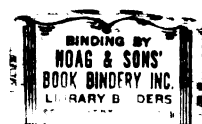
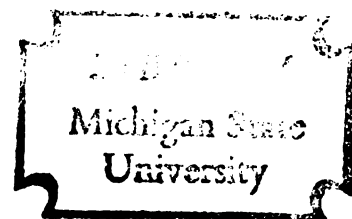


A COMPARISON OF
THREE FRENCH CLANDESTINE
NEWSPAPERS FROM WORLD WAR II

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
MARTHA ALADIEM CLIMO
1976

THESIS



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ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF THREE FRENCH CLANDESTINE NEWSPAPERS FROM WORLD WAR II

By

Martha Aladjem Climo

French clandestine newspapers during World War II provided a forum for French resisters to the Nazi regime. The newspapers helped restore people's faith in the salvation of France by transmitting reliable information about the war. Over 1,200 underground newspapers were published in France during the war. They appealed to all facets of French society. French underground propaganda was an effective device which stimulated patriotism and implanted ideas of resistance in the minds of the people.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine and compare three French clandestine newspapers during the early war years, 1940-1942, Défense de la France, Libération-Nord, and L'Humanité and to determine to what extent the newspapers' fight for liberation was influenced by political rather than nationalistic ideology. To achieve this goal, it was necessary to analyze three types of propaganda, anti-Nazi propaganda, anti-Vichy propaganda, and nationalistic propaganda.

All three newspapers reflected hatred of Nazi Germany and the puppet Vichy government and desired liberation for France as soon as possible. The chief difference among the newspapers lay in the focus of their propaganda concerning the means of achieving liberation. After some deliberation, Défense de la France supported General De Gaulle and recognized him as the leader of the Resistance. The socialist views expressed in Libération-Nord did not inhibit support for De Gaulle. L'Humanité, which was so heavily influenced by Stalin and the Communist Party, supported De Gaulle out of necessity. Stalin feared that if the French Communists did not support De Gaulle, they would gain too much power and become independent of Russian Communist control.

Other differences were also found in the newspapers' propaganda. All three newspapers bitterly complained about the German presence in France; however, Défense de la France and Libération-Nord took this stand from the outset of the war, while it was not until 1941, after the Russo-German pact was broken, that L'Humanité also took this position. All three newspapers complained of the hardships the French people suffered and they all complained about the mistreatment of Jews. While Défense de la France was not concerned with the mistreatment of Communists, Libération-Nord and, of course, L'Humanité were concerned. Not everyone was against the Vichy government from the

beginning of the war. Défense de la France had mixed feelings at first, while Libération-Nord and L'Humanité consistently opposed the Vichy Regime.

All three newspapers were concerned with the liberation of France, but it was L'Humanité which was most influenced by political ideology. Political biases and party preferences were secondary for those resisters working for Défense de la France and Libération-Nord. Those matters would be considered more seriously after the war.

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A THESIS

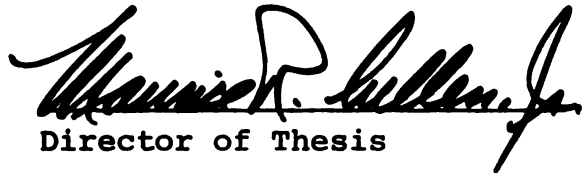
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Director of Thesis

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I was honored to receive a letter in response to my questions concerning nationalism and political affiliations from Claude Bourdet, a journalist who worked for Combat during the war, and a letter from Henri Frenay, publisher of Combat.

I want to thank my parents, Albert and Henrietta Aladjem, for their encouragement in my studies and for having the foresight to leave Europe before the war. Finally, I am grateful to my husband, Jacob, for his confidence in me, his patience and encouragement.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Study

French underground newspapers during World War II provided a forum for French resisters to the Nazi regime. The newspapers helped restore people's faith in the salvation of France by transmitting the voice of the British Broadcasting Corporation and by spreading propaganda against the Nazis. Over 1,200 underground newspapers were published in France during the war. They appealed to all facets of French society.¹ French underground propaganda was an effective psychological device which stimulated patriotism and implanted ideas of resistance in the minds of the people.²

The purpose of this thesis is to examine and compare three French underground newspapers during the early war years, 1940 through 1942, Défense de la France, Libération-Nord, and L'Humanité and to determine to what extent the newspapers' fight for liberation was influenced

¹Henri Michel, The Shadow War, trans. Richard Barry (London: Andre Deutsch, 1972), p. 97.

²Henri Michel, Histoire de la Résistance En France, 1940-41 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965), p. 90.

by political rather than nationalistic ideology. To achieve this goal, it was necessary to analyze three types of propaganda: anti-Nazi propaganda, anti-Vichy propaganda, and nationalistic propaganda. All three newspapers reflected hatred of Nazi Germany and the puppet Vichy government and desired liberation for France as early as possible. Unity was a key source of strength for success. The chief difference among the newspapers lay in the focus of their propaganda concerning the means of achieving liberation. Défense de la France and Libération-Nord supported De Gaulle and his ideals because they believed in them, while L'Humanité supported De Gaulle under the influence of Stalin. L'Humanité's policy was one of expediency. Also Stalin feared that if L'Humanité did not support De Gaulle, the French Communists would gain too much power and become independent of Russian Communist control.

The French underground newspapers were originally handwritten and later roneotyped (a duplicating process similar to mimeograph) or typed and mimeographed. The typical newspaper was tabloid format of about four to six pages, which facilitated concealment. Ideally, it was simpler to recruit printers and use their equipment including paper, ink, and type. To insure publication, each edition of a newspaper was prepared in more than one studio since the German and French police frequently broke

in and destroyed printing presses and arrested the clandestine journalists.

Eventually clandestine agencies emerged. Jean Moulin obtained information from various sources and published a periodical bulletin which was distributed by courier to all underground offices as regularly as possible. Of course, such activities were dangerous, but the resisters did what they could at the risk of being shot on the spot.

People craved information. They wanted appraisals of military developments and reading materials to relieve their anxieties. Although it was risky, newspapers were distributed on the streets as well as through the mail. Addresses but no names were put on the outside of the papers so as not to endanger anyone.

The overall effectiveness of Resistance newspapers must be gauged with reference to a particular theoretical light which delineates the elements of success or failure. Harold Lasswell says:

The problem of the propagandist is to intensify the attitudes favorable to his purpose, to reverse the attitudes hostile to it, and to attract the indifferent, or at worst, to prevent them from assuming a hostile bent. Thus, war propaganda involves the enemy, the ally and the neutral. It involves leaders on both sides and the support of certain policies and institutions.³

³Harold Lasswell, "The Theory of Political Propaganda," in Reader in Public Opinion and Communication, ed. Bernard Berelson (New York: Free Press, 1966), pp. 178-79.

Given this definition of a propagandist, it can be assumed that the resistance newspapers were ultimately successful since they were on the side of the Allies.

The Methodology

Little research has been done on the French underground newspapers. Moreover, it is only in the past decade that the French people have been salvaging the newspapers and putting them on microfilm for availability to researchers. The chief specialist on the French Resistance and the underground newspapers is Henri Michel, a former journalist in the Resistance Movement. Michel has written numerous articles and books on the Resistance which include sections on the underground press. In his bibliography, he says that virtually no research has been done on the Communist underground newspapers during World War II. This study deals with one Communist newspaper, L'Humanité.

