

negotiated peace in the west while German armies crushed the Bolshevik Russians.²¹⁵ It was obvious to the United States that Laval was still convinced that France's destiny could only be achieved by full collaboration with the Nazis. Leahy wrote the President: "His government will go as far as it can in collaboration with Germany to assist in the defeat of what he calls Anglo-Soviet Bolshevism."²¹⁶

The United States was certainly not going to allow the French "Chief of Government" (Pétain was pushed upstairs as Chief of State) to have a part in entrenching Hitler in Europe. Leahy's orders were still the same; he returned shortly thereafter dismayed at the turn of events at Vichy and bereaved by the death of his wife. The appointment of Laval as the new head of the Vichy government did not confer on him the mantle of the old Marshal. Darlan still retained his position as successor to Pétain; this would prove to the advantage of the Allies later that year.

The attitude of the State Department towards Vichy after the near break of relations and the recall of Ambassador Leahy took on a sterner tone. This may be attributed to the entrance of the United States into the war and the return of Laval as evidence that the regime did not retain any of the semblance of independence which it had once had. The British invasion of the Vichy governed island of Madagascar early in May in order to prevent a possible Japanese seizure of the important port of Diego Suarez was accompanied by a note to Henry-Haye that the United States was in complete agreement with the British action and warlike acts would be regarded as "an attack on the United Nations as a whole."²¹⁷ Vichy protested the action (as did deGaulle who was not included) and after a token show of resistance the port surrendered. The threat of Japan and Germany

joining forces by use of the island passed, and shipping around the continent of Africa did not have to run this gauntlet.

The State Department had sought to prevent the Axis from penetrating other areas of French possessions. Earlier in the year, there were reports that a German submarine plying the Caribbean had put into port at Martinique. A note to Vichy had demanded that the French forbid any German ships or planes to use or enter any French possession in the Western Hemisphere; the note was written in such a way that if this assurance was not given, then the United States would "take action necessary to security of the Western Hemisphere and in accordance with inter-American obligations."²¹⁸ When compliance came from Vichy, the shipments of supplies to North Africa was resumed.²¹⁹ Later in the spring, a special mission to Martinique had dealt with Admiral Robert without going through channels at Vichy. Laval had objected to this but the Admiral was as conscious of his own importance as Laval was of his own, and although a military force was demanded by some elements of the American public, the United States was satisfied with the permission to place a naval observer on the island to report any unusual goings-on.²²⁰ The United States had not taken over control of the island, but neither did it plan to let Laval use it to the advantage of the Germans.

12. Plans For Invasion

Ignoring Laval and the government at Vichy as best it could, the United States sought to build up North Africa in the hope that if and when it might become a theater of war, the colonists would be in a position to resist a German advance. The Joint Chiefs of Staff had turned down a request from Robert Murphy in April for arms and munitions for the underground resistance groups, and the area still had a need for food and

other items which had been sent under the Economic Accord.²²¹ Shipments had been going to North Africa in a halting fashion. Under advisement from Secretary of War Stimson and General Donovan of the OSS the supplying of the African colonies was begun in June of 1942 not only for purposes of combating German propaganda,²²² but also to strengthen those groups which depended on a continued source of food from the United States. It was probably also realized that if the food shipments were to stop permanently, Vichy might find the control officers objectionable and request their departure. At this time, the information which they were continually sending was being classified and used in the preparations for the projected invasion of North Africa. Their continued presence would be necessary. Two shiploads of food cleared for the colonies on the twelfth of June²²³ but following shipments were sporadic. The Board of Economic Warfare hindered them in order to prevent supplies reaching the enemy; later after the decision for the invasion had been definitely made, the Board still put obstacles in the way of continued shipments. Leahy finally resorted to telling the B.E.W., "FDR orders it--do it."²²⁴

The Japanese advances in the Pacific had postponed the planned invasion of North Africa in the summer of 1942 to a later date. The Vichy government's control over the region made it necessary that some prominent Frenchman meet the invading armies and raise the standard of revolt against the French government. In accordance with this plan, there would have to be found a man who had been connected with the defeated French government but not so much that he would be repugnant to the anti-German elements in the army and the resistance groups which were being fostered. General Weygand seemed the best choice when the idea of an invasion was formed. He was contacted in January after the Roosevelt-Churchill conference in

December to sound out his feelings as to his returning secretly and co-operating with the Allies. The old General refused to be a part of the plan and further replied that his allegiance to Pétain would force his informing the Marshal of the proposition, but he would keep it secret from all others.²²⁵ Although all plans for the invasion were shelved, Pétain was told that any German move to occupy the rest of France or seize the colonies would result in all possible aid from the United States. The aged Marshal replied that neither was expected, nor would he accept American aid unless it was asked for. He added that he would resist any and all invasions.²²⁶ The implications were clear from both leaders that the United States could not look to them to provide leadership for the colonial armies when the Allies invaded to wrest the control of Africa and the Mediterranean. It was also evident from Pétain's remark that the person whom they did find would also have to convince the army to cease fire on the Allies before leading them to battle against the Germans.

The decision definitely to invade North Africa was made in June of 1942, with the expectation that it would occur early in 1943, but Russian pressure for a second front as well as the desire of the American people to be on the offensive before its war was a year old pushed the date up to November 1942. Arrangements were speeded up both in the United States and Britain and also Africa. Robert Murphy scurried around among the resistance groups and found as trustworthy a group as was possible to collect in the colonies to help in a two-fold plan: to find a leader to assume command of the troops, cease their fire and then direct it to the east toward the Axis, and to render the assaults easier by having the resistance forces act almost as fifth-columnists who would arrest pro-Axis or pro-Vichy officials and secure inland strategic areas.