This thesis necessitated the careful examination of three underground newspapers in the French language. The writer is responsible for all translations made for the purposes of this thesis. A facsimile of the original newspaper Libération-Nord, 1942, was obtained from the Service de Presse et d'Information, a division of the French Embassy in New York City. A microfilm of Défense de la France, 1941 to 1944, was borrowed from the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago. The writer obtained

the microfilm of L'Humanité, 1941 to 1945, from the Association Pour la Conservation et la Reproduction Photographique de la Presse in Paris.

The writer interviewed Dr. Alain Corcos of Michigan State University, who was raised in France during World War II under the influence of an uncle who worked for the Resistance. On the recommendation of Françoise Giroud, Minister for Women in France, the writer also conducted two written interviews with Claude Bourdet and Henri Frenay, who were underground journalists during the war. They are also authors of books used for this thesis.

The diversity of sources, then, contributed to a thoroughly inspiring challenge.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND OF THE FRENCH CLANDESTINE

PRESS DURING WORLD WAR II

Germany defeated France in June, 1940, occupied almost two-thirds of the country, and set up a puppet government in Vichy for the remainder. The German invasion, followed by the rapid fall of the French government, gave birth to two elites: resisters to the Nazi government and supporters of Marshal Henri Phillipe Pétain. Although both groups rebelled against the old government of the Third Republic, they differed in the means of attaining their goals: the resisters supported a form of collectivism while the collaborators supported a corporate solution.⁴ The collaborators accepted defeat and assumed that Germany would soon dominate all of Europe. Pétain, Pierre Laval, and their colleagues hoped to gain the best possible position in Hitler's new order. Somehow, they

⁴Gordon Wright, France in the 20th Century (Washington, D.C.: Washington Service Center for the Teachers of History, American Historical Association, 1965), p. 5.

believed that they could satisfy Hitler and at the same time serve France.⁵

Laval, who has been described as a man who based all his decisions on personal contacts, became deputy prime-minister in 1940. As far back as 1931, Laval confided in the German foreign minister:

Just as war was originally waged between towns, then between countries and recently between empires, so, in the future, it would be waged between continents. He (Laval) did not believe in a Franco-German conflict . . . but sooner or later the Russians and the Chinese would launch an attack upon Europe. We had to make ourselves safe against this.⁶

Historian Geoffrey Warner commented on Laval's policy:

All the elements of Laval's future policies are to be found here: the anti-communism, the suspicions of Britain and the desire for European unity based upon a Franco-German entente. It was the tragedy of his career that his vision was to find its apotheosis in Adolf Hitler's phoney European "new order."⁷

As a leader in the Vichy government, Laval was disliked and criticized by resisters.

For many French people, Pétain, president of the Vichy government and chief of the collaborators, was quite respectable:

A personification of abiding old France; an erect old soldier of austere tastes, of Catholic peasant

⁵John F. Sweet, "The Mouvements Unis De La Résistance (M.U.R.), A Study of Non-Communist Resistance Movements in France, 1940-44" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1971), p. 4.

⁶Geoffrey Warner, Pierre Laval and the Eclipse of France (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 24.

⁷Warner, Pierre Laval and the Eclipse of France, p. 24.

stock, Marshal of France, member of the French academy, returning from his modest country estate once more to rescue his country from the rabble.⁸

But as Jacques Duclos, then head of the French Communist Party, points out in an interview in the French film The Sorrow and the Pity, Pétain had been the favorite of the people for many years. He was thought of as a good old man. According to Duclos, Pétain had fooled the people by his innocence. They assumed he was too old to hurt the country and certainly could have no hopes for political gains in the future. However, Duclos said he is not even sure if Pétain understood what he had achieved.⁹

When Pétain, Laval, and their fellow collaborators took control of the Vichy government, resistance movements cropped up all over France. Most resisters had not been politically active prior to the war. They came from all facets of society including the working class as well as the aristocracy. The Resistance movement grew out of patriotic concerns. In the midst of disaster, people initially responded on an individual basis. They had been humiliated and wanted to oust the Germans and Vichyites and renovate France. The Resistance movement gave people the opportunity to cooperate with one another to achieve

⁸Robert Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order (New York: Knopf, 1972), pp. 27-28.

⁹Marcel Ophuls, The Sorrow and the Pity (a film-script) trans. Mireille Johnston (New York: Outbridge and Lazard, Inc., 1957), p. 32.

a mutually desired goal: the liberation of France from both the Nazi imperialists and the Vichy regime.¹⁰

Although the movement was initially inspired by feelings of patriotism, it eventually adopted an ideological and reformist tone:

In its broadest sense, this ideology was anti-totalitarian and at the same time collectivist: it aimed to reassert the values of liberal humanism, as modified by 20th century democratic socialist and Christian socialist thought. A growing number of resisters saw the expulsion of the Germans as only one step toward a higher goal--the renovation of the nation's society, economy and political structure.¹¹

Although the Resistance was highly motivated and inspired, it had difficulties getting on its feet. People believed that the war would end in the winter of 1940. Pétain's government was still strong and the Germans controlled two-thirds of the country. As an indication of the confusion, Communist posters as late as 1941 read: "Neither Pétain! Nor De Gaulle!" and "France wants neither cholera nor the plague!"¹²

Resisters responded to their feelings against the Nazis and collaborators by passing on information and spreading propaganda. The Allies initially ignored the resisters' early efforts. The more hopeful people

¹⁰Alban-Vistel, "Fondements Spirituels de la Résistance," Esprit 195 (October 1952): 480-92.

¹¹Gordon Wright, The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-45 (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 147.

¹²Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order 1940-44, p. 35.

became about the possibility of liberation, the more strength they gave to the movement. The resisters' actions manifested themselves in sporadic demonstrations, strikes, sabotage, and assassinations. Pamphlets turned into periodicals, private homes used to conceal refugees were linked to escape lines, and agencies were set up to gather intelligence. Sporadic demonstrations, strikes, sabotage, and assassinations gave birth to armed group resistance.¹³

The small army carried on a miniature war within the context of a large war. Their tactics in achieving peace differed from those of the Allies: their troops were fewer, less well prepared, and they had developed little strategy. When a battle became too fierce, they were forced to retreat. By 1943, the Resistance army in France had only 100,000 soldiers.¹⁴

Henri Michel described the main difference between the clandestine resister and a soldier in a professional army:

A clandestine volunteer never separates his actions as a fighter from his views as a citizen. The war he wages is ideological as much as national; it will not necessarily end when the occupying power

¹³ Michel, The Shadow War, p. 14.

¹⁴ Paul Bringuier, "The Epic of the French Underground," New York Times Magazine, 11 July 1943, p. 5.

has been beaten and driven out because the political aims which he desires must be achieved as well.¹⁵

Michel emphasized the necessity for the union between propaganda and military action. This dimension would give impetus to the movement:

The occupied peoples could be given a plethora of news and directives, creating the impression of ubiquitous omniscient power, stirring euphoric reactors to hope, helping them gradually to take action within their capabilities, but also indicating a course in which they might have embarked if left to themselves.¹⁶

Michel further stressed that if propaganda was to be successful, it must be conceived of and executed effectively. It must be directed appropriately to the people it is addressing. Criticism of current leaders must be avoided at all costs.

The clandestine press provided hope, leadership, and encouragement where despair may otherwise have dominated. About five weeks after Paris surrendered, Paul Simon, a veteran of World War I, used a toy printing press to produce fifty copies of the first underground newspaper, Valmy. A weekly newspaper named Pantagruel was the first to recognize Charles De Gaulle as head of the Resistance movement. La Voix De Paris was the first paper to publish information concerning the motives of the Vichy government. Résistance published excerpts from Mein Kampf to demonstrate

¹⁵Michel, The Shadow War, p. 10.

¹⁶Michel, The Shadow War, p. 10.

to the people Hitler's real intentions. La Voix du Nord urged laborers to stop working during air raids in order to cause slowdowns in production.

The principal goals of the newspapers were to change public opinion, to arouse the people's apathy, and to counteract Nazi propaganda. The next step was to implant ideas about Resistance in the minds of the people so as to manipulate their actions. The first idea was the necessity to destroy the foreign occupier.¹⁷

The BBC stimulated the French underground press. It relied on purely direct, honest reports which appealed to the individual's sense of reason, rather than to his emotions. Increasingly, people listened to the BBC and became involved in clandestine activities. Each movement aspired to be the leading voice of the underground, thus causing tension among the groups.

The underground press helped the Allies obtain military and civilian information and informed British agents about new and old war plants as desirable military targets, the construction of airfields, labor conditions, and the effects of production slowdowns. Michael DeCapite described the purpose of the press at the time:

Its most important function, however, is to strengthen morale and keep alive the hope of deliverance from Nazi domination; sabotage methods are discussed in it; active resistance is urged; passive resistance is

¹⁷Michel, The Shadow War, p. 98.

praised; German propaganda is analyzed and refuted; names of German leaders are selected for a day of reckoning. It carries on a war of nerves by methods as persistent and effective as any of the schemes devised by the Germans themselves.¹⁸

Ironically, the Nazi sanction against listening to the BBC and reading the clandestine papers enhanced the significance of the underground as a reliable source of information for the anti-German population.

Initially, the Germans paid little attention to the resisters' enterprises and thought that the clandestine newspapers were an expression of weakness. The Germans grew nervous when they realized it was impossible to halt the flow of clandestine literature which had already begun to affect the French population. On finding underground reading materials, the Germans stamped them with "hostile literature" and circulated them in small numbers. They used these papers as a source of counter-propaganda.

The underground press became so successful that the Germans produced newspapers with a similar format to that of the underground papers but with distorted information; they hoped that people would be fooled into believing that these were legitimate papers and become misguided. This counter-propaganda proved to be unsuccessful. The Germans also sent false newspapers to people

¹⁸Michael DeCapite, "Europe's Underground," Nation 154 (May 23, 1942): 592.

receiving regular ones and tracked these people down and sent them to prison.¹⁹

Towards the end of the war, the German soldiers could not help but be influenced by the underground press:

. . . Ideological attacks on the Nazi party and German aims; the strategic hopelessness of German's military and economic position; the justice of the United Nations' war aims and their unity and determination to carry them out; promises of good treatment of prisoners of war with appeals of self-preservation.²⁰

Even if the Germans could not be induced to withdraw from combat actively, the propaganda appealed to them to hide in cellars. This became a favorite technique of surrender since it avoided the need of facing the desertion problem.

Up until 1941 many French people believed it was possible to make friends with Hitler and did not realize the full implications of their plight. Knowing that the French people were not allowed to speak, write, or assemble freely, some university students in Paris initiated an underground movement, *Défense de la France*. Out of it evolved a newspaper by the same name. The young journalists

¹⁹Tania Long, "Free Press of Enslaved Europe: One Thousand Underground Newspapers Are a Weapon That Harasses the Nazi Rulers," The New York Times Magazine, 16 May 1943, pp. 20-27.

²⁰Edward Stills and Morris Janowitz, "Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht," in Propaganda in War and Crises: Materials for American Policy, ed. Daniel Lerner (New York: G. W. Stewart, 1951), pp. 403-10.

hoped that the newspaper would rehabilitate the French spirit and influence public opinion.

The resisters explained that Défense de la France was written by and for the French. The newspaper appealed to the French people's emotions by referring to propaganda against France, the necessity of the young to enlist in the French service, and the tragedy of the concentration camps.²¹ Défense de la France affirmed the reality that France was involved in war and that she had to struggle for liberation. In the first edition, the journalists stressed the purpose of the movement: "unity, truth, and honor."²² The paper clearly stated that it was neither under the British nor under the Communists.

On December 1, 1940, Christian Pineau compiled the first edition of Libération-Nord. The newspaper survived until August 14, 1944, its mission accomplished with liberation. Apparently, Pineau wrote the first seventy editions. Not able to handle the responsibilities and withstand German pressure, Pineau went to England leaving Jean Cavailles and Jean Texier in charge of the newspaper. The newspaper was a weekly and had a circulation of about 50,000. Frequently stamps were stolen from the Germans

²¹Marie Granet, Défense de la France. Histoire d'un Mouvement de Résistance 1940-44 (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1966), p. 47.

²²Granet, Défense de la France. Histoire d'un Mouvement, p. 40.

and used for postage on the newspapers. Ironically the Germans were paying for the delivery of propaganda against themselves.

The primary purpose of Libération-Nord was to spread propaganda against the invader. To do so, it was necessary to arouse the public patriotism, to demonstrate that people should not abandon hope, and to explain why the French had to fight and defeat the Germans. The resisters had to prove to the people that the French could win and to explain how to proceed to achieve liberation.²³

In 1941, French morale was low. Pineau initially called for the people to have courage and perseverance. He tried to strike a political chord by exciting hatred against the Nazis. To succeed, he had to tell the truth, inform people of the military developments, discuss the economic difficulties, and report the news about Vichy.

Pineau waged a battle against the collaboration press. According to Paxton, "some of the most notorious figures of the occupation were the Frenchmen who led the political groups in publishing newspapers at Paris in return for the high life of the occupied capital, and in many cases, direct subsidies from the German embassy."²⁴

²³Marie Granet, "Un Journal Socialiste Clandestin Pendant l'Occupation: Libération-Nord," part I, La Revue Socialiste 192 (April 1966): 368-69.

²⁴Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order 1940-44, p. 49.

In one article, Pineau tried to demonstrate that the press produced by the collaborators was solely under the Germans who financed it, directed it, and controlled the articles and enforced permanent censorship.²⁵

Libération-Nord was geared toward discussing the ideas of the working class as well as of the intellectuals. It was influenced by the Socialist party and by Leon Blum. It was anti-fascist and anti-Vichy. It stressed the necessity to get rid of Hitler's regime, which meant, in turn, to fight totalitarianism.

L'Humanité was fighting against the capitalists in 1939 and supporting Stalin, who by 1940 was an ally of Hitler. Beginning in 1940, the newspaper led a campaign against Pétain and the Vichy regime. The Communist clandestine press influenced many people during the occupation. L'Humanité's circulation was low during the war due to a paper shortage, but a total of 317 issues were published and circulated all over the country. On the eve of liberation, the Communist Party's press was active and aggressive. The Communists had attained success under the slogan of "Unity of Action."²⁶

²⁵Granet, "Un Journal Socialist Clandestin Pendant l'Occupation," pp. 368-69.

²⁶Alfred Rieber, Stalin and the French Communist Party 1941-47 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 106-108.

The clandestine press reflected a vast number of opinions. For example, Combat, published by Henri Frenay, one of the leading newspapers, developed out of two newspapers: Liberté in the south and Veritas in the north. Socialists and trade-unionists participated in the production of Libération-Sud under the direction of Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, a leftist journalist. Témoignage Chrétien was published by a group of French Catholics. They relied on the Vatican Radio as their most important source of anti-Nazi propaganda.