The "group of five" which Murphy assembled was an unusual one and

probably had as many motives for their assistance as there were men in it. The most conspicuous was Lemaigre-Dubreuil, a wealthy businessman of questionable patriotism who was known by all to have been intimate with the Germans; it was believed that their economic policy was hurting his purse. He also had contacts with General Giraud who had dramatically escaped from a German prison in April and had gone to Vichy France. Another member was Jean Rigault, a colleague of Lemaigre-Dubreuil, who was just as anxious to be rid of the Germans. Jacques Tarbe de Saint-Hardouin had been a member of Weygand's delegation on economic matters. Van Heck, in charge of the Youth Camps in all North Africa, had many intelligence contacts and also had a means of supplying men. The fifth, Henri d'Astier de la Vigerie, was an experienced member of the underground. They were assisted in military matters by Colonel Jousse.²²⁸ The problem which faced them in the summer and fall was the finding of a leader to assume command of the various bands of men who were resisting German penetration; there were also problems of equipment.

Colonial officials in Africa were somewhat varied in their feelings toward the Allies with respect to their own government. Sizing up the situation from the reports which he received in Vichy, Leahy relayed what he thought could be expected by the invading armies in North Africa. General Juin had taken charge of all the French armies after Weygand was dismissed. He was believed to be friendly, but probably would not take any action without orders from the Vichy government. In West Africa, General Barreau commanded the local area and was believed sympathetic toward the Allies. In Morocco, the situation was not favorable in anyone's mind; Nogues, an ardent Vichy partisan, could be expected to do exactly what Pétain and Laval ordered. In Tunisia, Admiral Esteva was believed to

be a friend and might help if approached in the right way and if assured that no jeopardy to French control of the colony would occur. The naval installations at Casablanca were commanded by Admiral Michellier who was thought to be friendly, but that was all that was known.²²⁹ It was first felt that due to anti-British feeling among the French, especially in naval circles, that the invasion should be completely American in make-up, but the manpower necessary for the success of the invasion was not to be found solely in the American army, and the British had to be included. All sorts of devious ways to conceal their presence from the French were advanced, but it was finally decided to put them in the second wave of landings and to hope that the token show of resistance would be over by the time the French found out it was not merely the Americans who were making the assault. At no time was the presence of General deGaulle or his troops included in the invasion plans by the military. When deGaulle was informed of the invasion the first troops were already on the beaches and moving toward their objectives. There were different reports on the General's behavior when he found out that an invasion of French territory had been made without his knowledge or presence; some have said he accepted it with his usual stoic calm and others told it that he flew into a high dudgeon. In any case, there were very good reasons why his presence and his knowledge of plans were ruled out. The attitude of the colonial French and the problem of security were the most important factors. The failure of the Dakar expedition in September 1940 and the pitched battle of the Vichy forces in Syria had made it evident that deGaulle was persona non grata as far as the regular French army was concerned. The reports which were being sent to Washington and to Eisenhower's headquarters from members of the OSS, Robert Murphy and the control officers in Africa continued to substantiate this belief.²³⁰ In Eisenhower's mind, it was not difficult to

understand this dislike of the Free French and its leader: when France fell, the regular army submitted to the orders of the government, and deGaulle did not; either he or they were disloyal, and in the minds of the regular army, it was deGaulle who was the traitor.²³¹

As far as security and the need for complete surprise, it was imperative that the Free French did not know of the invasion nor of any of its plans. The Dakar expedition had failed because Vichy had learned of it through leaks in the deGaulle movement. The deGaulleists were happy to accept anyone who had escaped from Vichy or occupied France and were therefore not suspicious of many who filtered into the organization after "daring escapes" engineered by the Gestapo. It was not that these spies were found out later and this reason used to bolster up the ostracism of deGaulle; it was known at the time that there were spies in the Free French movement and the risk of a leakage of this, the greatest undertaking by the Allies thus far, could not be made.²³² It has to be admitted that deGaulle had risen in stature since the return of Laval and the resistance groups within France and in North Africa did look to him for leadership, but as Eisenhower further commented, "...we had to win over the armed services as a first objective."²³³

German propaganda about American interest in the African colonies had to be combated by the assurance that the intervention would be one of only military interests and the French sovereignty over the region would not be interfered with by the presence of the Allies. On the contrary, French assistance would be welcomed in putting down any resistance to the Allies as well as fighting the Germans. In addition, the resistance wanted to have the United States invited into Africa so that no violation of French sovereignty would result from a forced invasion.²³⁴ This concession to

French national pride had to be overlooked if the Allies were to achieve the all-important surprise element in the invasion. If any invitations were to be issued, the United States would provide the man to give them. For this reason, and for the contacts in North Africa made by Robert Murphy, the highly secret trip of General Mark Clark to Algiers was made.