The newspaper primarily appealed to the young people and Catholics. It reminded the Catholics of German persecutions against those Catholics who were religious, of their being sent to concentration camps, and German attacks on Catholic bishops. Témoignage Chrétien quoted Hitler as saying that Saint Paul was the epileptic of Christianity and one is either Christian or German.

Although the Vatican did not set guidelines for the priests and Catholic population during the war and remained silent on the Jewish question much of the time, many Catholics dedicated their services to the Resistance and the publication of underground newspapers. Between the two wars a new kind of social Catholicism had arisen in France which the pope condemned. The leaders of the movement were secular and had conflicts with the priests.

They took it upon themselves to fight against Hitler, his policy of anti-Semitism, and the annexation of Alsace.

In 1941, Jacques Decour along with several friends initiated an underground literary journal, Les Lettres Françaises. After the first edition was compiled and about to be published, the Germans arrested Decour and executed him on May 30, 1942, for publishing anti-German propaganda similar to that of the three newspapers under study. In the meantime, Decour's sister burned the entire first edition so that the Gestapo would not discover it. Later Jacques Débû-Bridel, another journalist and friend of Decour, compiled a summary of the first edition. After Decour was arrested, the group of friends dispersed and Claude Morgan took over the job of publishing Les Lettres Françaises. It was September, 1942, when the first edition appeared.²⁷ The death of Decour is only one example of the tragedies that the French underground suffered. Frequently, the Germans arrested the journalists, burned issues of their publications, and along with the help of the French police blew up the press rooms of the newspapers as was the case with Combat in 1944.

With this background in mind, we shall proceed to discuss the content of the newspapers, more specifically, the three main types of propaganda used by the French clandestine press during the war.

²⁷Les Lettres Françaises, France, 1942-44.

CHAPTER III

ANTI-NAZI PROPAGANDA

As a whole, the French underground press waged a bitter attack against the Nazi invasion and subsequent domination of two-thirds of France. Numerous articles appeared in Défense de la France and Libération-Nord stressing the necessity to expel the Germans from France. From the outset, these two newspapers and, by 1941, L'Humanité, blamed the Germans for robbing the French of their food and forcing French labor to work for Germany. The newspapers also expressed dissatisfaction with German treatment of minority groups, particularly Jews and Communists.

Although the Communists opposed the Nazi regime prior to 1939, by 1940 L'Humanité condemned the western imperialists and not the Germans. The French Communists backed the Russians who had signed a pact with Germany; consequently, the French Communists supported the Germans. After the pact was broken in 1941, the Communist press continued to condemn the western capitalists and began to find fault with the Germans as well.

According to Michel, the underground press stressed the need to rid the country of the enemy as a first step

in solving internal problems. The newspapers aroused the people's hatred for the Germans by reminding them of Nazi crimes including the arrests of innocent people and the execution of hostages. To boost morale, articles emphasized the weaknesses of the Germans, minimized their victories, and magnified their defeats.²⁸ In order to arouse the Germans to return home to their families, the resisters sent pamphlets filled with anti-Nazi propaganda to the German soldiers.²⁹

Political Propaganda Against the Nazis

Journalists writing for Défense de la France expressed a desire not to be dominated by the Germans, the Russians, or the British. They wanted France to retain her identity and said that Germany was trying to demoralize the people. The journalists fought the Germans' desire to create dissension among the French who were already depressed. One journalist aroused the French people's animosity toward the invader by pointing out that since the Germans had been present in France, they had taught the people only about war, famine, concentration camps, and shame. He wrote that if the Germans succeed,

²⁸ Michel, The Shadow War, p. 98.

²⁹ Michel, The Shadow War, p. 98.

they will offer the French people a small paradise provided they sacrifice their freedom.³⁰

Resisters reinforced the criminal nature of the German character. In an article in Défense de la France, a journalist attacked the German people:

You want to dominate the world and we will prove that you are nothing but vile and malfeasant animals. You perform all your evil³¹ acts, but you are nothing but miserable assassins.

The resisters said that the Germans were barbarians and that their actions revealed that justice does not exist in their world: "You are nothing but tigers and hyenas."

In the summer of 1942, Libération-Nord lashed out against the Nazis and pressured the French people to do the same. "The stake is clear: either freedom or slavery. Everyone has the sacred task of doing all that is possible to free the country from the enemy's destruction."³² The journalists introduced the idea of sabotage to the people as a means of furthering the cause of the Resistance. They stressed the necessity of ridding the country of the enemy as a preliminary for solving internal problems. In one issue, a journalist wrote that most people did not know how to engage in sabotage, which is a delicate process requiring profound understanding of the trade. The Allies

³⁰ Défense de la France, no. 1, 1941.

³¹ Défense de la France, January 7, 1942.

³² Libération-Nord, June 12, 1942.

had transported war materials in broad daylight in front of the enemy, so why couldn't the French perform similar acts?

Unlike Défense de la France and Libération-Nord, L'Humanité did not attack the Germans even though prior to the war the French Communists had taken an anti-Nazi stand. The delay in cooperation with the Resistance detracted from the impetus in the early stages of the movement. "On the eve of the war, immediately following the signature of the Russo-German Pact, they did an abrupt volte face, and denounced the 'imperialist war.'"³³ Shortly thereafter, Edoard Daladier, a minister in the Vichy government, dissolved the Party, suppressed the newspaper, and expelled Communists from the Assembly. The Germans then arrested and imprisoned many Communists. The Party was completely demoralized. Many members found the change in policy hard to accept and went underground.

After the invasion in 1940, the first act of the French communists vis-a-vis the Germans was to seek permission to publish L'Humanité openly. (It was refused.) Nevertheless, the underground L'Humanité continued to urge fraternization with the Germans, attack De Gaulle as a reactionary in the pay of British imperialists, and speak of Anglo-French war guilt. The Germans responded by releasing during

³³ Peter Novick, The Resistance Versus Vichy, The Purge of the Collaborators in Liberated France (London: Chatto and Windus, 1968), p. 16.

the first six months of occupation, over 300 Communists who had been imprisoned by the French authorities.³⁴

After the war began, the communists attacked the western capitalists and saw the British as more of a threat to them than the Nazis. However, by January, 1941, they already began to express their fear of the Germans as well as of the British.³⁵ In June, 1941, the Russo-German Pact was broken when the Germans invaded Russia. About that time, L'Humanité strongly attacked the German presence in France. On July 2, 1941, an article in L'Humanité warned that Hitler wanted the Vichy government to break ties with Russia.³⁵ In the same issue, a journalist expressed discontent with the Vichy government for carrying out the order to join the Germans in a war against Russia.

According to Novick, the Communists did their best to eradicate the memory of their association with Germany prior to the German invasion into Russia:

While the Communists in this period cooperated with with all other Resistance elements . . . they were not hesitant about pointing out their leading role. Their efforts in this direction were reinforced by German and Vichy propaganda which pictured all resistants as communist terrorists or their tools. This propaganda was doubly valuable to the communists, since it put non-communists resistants on

³⁴Novick, The Resistance Versus Vichy, p. 17.

³⁵L'Humanité, August 15, 1940.

³⁶L'Humanité, July 2, 1941, no. 110.

notice that by openly criticizing the communists, and thus imperiling Resistance unity, they would be playing the enemy's game.³⁷

Défense de la France and Libération-Nord were dedicated from the outset to the salvation of France without specifying a political affiliation, while L'Humanité supported the Communist Party as a means of achieving liberation. Although the Communists supported the Germans at first, they learned their lesson and soon urged a policy of unity for all resisters. They were opportunists in that initially they did not protest the German presence in France, thinking they could profit from a liaison with the invader.

Economic Propaganda Against the Nazis

In addition to spreading political propaganda, the French Resistance newspapers circulated economic propaganda. Resisters were violently opposed to sending French workers and food supplies to Germany. Most French people struggled to find enough food to eat. The journalists hoped that by writing about the problem, individuals would realize that they were not alone in their hunger and should join in the resisters' efforts to stop the food wagons en route to Germany. In regard to this problem, Michel said:

Key phrases calculated to make a deep impact constantly recurred such as "plundering our food," which touched upon one of the reader's more pressing anxieties--fear that he might be unable to feed himself

³⁷ Novick, The Resistance Versus Vichy, pp. 17-18.

properly. There were many reasons for food shortages, but only one was highlighted--the occupation: the others were either passed over in silence or connected to the occupation.³⁸

The clandestine newspapers did not only complain about the lack of food but also suggested a solution to the problem: resistance. In September, 1941, Défense de la France said that the hatred of the French for the enemy grew each day as a result of the Germans' pillaging and spying. In defense, the French must resist the Germans. The newspaper then explained the meaning of resistance:

To resist is to accelerate the battle against Nazism in cutting down production in our factories for items going to Germany. To resist means discouraging troops from going to fight with Germany. To resist means above all to demonstrate to the invader that it is fighting against a superior civilization which it can not absorb.³⁹

The writer of another article further discussed the problem of pillage. He explained that 220,000 wagons of food are going to Germany and 200,000 remain in France primarily for German consumption. The French exchange 720,000 tons of phosphate for 600,000 of apples and in fact only receive 40,000 tons of apples. Similar problems arose with wheat and meat. The article raised the question, "Why, then, should we collaborate with people who have nothing and offer us nothing?"⁴⁰

³⁸Michel, The Shadow War, p. 98.

³⁹Défense de la France, September 10, 1941.

⁴⁰Défense de la France, September 10, 1941.

According to Paxton, Hitler contributed to strengthening the Resistance movement by mobilizing people to work in Germany. Many young men who were faced with the possibility of going to Germany, chose to go into the mountains to join the maquis, a guerrilla organization.⁴¹

Libération-Nord also took a strong stand against the German confiscation of French food. An article said that every week, 20 trains and 1,500 wagons go to Germany which would never come back. "At this pace, we won't have anything to eat by winter."⁴²

In November, 1942, the newspaper expressed disgust with exporting French workers to Germany. The newspaper said that the workers have not maintained their loyalty to France and have chosen to work for the enemy. It is necessary therefore to eliminate this program immediately.⁴³

L'Humanité also rebelled against the Germans for contributing to food shortages in France. In January, 1941, a journalist wrote that 400 wagons of animals have left for Germany with ten to twelve animals in each wagon.⁴⁴ In February, 1941, a journalist wrote that at the train stations in France, the Germans choose the best meats to

⁴¹Paxton, Vichy, France, pp. 292-93.

⁴²Libération-Nord, April 18, 1942.

⁴³Libération-Nord, November 27, 1942.

⁴⁴L'Humanité, January 1941.

send to Germany.⁴⁵ By April, the newspaper said that the French people received only forty-four grams of meat per capita per day. The resisters complained about high costs and claimed it was impossible to provide for their families.⁴⁶

All three newspapers hoped that by talking about the problem close to home, they could inspire the people to join the Resistance. The resisters wanted people to see the bad effects of German domination of France.

Propaganda Condemning Persecution of Minorities

The Resistance newspapers came out strongly against the Nazi persecution of minority groups. All three newspapers condemned anti-Semitism, while their feeling about Communists as a minority group varied. The Resistance movement not only spread propaganda against the concentration camps, but also helped people escape from the enemy. They hid people in their homes, made contacts for them, and forged identity papers. The Jews and Communists were both victims of German propaganda:

Unwilling, in the years following the armistice, to admit that Frenchmen were being executed only because they were patriots, the Germans and their bought press labelled either Communist or Jew every man executed for sabotage or underground activity.⁴⁷

⁴⁵L'Humanité, February 1941.

⁴⁶L'Humanité, April 1941.

⁴⁷A. J. Liebling, "Underground Press," New Yorker 20 (April 15, 1944): 54.

In one respect, the Communists gained from the German propaganda:

One consequence was the indelible association of the words "communist" and "patriot" in the French popular mind and within the last two years they have become synonymous, which gives an increased impetus to the leftward tendency caused by that reason committed by the great industrialists.⁴⁸

Resisters working for Défense de la France took a strong stand against anti-Semitism. They claimed that Nazism was the chief enemy of religion and of a universal culture. According to one journalist, the Germans were anti-Semitic because "the Jews are the people who have given the idea to the people of a universal God and the first basic laws of moral humanism. The decalogue disturbs the Nazis."⁴⁹

However, Défense de la France feared the Russian influence and was not sympathetic to the French Communists early in the war. The resisters working for Défense de la France disliked the Russians and the Germans and said: "Do not defend Communism. . . . Do not come to terms with Hitler. To do so is to assassinate France."⁵⁰

In the summer of 1942, Libération-Nord protested strongly against anti-Semitism. One article criticized the new measures taken against the Jews, which the writer

⁴⁸Liebling, "Underground Press," p. 54.

⁴⁹Défense de la France, March 20, 1942, no. 12.

⁵⁰Défense de la France, March 20, 1942.

thought was in defiance of civilization. The article further stated that commentaries in the Nazi-controlled press were shameful. The resisters wrote that one- and two-year-old children are taken from their mothers.

". . . The pacifists have no excuse for this ignorance. One must take part. Whoever is not against the grave scene today is against us."⁵¹ The resisters accepted responsibility and wanted more French people to do the same.

In the autumn of 1942, another article appeared in Libération-Nord condemning the persecution of Jews. It said that in Paris thousands of Jews had been mistreated. Families have been broken up and sent to unknown places. One author wrote:

I proclaim that all men, aryan and nonaryan are brothers because they are created by the same God; that all men whatever race or religion have the right to individual respect. The anti-Semitic acts are a mistake of human dignity, a violation of the most sacred rights of the individual and the family. May God console and fortify those who are indignantly persecuted.⁵²

Although discussion of the persecution of Communists was not evident in Libération-Nord in 1942, Captain Brecourt, a frequent contributor to the newspapers, said that the people should salute the heroic Resistance of

⁵¹Libération-Nord, July 17, 1942.

⁵²Libération-Nord, October 23, 1942.

the Russians; now the Germans have learned that the Russians know how to fight. Another article praised a Russian surprise attack against the Germans.

Libération-Nord lauded the Russians' success against the Germans. The journalists hoped to inspire people to fight hard to defeat the Germans by designating the Russian example as a source of motivation.

So far, the one major difference between Défense de la France and Libération-Nord is that resisters working for the former feared a tie with the Communists while those working for the latter admired the Communists.

By the summer of 1942, resisters working for L'Humanité wanted all people to unify and rise up against Hitler. To strengthen their position, the Communists condemned the Nazi persecution of the Jews and complained of the poor treatment of other Communists who had been sent to concentration camps and work camps because of their beliefs. In October, 1940, L'Humanité condemned the destruction of Jewish shops.