On the nights of October twenty-first and second, General Clark and Colonels Hamblen and Holmes, General Lemnitzer and Captain Wright (Navy) went by submarine to a lonely house some sixty miles west of Algiers to meet with Robert Murphy and the representatives of General Giraud who had expressed a willingness to continue his fight against the Germans. Through Murphy's contacts with the members of the "group of five", a going business of subversive activities had been in progress in Africa and with General Giraud. The conference would iron out the details concerning Giraud and his role in getting the French troops to cease fire on the Allies and to join in the fight against the Axis. Arriving on the beach at night and guided by a light in an upstairs window, the quintet were hurriedly hustled into the villa; given a change of clothes, they waited for the representatives of General Giraud to appear. When everyone was assembled, the talks began, lasting for many hours. The only diversions were hastily concocted meals (the servants had been sent away to prevent any leakage) and the arrival of the French police. Suspicious, the servants had informed the officers of the law that something unusual was going on in the villa of M. Teissier. The "go-betweens" bolted on the news of the impending arrival of the police, and Clark's group descended into the wine cellar where they did not dare move for fear of disclosing their hideaway. Only an already well-chewed piece of gum given by Clark to one of his accomplices halted a coughing fit which nearly knocked all the secrecy and

careful planning into a cock-hat. The police were not the most inquisitive group, and their suspicions were talked away by Murphy and Teissier who appeared to be having a friendly game of cards. The police having finally departed, the fugitives from the wine-cellar packed their papers and hurried to the beach where they spent the rest of the night waiting for the submarine to take them away. Clark and Murphy considered the mission a success, and, if they interpreted General Mast (Giraud's go-between) correctly, the "king-pin" would be on call to serve the Allies and to assume command of the French forces in Africa.²³⁵ From the reports which Murphy delivered to the Allied Headquarters in London, it was believed that the success of Giraud would be immediate. Not only would the troops and their officers halt their resistance to the invaders, but also the French units could be used to advance on the Axis forces now retreating under a British push toward final victory in Africa.

Everything seemed favorable for the Allied assault. Vichy France was beginning to assume the mantle of complete collaboration with the Germans. Laval went ahead full speed on the National Revolution as he conceived it, that is, a completely fascist regime, obsequious to the Nazis. This had long been the suspicion of many Americans and Laval was making it a realization. This all-out attitude, it was hoped, would make it easier for the colonies to throw off the mask and continue the fight against Germany and Italy which had been halted with the armistice more than two years before. In addition the United States believed the man had been found who could rally the army and the resistance to the Allies and prevent blood from being shed between former friends. Murphy's shady friends in North Africa were further considered to be to the benefit of the invaders. The greatest fears were that either Germany would make an advance on Tunisia from Italian Libya be-

fore the Allied offensive in the west could begin or that the French would, by some turn of fate, make a bitter opposition fight on the African beaches thereby losing precious time. Summed up, getting the French to stop fighting, and time were the chief considerations in the military minds.

"King-pin" was told that the invasion would be in the very near future and to be ready to leave by submarine on November 4. Like a bomb-shell came the news that Giraud had insisted that he would not be able to leave France before the twentieth of November. Murphy made a strong defense of delaying the invasion so that Giraud would be on hand to aid the persuasion of the French. Dumbfounded that a man as experienced as Murphy should make such a suggestion, Eisenhower as the Commander-in-Chief of the invasion refused to delay "D-day" at all; he was backed up in his decision by nearly everyone from Roosevelt on down.²³⁶ Murphy put Lemaigre-Dubreuil on the task and within a short time, word came from France that Giraud would be available anytime, but he insisted that a United States submarine pick him up. This difficulty was easily solved. There were no American subs in the area so the same British sub which had delivered Clark and his band and the same American captain commanding it were dispatched to the coast of France. Giraud was late in leaving, and the goods were not picked up until the fifth of November and the port of Gibraltar, where Eisenhower and Clark were entrenched, was not reached until the afternoon of the seventh. There in the tunnels under the rock where the Allied headquarters were, Eisenhower and Clark began to make arrangements for Giraud to assume the command of French colonial forces.

The second surprise which Eisenhower received from Giraud was the French General's offering himself as supreme commander of the entire Allied expedition. Insisting that he had come under dangerous conditions for that

purpose, Giraud refused to have any other rank within the invasion. Explaining his position, Giraud continued to argue against the best protests which Eisenhower and Clark could muster: "General Giraud cannot accept a subordinate position in this command; his countrymen would not understand and his honor as a soldier would be tarnished."²³⁷ In addition to his demands for the position of complete charge over the invasion, he demanded an invasion of the southern coast of France at the same time. Both plans were completely out of the question; the Allied commanders had been ordered to do the bidding of Eisenhower and, in addition, "Ike" had full knowledge of the strategy and problems involved. Furthermore, as Eisenhower protested, "...there was not a single Frenchman in the Allied command; on the contrary, the enemy, if any, was French."²³⁸ Repeating themselves and offering Giraud nearly everything except the throne of France, the two American generals continued their talks with the stubborn Frenchman until late in the morning. Resolving to go ahead with the landings the morning of the eighth whether Giraud cooperated or not, the tired men finally went to bed with Giraud still protesting that he could not accept any post which was beneath his honor. The next morning he had changed his mind. It had been obvious that if anyone were to change his mind, it would have to be Giraud. While he slept the first troops hit the beaches and "Torch" was in execution. Giraud's position would be to try to end French resistance to the Allies and organize them into leading them against the common enemy: the Axis.

The thrusts of the invading forces were aimed at the three cities of Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers. Oran (Mers-el-Kebir) the scene of the July 1940 attack by Britain on the French naval squadron, was chosen as a point of invasion in order to take over the naval yards and airfields

there. There was bitter resistance at this port with the naval forces supplying most of the opposition. At Casablanca in Morocco there was a two-fold purpose for the invasion. It was the end of the railroad from Oran and would provide a means of escape, if held, for troops in Oran and Algiers should the Germans march through Tunisia quicker than anticipated. Its proximity to Spanish Morocco also made it necessary to land a force in order to oppose any Spanish attack on the flank of the Allies from that colony. At some places along the western area, there was bitter fighting, more so than anywhere else. Algiers, deep in the Mediterranean, offered little resistance to the landings. Eisenhower attributed this to the work of Murphy and the French Generals Mast and Juin.²³⁹

Hoping to calm the fears of Pétain and the French people, President Roosevelt sent a message to the Marshal on the morning of the invasion. Informing him of the landings, Roosevelt pointed out that there were good indications that the Germans would move into Tunisia, and to protect the strategic area of Africa as well as the Americas, he was dispatching the troops with only a military purpose and would withdraw them when the threat was abated. In his reply, Pétain ignored all the traditional friendship between the United States and France and accused the United States of making an unprovoked attack on the French colonies. "I have always declared that we would defend our Empire if it were attacked...We are being attacked, we shall defend ourselves. That is the order I am giving."²⁴⁰ The night of the eighth, Laval informed the American chargé that diplomatic relations between Vichy and the United States were officially terminated. The orders to resist were repeated.²⁴¹ On the eleventh Laval made his last act as Chief of Government of Vichy which had been, up to that moment, a quasi-independent state: he gave permission for the Germans to

send planes over the unoccupied area to go to Africa. The complete occupation of France took place with one sweeping move leaving only a small area around the port of Toulon free. There, with a highly uncertain future, lay the best part of the French fleet. The Germans had not bothered to stop with sending only planes over the southern part of France; the whole country lay under total occupation by the Nazis.

15. A Deal With Darlan

On November ninth, the day after the first troops hit the beaches, General Giraud made his broadcast to the French army and colonial populace to cease the resistance and to join the Allies. He was completely ignored. However, the Allies still had a way out of the situation. The morning of the invasion, Murphy had gone to General Juin's home to tell him that the invasion was imminent and asked him to order his troops not to resist. Juin was perfectly willing to do so, but he feared that his orders would be revoked: Darlan was in Algiers visiting his sick son. Darlan was contacted and expressed his surprise that the Americans would take such an action without first approaching Vichy. As for himself, he would make no move to cooperate unless authorized to do so by Petain. Cabling the Marshal, Darlan waited for his reply. The troops which were supposed to land near Algiers were late, but the resistance men whom Murphy had contacted were trying to secure their assigned posts. In many cases they were not reinforced by the American troops and had to retire. Negotiations were opened in Algiers with Juin and Darlan, with still no reply from Petain, and resistance ceased in Algiers the night of the eighth. Fighting was still going on in the Casablanca area of Morocco.

Pétain finally received word from Darlan that resistance was about

to cease. Apparently he had never received the first message which Darlan sent. From all indications, Pétain was willing for Darlan to treat with the Allies as he saw fit, he was ready to allow him to do so when Laval protested. Although, in this discussion, the southern part of France had already been overrun, this action had not taken place at the time of Darlan's second message to Pétain. Laval, fearing such a move, did not want Pétain to give Darlan freedom of action. Pétain complied with his subordinate's decision, but sent two messages to Africa: one for the record and one for Darlan. Whether the Marshal did actually send the second message became a highly controversial point, but from reliable sources, it seems that indeed he did.²⁴² One message disavowed Darlan and appointed Nogues as commander of the North African region. The other told Darlan that he had freedom of action and the full confidence of the Marshal. Receiving the wrong message first, Darlan tried to back out of the commitment to Clark; the peppy American did not give this a sympathetic ear. Just at this time, with Darlan considering himself under arrest and the negotiations ready to break down, word came from Vichy that the total occupation was beginning. At nearly the same time came Pétain's second message.

Conferences between French officers and Americans continued without a halt. Finally, with no less than three men supposing to be in charge of Africa, the American candidate Giraud, Pétain's candidate Nogues, and the secret candidate of Pétain Darlan, the agreements were worked out to end the fighting and to set up a workable arrangement between the French and the Allies. The much-maligned Darlan Deal was a result of the pressure of time and the wish to stop the fighting between the French and the Allies. In essence, it conferred on Eisenhower all necessary powers to conduct the military operations and make use of transportation facilities. Darlan would

order the fighting to cease, and if successful, would head the administrative control over North Africa at Eisenhower's direction. Giraud would be in charge of the French military forces. There was no indication that any sort of political recognition would be accorded to the Darlan elements in Africa.

Because of the order which Darlan had originally issued to cease fighting, the Casablanca region put an end to the resistance. In other areas, fighting was halted at Darlan's command even though he had been publically disavowed by Pétain. The Admiral's order had put an end to resistance and guerilla action which might have resulted. There was also the aspect of the Arab tribes; their loyalty to Vichy had been strong because of anti-Semitic laws. To keep these tribes under control and to prevent their impeding the progress of the invading troops toward Tunisia, it was further necessary to deal with Darlan. To prevent a costly military occupation, it had been deemed wise militarily to do anything to prevent a failure of the first American expedition to fight the Germans. The final agreement with the army and civil officials was reached by the thirteenth of November. With his order to cease fire, Darlan also issued instructions for the fleet at Toulon to join the Allies should the Germans make a move to occupy all of France. The Germans were moving toward Toulon, but the fleet did not budge.²⁴³

Having seen some of the unsavory facets of Darlan while he was in power in Vichy, certain Americans began an outburst of protest over the military dealings with the Admiral in Africa. It has been pointed out that the end of resistance in every form was achieved by the orders issued by him. West Africa was turned over to the Allies without firing a shot. With it came the long-desired port of Dakar. According to military estimates, more than

sixty days had been saved by the acceptance of Darlan's terms. With this advance in schedule, it was also estimated that 16,000 Allied lives had been saved also. Freeing the troops from a "mopping-up" action, the Darlan deal allowed them to move toward Tunisia which the Germans had invaded through the Mediterranean port of Bizerte. Only Laval's actions had prevented Admiral Esteva from joining Darlan and resisting the Germans. When the message came from Darlan in Algiers, Esteva's office was filling with German soldiers; he had to hang up. Since the greatest fears which the Allies had prior to the invasion were the elements of time and saving of American, British and French lives, it must be considered that the Darlan deal had been a valuable factor in the fulfillment of objectives.