In Paris, German troops killed students and in November, 1940, L'Humanité protested the deaths of young people in prison camps. In December, the newspaper attacked the Germans for taking out the young workers from factories and putting them in camps. The paper praised those young people who had managed to unify their forces and create the newspaper L'Avant-Garde.

L'Humanité sympathized with suffering Communists all over the world because they shared a common contempt for capitalism and the war. One article argued against the repression of Communists in the north and south of France and in Indo-China, Italy, America, Germany, Britain, and in Switzerland.⁵³

In January, 1940, L'Humanité further propagandized about the persecution of the Communist Party because of its attachment to Russia and its destiny to awaken France. The Germans threw thousands of comrades into concentration camps and prisons. The paper wished their comrades courage and said that the future lies on the Communists.⁵⁴ The Communists used the pictures and words of children to evoke sympathy, and called for a unification of families and the abolition of concentration camps.⁵⁵

Other newspapers also called for an end to persecution of minority groups. A group of French Catholics was responsible for the publication of Témoignage Chrétien. These resisters tried to explain the destructive nature of German propaganda and they used statements from the Vatican Radio to convince the people of the evils of Nazism.

In one article, "L'Anti-Semitism et la Conscience," the writer asks if anti-Semitism is not a contradiction

⁵³L'Humanité, December 19, 1940, no. 87.

⁵⁴L'Humanité, January 9, 1941, no. 90.

⁵⁵L'Humanité, January 16, 1941.

of the philosophy of the French people and their struggle to defend human dignity and the use of reason. The writer asked if historical writers such as Pascal, Montaigne, and Descartes would have excluded Jews from their definition of mankind.⁵⁶

The writer asks whether Jesus addresses himself to all people or whether he excludes certain peoples out of malice and anger. Do we have such little common sense that we must follow the war of the barbaric Nazis? French anti-Semitism is dishonorable to France. It is demoralizing. It corrupts one's moral sense and perverts one's heart. Sooner or later, if the French people continue to listen to the official propaganda, they will not be able to discern the real enemy. Anti-Semitism, he writes, is not against a crime, but against a race or religion in which there are both the guilty and the innocent. Is it a crime, he asks, to be a Jew or a descendant of a Jew?⁵⁷

In another article in Témoignage Chrétien, the writer uses similar arguments against Nazism and its policy against Jews. By approaching the Catholics on religious grounds, these resisters hoped to turn the Catholic population against the Germans. In an article

⁵⁶ Georges Cottier, ed., De la Résistance à la Revolution. Anthologie de la Presse Clandestine Francaise (Neuchatel: Editions de la Baconniere, 1945), p. 70.

⁵⁷ Cottier, De la Résistance à la Revolution, p. 71.

entitled "Collaboration and Fidelité," the writer explains step by step how the Germans used seduction, compromise, perversion, and destruction to convert the Catholics to their way of thinking.⁵⁸

The writer quotes Pope Pius IX from a speech on September 6, 1938, to demonstrate the dangers of Nazi propaganda:

Note that Abraham is called our patriarch, our ancestor. Anti-Semitism is not compatible with the thoughts and sublime reality which are expressed in this text. It is an antipathetic movement to which we can not as Christians have any part. Anti-Semitism is unacceptable. We are spiritually semites.⁵⁹

The use of historical writing was extremely effective in expressing contempt towards Nazi persecution of Jews. In the second issue of the clandestine literary paper, Les Lettres Françaises, there is a passage from Maxim Gorki with his views on anti-Semitism. He speaks of having read innumerable accounts of people trying to legitimize anti-Semitism. He strongly disagreed with the people's efforts. He asks the question, "Isn't a Semite more of a man than an anti-Semite?"⁶⁰

In this discussion of propaganda used to condemn Nazi persecution of minority groups, we have seen a vast

⁵⁸ Cottier, De la Résistance à la Revolution, pp. 31-34.

⁵⁹ Cottier, De la Résistance à la Revolution, p. 35.

⁶⁰ Les Lettres Françaises, no. 2, October 1942.

variety of techniques used by the clandestine newspapers. Défense de la France propagandized against the Nazi maltreatment of Jews, but feared the Communists as much as they feared the Nazis. Libération-Nord condemned the persecution of Jews and praised Russian Communist successes against the Germans. L'Humanité condemned the persecution of all minority groups including the Jews, the Communists, the young, the students, and the workers, because their strength lay in a policy of unity of all peoples.

The newspapers used a clever technique. By criticizing the Nazis for persecuting minorities, they hoped to appeal to the still-free minorities to work in the Resistance and to the masses to wake up and realize what was happening to individuals. By making the stories personal, by talking about families breaking up, they hoped to appeal to other families to join the Resistance and fight.

It is fair to conclude that the French underground newspapers unanimously realized that liberation could not come for as long as the Germans remained in France and drained her of her food, her workers, and her people.

CHAPTER IV

USE OF ANTI-VICHY PROPAGANDA

Vichy Power

In the spring of 1942, Laval concluded an agreement with the Germans which gave the French police control of problems involving anarchism, terrorism, and Communism. However, the French police had no jurisdiction over punishments for crimes committed against the Germans and at any given time, the Germans would intervene with French policy. In 1943, the French police arrested 9,000 people for their support of Gaulism and Marxism and their acts of hostility to the Vichy Regime. In the summer of 1944, 80,000 French people were deported to Germany for similar crimes.⁶¹

The Vichy government was inherently anti-Semitic. The combination of German pressure and French passivity created one of the strongest policies of anti-Semitism in wartime Europe. Long before 1942 when the Germans sent Jews to concentration camps, the French set up a purge and quota system. The anti-Semitism of Vichy government policy found its roots in French Catholicism and nationalistic

⁶¹Paxton, Vichy, pp. 296-97.

sentiments rather than in racism which was imposed by the Nazis.⁶²

Novick said that Jews were not allowed to teach, bank, or work in communications or in civil services. Even though the Vichy government and administration cooperated with the Germans, the Vichy regime's anti-Semitism was very much a native product.⁶³ In the fall of 1942, the French police rounded up about eight to ten thousand foreign Jews living in the southern zone of France and deported them to camps.⁶⁴

However, many of the French people did not completely understand the political position of the Vichy government. In the beginning of the war, the challenge of spreading propaganda against the collaborators was particularly difficult. Paxton claims:

The very existence of the Pétain regime further confused the issue. While the direct German presence in the northern two-thirds of France left no doubt where the enemy lay, it was not clear in the south whether Anti-Germanism meant opposing Vichy or reinforcing its simulacrum of independence and its nationalistic rhetoric.⁶⁵

To be effective, Resistance needed hope and a clear target. The thought of pushing the Germans back across the Rhine seemed an impossibility. Paxton said

⁶²Paxton, Vichy, p. 173.

⁶³Novick, Resistance, p. 10.

⁶⁴Paxton, Vichy, p. 296.