It was not believed that these objectives could be accomplished in any other way than by dealing with the one man in Algiers who had the power to stop the fighting. The name of Pétain was a magic phrase in North Africa for he seemed to be the symbol of both past French glory as well as the hope of the French people to resist the Germans as best he could. The army had taken an oath to him personally; anything they did they would do in the name of the Marshal. If Darlan had to tell them he had assumed the mantle of Pétain in order to achieve the results, it was deemed permissible to do so; at no time was there any thought of reconstructing the Vichy regime in North Africa with Darlan as the head of it. With all of France occupied, it was assumed that Darlan indeed had inherited the right to speak for the Marshal. In addition, the second secret message seemed to clinch the matter.

Essential criticisms of the deal with Darlan were summed up in three major matters: there was a risk that great power had been turned over to

a man of questionable loyalty; Darlan would build up a fascist regime to force it on France proper after the liberation; that French democratic morale had been weakened by associating with him.²⁴⁴ The fears were justifiable, but they had been taken care of by as thorough planning as was possible. Of course, it could be dangerous to leave Darlan in control of the home bases while heading toward Tunisia, but Eisenhower had the final word on anything which Darlan might do. It was unlikely that the Admiral would turn against the Allies. French troops were being coordinated into the other forces and reserves stayed in the rear to protect Morocco against the Spanish. In addition, the invasion had been planned down to minute details and with almost certain assurance that the Allies would be victorious that a disaster was hardly expected. The real threat was the question of how much time and how many lives would be lost before final victory. As for the second fear, this matter was carefully avoided by Eisenhower's acceptance of the arrangements. Reporting to Roosevelt he said, the agreement was "...dictated by considerations of sheer military expediency."²⁴⁵ Furthermore there was no reference that Darlan was anything more than a French official cooperating with the Allies. Roosevelt reported to the nation, "I have accepted General Eisenhower's political arrangements made for the time being in Northern and Western Africa...The present temporary arrangement in North and West Africa is only a temporary expedient justified solely by the stress of battle."²⁴⁶ In any case, the British and the Americans were working on an arrangement whereby deGaulle would cooperate with Darlan and Giraud if he wished to. Darlan had agreed to release all political prisoners and anti-Vichy partisans. It was doubtful that he could make his rule personal and fascist in the presence of Allied troops that he might transfer it to metropolitan France. Clark

reiterated to Eisenhower the temporary characteristics of the agreement: "I have made it clear to Darlan in no uncertain words that we are dealing with him only as long as he does exactly as we say."²⁴⁷

The third fear of hurting the morale of French democrats will be taken up in the conclusion.

As the Allied armies moved east toward Tunisia and the Axis troops, Darlan's power began to increase. The temporary arrangement was beginning to become embarrassing. When could it be decided that the arrangement was no longer in force? It was feared that once entrenched in Africa, Darlan would not leave. To make public opinion of the situation worse, prisoners were still held---Darlan's assurances to the contrary notwithstanding. It was claimed that political and criminal prisoners were mixed up together in the same jails thereby making it harder to sort them and release the correct ones. To prevent any mistaken illusions which the Admiral might have built up and also to pacify public opinion in both the United States and Britain, two representatives were sent from each government with veto power over French administrative acts and to specify the policy which would be followed. Still the fact that Darlan, the despised Admiral who had tried to bargain away Syria, was in control under Allied auspices was a bitter pill. Then, on Christmas Eve 1942 waiting in the office of the Admiral, a young deGaullist, member of d'Astier de la Vigerie's Youth Organization, shot Darlan in the jaw and neck. Darlan died shortly thereafter. The assassin, Bonnier de la Chapelle was bundled off and executed secretly. It was at first thought that the Germans had had a part in the assassination, but this was not proved in the investigation. If anyone had a "part" in it, it was a combination of partisan friends of the "group of five" and

deGaullists.²⁴⁸ Said the Nation, "...[the] temporary expedient has been ironically fulfilled..."²⁴⁹ and the New Republic noted: "...miraculously, we had been given a second chance."²⁵⁰ The phrasemakers said they did not approve of assassination, but if there were to be anyone assassinated, they couldn't think of a better candidate than Darlan. Indeed, the United States and Britain had put themselves out on a limb, albeit temporarily; Darlan's death made it possible to get back on the ground. At the Casablanca conference in January 1943, Giraud and deGaulle were persuaded to join forces for the ultimate liberation of France.

14. The Vichy Policy -- Pro and Con

To return to the United States, the break of relations with Vichy was gratefully received. With Laval running the nation and making no secret of his intentions, it was felt that connection with such a regime had tended to compromise the United States and convey the impression of approval. Secretary Hull happily called a press conference to have an opportunity to defend the much-maligned Vichy policy. He outlined the objectives of the State Department in continuing relations with Pétain after the fall of France:

- "1) opportunity for the Government of the United States to get from week to week highly important information virtually from the inside of German-controlled territory and from North Africa regarding Axis subversive activities and other important phases of the international situation.
- 2) the maintenance of close relations with the French people and encouragement of leadership in opposition to Hitlerism wherever it exists.
- 3) the keeping alive of the basic concepts of freedom of the French people, looking toward ultimate restoration of the free institutions for France as they existed before the

German occupation.

- 4) the retention of the closest personal touch on the ground with all phases of the French and German situation under the armistice prevailing between Germany and France; resistance to increased German pressure on France to go beyond the armistice provision and to collaborate with Germany; constant effort to prevent delivery of the French fleet or any part of it into German military hands or to give military support to German arms; that also includes French bases all along the Mediterranean and the Atlantic coast.
- 5) last, but most important, paving the way and preparing the background in the most effective manner possible, for the planning and sending of the military expedition into the western Mediterranean area, and assisting the movements supporting present British operations farther east." 251

The point of gathering information has been advanced as one of the strongest as a defense for the Vichy policy. When attacked, the policy could not be justified in these terms without having Germany and/or Vichy putting a halt to these activities. The point of relations for reasons of intelligence has also been attacked; as has been seen, in certain respects, some information which came out of Vichy and North Africa was incorrect. The most frequently used example is the instance in which Murphy was assured that General Giraud would be accepted by the North African army. That he would be obeyed off-hand was misinformation, but it should be noted that Giraud was finally accepted as the head of the French army after Darlan had issued the orders to submit. This misinformation is only one case in point although it did happen to be a serious one. There were other sources of information received from Vichy that did bring merit to having representatives there. One cannot say that the control officers stationed in Africa under the auspices of the Murphy-Weygand Accord supplied any false information about the disposition of railway centers, telegraph centers, or military installations. Allies within the Vichy government supplied further data. When all the correct and highly prized intelligence is weighed against several

instances of misguided information, there should be a marked favor toward justification for the Vichy relations.

Perhaps the second and third reasons advanced by Secretary Hull may be coupled together for easier handling. The relations with the Vichy government of France would necessarily mean a closer contact with the French people. In these contacts, the position of the United States was distinctly made clear. From the fall of France until Pearl Harbor, the United States went on record practically every day to the effect that Nazi Germany represented a menace to its own position and that of the Western Hemisphere; Britain would be aided in the fight against Italy and Germany with all possible effort. After Pearl Harbor, the position of the United States became even clearer to the world: the war would be waged until victory over the enemy was achieved. The French people knew well what democratic government was to both themselves and the United States; they also knew what Nazism was. Anyone who could not see that Hitler and his minions were unalterably opposed to what the United States and Britain were fighting for surely must have been weak in perception. Waging a very battle for their existence, these nations would work to restore conditions in Europe as they had existed before the war if such conditions were at all possible.

War does bring about drastic changes, but with the Allies pledged to the liberation and restoration of the French Empire and protesting every concession made to the Axis by the Vichy government, it would be hard to say that the French people could have been misled. In addition, without diplomatic relations, the United States could never have sent over relief packages nor supplies to the North African areas. The rebuffs to deGaulle might have had an effect on the sentiments of the resistance movements

except for information received in the embassy at Vichy and from the consulates in Africa that deGaulle was not the hero of these men. However, when Laval came into power, the resistance groups became more active and looked to the Free French for their leadership. Nor can it be denied that deGaulle had made good contacts with the resistance in France in 1942. However at this time when deGaulle might have been a strong symbol of resistance to the French, he had to be held down for reasons of the forthcoming African invasion. While many of the lower classes in France did owe allegiance to deGaulle, the Vichy government was unalterably opposed to him. He had been tried and condemned to death in absentia by Vichy. It was strongly believed that any move toward tacit recognition of the Free French would bring about a possible break of relations; this would upset every plan which had been formulated because of the Vichy government.

By having contacts in Vichy, the United States knew as much as could be known about the German-French relations. Any move which could be interpreted as being beyond the terms of the armistice was immediately protested. To say that the policy was a failure because Vichy did not comply many times to our requests in the face of German pressure would be to overlook the fact that there are limitations to what diplomacy can achieve in the face of an occupying force. It cannot be denied that on many more occasions, pressure from the United States to halt shipments to France and North Africa, to review the policy, or to recall Admiral Leahy did prevent Vichy from going beyond the terms of the armistice whenever it had even the barest amount of freedom of choice. In this regard, it would be mistaken to say that Vichy did not have a freedom of choice on many occasions. The presence of the fleet and the African colonies without the pale of complete German control made the Germans careful about how strong they pressured the Marshal. A

story filtered out of France that Abetz stormed into Pétain's office the day after Laval's dismissal and told him that he had twenty minutes to accept Laval back into the government. Pétain is supposed to have replied that he did not need twenty minutes, but only five to order the fleet to get underway and to tell Weygand in Africa that he was on his own. Whether this story is apocryphal or not, it illustrates the point. There was always the fear that the colonies might take up arms against the Axis rear in Libya. Therefore the Germans, although they exerted pressure, tried to arrange matters so that Vichy would collaborate of its own accord. The existence of the demarcation line, the prisoners of war, and the threat that Laval might be forced upon them did tend to make the men at Vichy more compliant with German wishes. On the other hand, Vichy could not afford to go too far beyond the terms of the armistice. To do so would threaten its very existence as a state; too much collaboration would lose for it the recognition accorded it by the United States. This existence was boosted by the fleet and the colonies and raised the prestige of Vichy in German and American eyes. These two elements were called "myths" by sceptics of the Vichy policy, but they were no myths. Both the Axis and the Allies were struggling for them.