⁶⁵Paxton, Vichy, p. 38.

that Resistance required taking risks and acting against the law on behalf of a higher good and that the young and the outcasts had an easy time adjusting to this mode of life. The Resistance was primarily composed of the young, the Communists, and old street fighters from prewar times. Unfortunately, the status of the Resistance magnified the fears it aroused in solid citizens.⁶⁶

The Resistance connoted images of lawlessness which further reinforced the Vichy government's identification with Germany:

Perceiving the Resistance as a minority of outlaws, the Vichy regime was drawn even closer into complicity, with the German occupation authorities' effort to crush it. The very logic of Vichy's existence required it to keep order. The Vichy strategy of seeking to replace the Germans and restore French sovereignty in the policy and military fields drew the strings of complicity even tighter. From the beginning, the Vichy Regime had found German concessions easier to obtain in those areas that permitted a stronger Armistice and French police to help keep order.⁶⁷

Most French people had had confidence in the Vichy government, but by 1941 their support waned. People were cold in winter: they had few clothes; textiles were scarce. They feared the coming winter. They were hungry and saw no salvation in sight.

⁶⁶Paxton, Vichy, pp. 291-92.

⁶⁷Paxton, Vichy, pp. 291-92.

The Newspapers' Response to Vichy Control

By 1942, all three newspapers opposed the Vichy Regime. Novick said that although the resisters were not consciously mapping out a plan for a future purge, they alluded to the problem. Défense de la France, which had supported Pétain and had remained cool towards De Gaulle, now thought the collaborators would have to be punished. Resisters working for Libération-Nord claimed that in addition to setting up regional offices and publishing the newspaper, traitors would have to be penalized at the end of the war. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union, in 1941, the Communists aimed their animosity towards the French judges who convicted Communists. The resisters warned the judges of a future purge.⁶⁸

Public opinion concerning Pétain was split: some maintained respect for his World War I heroism while others condemned him as a traitor. In the early war years, however, the thrust of the clandestine propaganda in the northern zone was aimed at the invader and not the collaborators:

What was present, was the occupier, the Nazi. It was against this that they must fight. To collaborate with the occupier was infamous. What was important was the feelings towards the Germans. What one thought of the Vichy government was secondary.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Novick, Resistance, pp. 24-25.

⁶⁹ Granet, Défense de la France, p. 54.

By keeping the anti-Vichy propaganda as a secondary target, the resisters working for Défense de la France could work together even though many differed in their views on Pétain and his government. The attitudes revealed in articles did not represent all views.⁷⁰ Philippe Viannay and Robert Salmon, who wrote most of the articles for Défense de la France, differed in their opinions on Vichy. Viannay came from a traditional Catholic family. He felt that although people did not have to agree with Pétain's foreign policy, they must support his internal policy. On the other hand, Robert Salmon was a democratic socialist who supported De Gaulle. Salmon and Viannay frequently discussed their political views but found room for agreement in their attitudes toward the Germans; they would fight to death to get rid of them.⁷¹

By the spring and early summer of 1942, however, Viannay's confidence in Pétain was shaken. A trip to Vichy made him realize what the collaborators stood for and that Pétain was not a free person. At the time when Viannay was recognizing the reality of the Vichy government, that it was a puppet of Germany, De Gaulle's role as leader of the French underground movement outside France was taking form and Viannay eventually supported him.⁷²

⁷⁰Granet, Défense de la France, p. 54.

⁷¹Granet, Défense de la France, p. 57.

⁷²Granet, Défense de la France, p. 59.

An article appeared in January, 1942, in Défense de la France, which was addressed to Marshal Pétain. It said that the French will not accept the laws which exclude certain citizens. "Monsieur Marshal, you can not, you must not be the man of one party. You must be the man of France. You must not dream to unify half the nation against the other half."⁷³ This statement reflects a desire to support Pétain while longing for him to change his policies. There is much sorrow in the resister's words. But at least he has recognized the president's selfish motives.

Although the resisters working for Défense de la France were not preoccupied with the American position in the Pacific, they were concerned with the American production of planes, trucks, boats, and cannons. To boost morale, the resisters discussed the Allies' manufacturing of artillery and said that "revenge was not a dream, that sooner or later Hitler would be conquered, that France would be liberated, and the courage of the Allies would triumph. To these ends, France must help."⁷⁴

Unlike Défense de la France, Libération-Nord took a strong stand against the Vichy regime at the outset of the war. Frequent articles enforced the idea that the Vichy government must fall. The resisters' goal was to

⁷³Défense de la France, January 15, 1942.

⁷⁴Granet, Défense de la France, p. 36.

incite hatred toward Fascism, Nazism, and totalitarianism which were all symbolized by Hitler and the Vichy government.

In June, 1942, Libération-Nord attacked Laval and the Vichy government. One journalist wrote that Laval's return to power is a gain for Hitler which means a rise in the number of French prisoners. The writer said that Laval thinks the people are stupid. He is only concerned with himself. He seeks help from the workers but offers nothing in return to the people. Laval will let Hitler liberate the French people who are already familiar with the dictator's promises. The French people must not accept such treatment. No one must go to Germany.⁷⁵

In July, 1942, Libération-Nord attacked Laval again. The article criticized Laval for saying that 5,000 French prisoners are ready to be freed. The author of the article raised the question, "When and How?" He then said that these people would not be liberated: Laval was only under orders to transmit messages from the Germans but not to deliver freedom to prisoners.⁷⁶

Libération-Nord maintained its position against Laval and his policies. In October, 1942, a journalist wrote that until today the Vichy government could continue

⁷⁵Libération-Nord, June 26, 1942, no. 81.

⁷⁶Libération-Nord, July 17, 1942, no. 85.

to ignore the Resistance, but now it is forced to recognize the protesting workers.

Of course, Libération-Nord also criticized Pétain. In December, 1942, an article entitled "The False Pétain" said that although the Marshal had acted heroically during World War I, he had not demonstrated his character in this war.⁷⁷

Although Défense de la France and Libération-Nord were situated in the north, their views on the Vichy government varied. While Défense de la France was composed of a group of people with diverse political views, their goal was to save France by ridding the country of the Germans. Libération-Nord, which was influenced by the Socialist Party, naturally spread propaganda against the Vichy government, which leaned to the right.

Even though L'Humanité supported the German position early on in the war, the newspaper bitterly and violently opposed the Vichy government. The Communists felt that the puppet government believed in the leadership of a few while the Communists believed in unity for everyone. Criticizing the Vichy government, the resisters hoped to cultivate a hope and faith in the people in the Communist movement. The fact that the newspaper's headquarters lay in the south of France gave the resisters a first-hand perspective on the inequity of the puppet

⁷⁷ Libération-Nord, December 4, 1942, no. 105.

government. An article appeared in December, 1940, which openly criticized the Vichy policy. The author wrote that the German troops have killed students, that France was suffering the after effects of the imperialist war, and that Pétain and Laval and their colleagues impose their savage repression on the people; in contrast, the Communist Party raises a flag of independence from the plutocrats.⁷⁸

In another article, a journalist blatantly condemned Pétain:

You are with Laval representing a nation; you do not ever blush because of this shameful collaboration which put France at the mercy of Germany and risks our getting involved in a new war. You are the tormentor of freemen starving the people and destroying the families.⁷⁹

Under the influence of Stalin, L'Humanité denounced the puppet government by comparing life in Moscow to life in Vichy. In November, 1940, a journalist wrote that under the Vichy government 1,100,000 people are unemployed. Pétain and Laval are collaborating with one imperialist clan against another. The peasants are insulted, the rich get richer. Capitalism is responsible for the misery of the war. However, in Moscow, unemployment does not exist. Stalin and Molotov affirm peace and neutrality.

⁷⁸ L'Humanité, December 5, 1940, no. 85.