The Allies would have liked to have the fleet join their own, but its neutrality would suffice. That the Axis never did succeed in obtaining the fleet at Toulon before it was scuttled was not because Germany or Italy did not try. The scuttling at Toulon must be considered as an act of defiance. The Allies tried to persuade the commander to flee Toulon and sail with the British and Americans, but the requests, even from Darlan, were ignored. It was not known in the State Department, but Vichy would almost surely never have turned the fleet over to the Germans. As a symbol

of its power, the fleet was in actuality a potential threat to both the Axis and the Allies. In the hands of Vichy it became a pawn. In any other hands, Vichy would have ceased to exist.

Another reason why the fleet did not fall into German hands or join the Allies was an order which Darlan issued to his Admirals shortly after the 1940 armistice. In effect, he told them that the fleet would never be surrendered nor would it set sail for an Allied port. The ships would either be at anchor or they would be scuttled. The important clause: if Darlan should issue an order contrary to the ones calling for the scuttling of the ships, it should not be obeyed since he might be a prisoner at the time. These orders were permanent. Intelligence sources which the State Department had access to have been criticized for not knowing this,²⁵² and for this reason the Vichy policy has been rejected on the two accounts of saving the fleet and intelligence. It must be pointed out, however, that even with reliable sources of intelligence, it was not possible to know secret orders to the fleet. There are limitations.

It must be recalled that the United States note prior to the surrender as regards the fleet had in no small way an effect on the cabinet meeting debating the issue of an armistice. The threat of losing the friendship and goodwill of the people of the United States had strengthened the resolve of the French not to lose its navy; it was felt in the State Department that constant pressure was needed to maintain that decision. By the same token, Vichy almost surely would not have turned its colonies over to Germany for fear of selling away its existence. But there was nothing but pressure from the United States and the obstinance of the African officials backed up by American supplies which prevented the leasing of bases to the Axis and granting further extraterritorial rights to them. A case in point

would be Weygand and Boisson scrapping the Paris Protocols in June 1941. That Hitler did not get all of what he desired in the Mediterranean region may not be solely attributed to the United States, but Weygand would not have been so insistant if he had known that there would be no help from across the Atlantic.

That the contacts in North Africa through having relations with Vichy worked to the ultimate success of the North African invasion is hard to deny. The control officers would not have had the opportunity to collect the information, nor would have Murphy been in a position to deal with General Juin or Admiral Darlan. It has been seen that the use of this information and personal contacts helped in the ending of the resistance, and thereby served to save many extra lives. When it is questioned whether there would have been any resistance had Vichy not been in existence (an existence which the United States helped to maintain), it is difficult to say. The Vichy existence point can not be isolated from other developments on the continent. With a fighting colony in Africa, France might have been completely overrun. The presence of the fighting colony might have forced Spain to join the Axis to save her Moroccan colony and the whole course of the war would have been different. The existence of Vichy, however unsavory it was, worked to the ultimate good of the United States. Contacts of intelligence were maintained through this existence and a contact with the French people was also held. The United States tried to help the people of France by sending aid and food. Vichy's existence also kept the fleet away from Germany and at the same time gave the United States valuable information from within Hitler's Europe.

15. Post-mortem

To attempt to find clear out distinctions within the Vichy policy of

the United States is almost impossible. There are contradictions and "double-edged swords" lurking behind almost every development. The policy was not all good, and neither can it be called completely bad. To say that the United States recognized Vichy and attempted to set it up against democracy or left-wing tendencies is preposterous. To claim that the recognition of Vichy and continued relations with it were all a huge plot to subvert the deGaulle movement belongs in the same category. I shall never maintain that there were not instances in which the policy of the Vichy government worked to the disadvantage of the United States. There were instances of this sort. They were small in comparison to what was prevented by the presence of the United States pressure and threats of the halt of supplies or the recall of the Ambassador. Vichy could never have allowed the break of relations with the United States while it still held some semblance of power. With the complete occupation of France, the power was gone. The symbols of the power were the colonies and the fleet. However, by that time the colonies were in the hands of the Allies.

Vichy was indeed a dilemma as it has been called. It was spawned out of defeat by Germany and fed by the United States. I believe that the creation of the bastard state was a mistake on the part of Germany. In doing so, Hitler lost some of the chances which he had to bring Spain into the war, by trying to give both Spain and Vichy the same things. Both became a burden to him. In a contradictory sense, the United States also had a Jonah on its hands. Only by the creation of Vichy was it able to have observers in France and in the colonies. In working with Germany for the preservation of the government, the United States was forced to appear as one condoning the government itself. This was not the case. Hull perhaps stated his case best to the British Ambassador the spring before "Torch".

"We have uniformly asserted to the world that the Vichy government did not represent the French people and the true interests of France... [we have had] relations with the government at Vichy solely for the advantages derived from having representatives [there]".

The Vichy policy has been condemned the loudest and the longest by the professional liberals. The Nation and the New Republic have been the leaders. At no time have I meant to cast a bad light on the "liberals" for not being in the know or for taking a healthy sceptical view of this aspect of diplomacy of the Second World War. Their exceptions to the Vichy policy have made the writing of this paper somewhat more objective.

To set off the above quotation of Secretary Hull and to lead into my opinion of the Vichy policy, this quotation from the New Republic summed up the views of liberal Americans: "...the [Vichy] policy frittered away much good will on the part of the anti-Fascist French and raised doubts all over the world about our war aims." ²⁵⁴

It has been seen that the United States aided and tried to maintain Vichy for this country's own good. Nobody will try to say that Vichy was anything but a fascist nation. Did we confuse and subvert the French people in dealing with this fascist government? If we did, we tried to make up for it by sending help to them to make their life a little less miserable. Moreover contacts within the government knew that the United States did not condone Vichy and was only using it to set off German control over the colonies and the unoccupied area of France.

And what of the war aims? What were the war aims of the United States if it diplomatically defended this government? Had the United States

gone to war after Pearl Harbor to carry on a holy war against Fascism? I do not believe this is so. The Axis threat to the very survival of this nation was enormous. We could not afford to take the moral position on every occasion. If the United States went on a crusade to free the world from Fascism in the Second World War, then the Vichy policy has been reduced to shambles. The liberals take both points and believe them strongly. I cannot. The Vichy policy must stand as a part of the fight of the United States for its own existence.

The essential debate over the foreign policy toward France was the struggle between deGaulle and Vichy. The General, however patriotic and however strong in his hatred of the "Boche", did not have much to offer except moral support. In addition, I do not think he would have been the "darling of the liberals" had they known some of his political views. DeGaulle admittedly was a symbol of the French resistance to the German invaders, but there were practical advantages to recognition and continued relations with Vichy which far out-weighted the benefits that might or might not have been gained from the Free French.

When considered in the light of the United States' fighting for survival, the Vichy policy, and its disadvantages included, stand as a somewhat cursed monument to the measures which this country was forced if we were to maintain our own way of life.

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197. Hull's Memoirs, v. II, p.1128ff.
198. Ibid, v. II, p.1128ff.
199. Although not specifically mentioned in the St. Pierre-Miquelon affair, this accusation is strongly made in I Accuse DeGaulle, by Henri DeKerillis (cited above); the author broke with deGaulle in 1943 over the policy of political engrandizement taking precedence over military engagements. I found only one instance where deGaulle was actively participating in any military action after the fall of France: he was present at Dakar in September, 1940. The rest of the time he was safe in London or Equitorial Africa pulling strings for the full political recognition of a single French Brigadier General as representing the entire nation of France. DeKerillis had no sympathy for Vichy either, in his opinion, deGaulle should have been leading armies in the field.
200. Nation, v.154, p.1-2; January 3, 1942, "Mr. Hull Should Resign", by Freda Kirchwey.
201. Ibid, v. 154, p.1-2, January 3, 1942; "Mr. Hull Should Resign", by Freda Kirchwey.
202. New Republic, v.106, p.3.
203. New Republic, v. 106, p.88-89; Nation, v.154, p.1-2.
204. Goodrich, Jones, and Myers, op.cit., p.466.
205. Hull's Memoirs, v. II, p.1128ff
206. Leahy, op.cit., p.76.
207. Ibid, p.77.
208. Marchal, op.cit., p.180.

209. Farmer, op.cit., p.283.
210. Leahy, op. cit., p.87.
211. Ibid, p.88.
212. Farmer, op.cit., p.282.
213. Leahy, op.cit., p.88.
214. Aron, op.cit., p.373.
215. Ibid, p.372.
216. Ibid, p.272.
217. Marchal, op.cit., p.202; see also Hull's Memoirs, v.II, p.1159-1160.
218. Leahy, op.cit., p.77.
219. Ibid, p.77.
220. Langer, Gamble, p.255-256.
221. Ibid, p.272.
222. Ibid, p.264.
223. Ibid, p.264.
224. Leahy, op.cit., p.113, remark made September 7, 1942 to B.E.W.
225. Hull's Memoirs, v.II, p.1127.
226. Ibid, p.1127 (my italics)
227. Aron, op.cit., p.394-395
228. Ibid, p.395.
229. Leahy, op.cit., p.114, information on all these men was taken from Leahy.
230. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade In Europe, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1948) p.83.
231. Ibid, p.84.
232. Leahy, op.cit., p.133; see also deKerillis, op.cit., p.86.
233. Eisenhower, op.cit., p.83; deGaulle's rise as leader of leaderless resistance is also discussed in Langer, Gamble, p.290-291.

234. Langer, Gamble, p.311.
235. Mark Clark, Calculated Risk, (New York: Harpers and Bros. 1950), p. 67ff; see also Life, v.13, pt 2 December 28, 1942, p.75-80: "General Clark's Secret Mission" by G. B. Courtney.
236. Leahy, op.cit., p131, concurring: General Marshall; Admirals King and Leahy.
237. Eisenhower, op.cit., p.100.
238. Ibid, p.100.
239. Ibid, p.103, areas attacked and their strategic significance from p. 78-79.
240. Aron, op.cit., p.401.
241. Farmer, op.cit. p.298.
242. Leahy, op.cit., p.339; Langer, Gamble p.353; Aron, op.cit., p.401.
243. For activities in Vichy see Aron, op.cit., p.398-416; for North Africa see Clark, op.cit., p.107ff and Eisenhower, op.cit., p.104-110.
244. Documents on American Foreign Relations, v. V, July 1942-June, 1943, Edited by Leland Goodrich and Marie Carroll (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1944), p.546, from New York Times, December 13, 1942, section 4.
245. Langer, Gamble, p.364.
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246. Ibid, p.371.
247. Ibid, p.370.
248. deKerillis, op.cit., p.97.
249. Nation, v. 156, p.3, January 3, 1943, "Darlan--and After" by Freda Kirchwey.
250. New Republic, v.108, p.7, January 4, 1943.
251. Goodrich and Carroll, op.cit., p.540-541, from Department of State Bulletin, VII, p.903, press conference November 8, 1942.
252. The Journal of Modern History, v.XX, no.1, March 1948, p.47-56, "Our Vichy Fumble", by Louis Gottschalk.
253. Hull's Memoirs, p.1158.
254. New Republic, v.107, p.624, November 16, 1942, "The End of Appeasement!"