⁷⁹ L'Humanité, November 30, 1940, no. 84.

The Russian government exonerates the peasants of their debts and 500,000 tractors have been put at their disposal.⁸⁰

By setting up a dichotomy between the collaborators and the Communists, the resisters hoped to lure the people into fighting for their cause. In January, 1941, the Communists wrote that the Vichy government persecutes the Communists because they are the only ones who are friendly with Russia, because they represent the only awakening element in the French nation. The government has thrown thousands of Communists into concentration camps. The resisters sent wishes of confidence to their comrades saying that the future lies in the Communists. "The future lies in the power of the workers already realized by a sixth of the world." He then thanked everyone who participated in the movement and encouraged people to continue spreading revolutionary propaganda, inspired by humanity.⁸¹

Of all the factions of the Resistance movement, the Vichy government feared the Communists the most. The Vichy government attributed all acts of terrorism to the Communists, who gladly took credit.⁸²

⁸⁰L'Humanité, November 10, 1940, no. 81.

⁸¹L'Humanité, January 9, 1941.

⁸²Novick, Resistance, p. 9.

By 1943 and 1944, in addition to spreading propaganda in the newspapers, many of the resisters also published blacklists geared towards warning the citizens of informers. Regional offices of the larger newspapers were responsible for this type of publication. The lists were also used as boycott guidebooks towards warning officials who were under surveillance and warned others to change their ways for fear their names might be put on the lists. However, making up these lists gave the resisters a source of motivation that one day they would be in control and would get even with their oppressors. The resisters even threatened the collaborators:

In November, 1942, Défense de la France warned policemen that their lives depended on their attitude, and two months later in the same view, they added "Friends of Germany, be fearful and report, if there is still time, the hour approaches. . . ."

Libération-Nord warned of punishment which would be visited upon these officials who cooperated with the new census, aimed at facilitating German recruitment of forced labor. Similar warnings are to be found throughout the Communist and non-Communist underground press in 1943-44.⁸³

In May, 1944, the Comité Nationale des Journalistes came out with a manifesto which stated that the collaboration press in the north would be suppressed at the time of liberation. A new journalism based on honesty and independence would take its place. The new press would not be controlled by the wealthy, so that the opinions of papers

⁸³Novick, Resistance, pp. 28-29.

would not be biased. Committees were then set up to determine future policies. Some matters had to be settled:

Should sanctions be applied only to papers which were zealously collaborationist, or to those papers which appeared in the "Free Zone" before the German invasion be forbidden to appear, or only those which had appeared under the Germans? If newspapers which appeared under Vichy were not in principle underground, would they be allowed to reappear under their old titles?⁸⁴

A final decision on these questions and others was not settled until at least two years after liberation.

⁸⁴Novick, Resistance, p. 116.

CHAPTER V

NATIONALISTIC PROPAGANDA

Pro-Liberation Propaganda in Relation to Political Ideologies

To motivate people to work for the Resistance, numerous articles appeared in the clandestine newspapers expressing a desire for liberation and peace. To build the people's confidence, underground journalists insisted on telling the truth. It is important to understand to what extent the resisters' desires were affiliated with political rather than nationalistic ideologies and to cite specific examples which reflected the newspapers' positions.

Défense de la France inspired the people to support the Resistance movement by spreading propaganda about the liberation of France. In the first issue, Robert Salmon said that the newspaper was established to inform people of the truth. The hour had come to boost people's confidence and tell them that they were capable of achieving great things. The newspaper confirmed the reality that the newspaper was written for and by the French people. "It is the only French voice which comes at this moment in the middle of lies and false flatteries. It has the only right to speak in the name of France. It

verbalizes what each individual is thinking to himself: that France will not allow herself to be strangled or seduced."⁸⁵

In the same issue, the author of an article wrote that although the first match has been lost, victory was still possible. The war is not over. Know that a united France is invincible. The Germans are trying to defeat our morales by spreading propaganda. They use our spirits and turn what they find into false or incomplete reports. They introduce suspicion. They want to disunite us. The author then provided a solution to the problem by saying it was necessary to regroup the French people and tell them the truth. "We must fight for unity, truth and honor. Fight with us."⁸⁶

Journalists writing for Défense de la France said that in the midst of lies, their newspaper was the sole source of truth: "What we must know is whether or not we are at the end of a race or if there is still enough youth so that we can continue to guide our destiny."⁸⁷

In January, 1942, Défense de la France once again stressed the importance of unity against the enemy. We must destroy all that has been built by the enemy. We must destroy the old government policies before building

⁸⁵Défense de la France, no. 1, 1941.

⁸⁶Défense de la France, no. 1, 1941.

⁸⁷Défense de la France, no. 1, 1941.

a new government. We are selling confidence, a love for the good, a love for France.⁸⁸

To inspire people, the journalists frequently used quotations from novelists. They also created slogans. In the first issue of Défense de la France, one journalist quoted Tolstoy, "The salute is in you."⁸⁹ Resisters repeated these words periodically in later issues. A particularly inspirational slogan appeared frequently in Défense de la France: "If you make 100 people read the newspaper, or if you copy it 100 times, all of France will have read it."⁹⁰ Défense de la France struggled for liberation. Although the newspaper was not influenced by a particular political party, it was ultimately motivated by and therefore supported De Gaulle, chief of the Resistance.

Philippe Viannay broke his affiliation with the Vichy government. He had to choose between General Henri Giraud and De Gaulle. In one article, Viannay compared the two leaders:

Giraud, the knight without fear, is particularly known by men of tradition. The whole army has an absolute confidence in his values. Finally, any men of good will who believed in Pétain and were deceived are turning now toward Giraud.

De Gaulle, by his gesture of 1940, having gathered much approval of men of honor and men of shrewdness

⁸⁸ Défense de la France, January 1, 1942.

⁸⁹ Défense de la France, no. 1, 1941.

⁹⁰ Défense de la France, no. 1, 1941.

. . . has been the hope of suffering France. Finally, respectable men of republican principles are supporting him. Each one of these people represents a particular aspect of the nation.⁹¹

Défense de la France supported De Gaulle, and Viannay eventually realized that former Pétainists and reactionaries supported Giraud while people on the left supported De Gaulle. When De Gaulle no longer spoke of Giraud, Défense de la France no longer supported him either.

The movement became Gaullist, in part, because of political events and, in part, because De Gaulle's niece, Geneviève, joined the movement. Through her, the newspaper obtained the true facts about the General and his plans. She made the resisters read his speeches which most people ignored early in the war. The resisters appreciated the independence and strength of De Gaulle and were convinced that he was not as ambitious or as adventurous as the Vichy and German propaganda had made him out to be; rather he was an austere and passionate patriot, attached to his work. His goal was to salute the grandeur of his country.⁹²

The turn which Défense de la France took in favor of De Gaulle remained firm even though Geneviève was captured and deported to Germany in 1943. The newspaper

⁹¹Granet, Défense de la France, p. 60.

⁹²Granet, Défense de la France, p. 61.

reflected its support of De Gaulle by using frequent citations from his books and speeches. The newspaper also shared the General's view about the creation of the Fourth Republic. It called for a new regime which must be democratic and progressive.⁹³

Christian Pineau and his trade-union and socialist friends influenced the political ideology behind Libération-Nord. The newspaper expressed the opinions and hopes of the working class and the intellectual elite. It was also influenced by Leon Blum's ideas on socialism. However, the political orientation did not interfere with the resisters' support for De Gaulle, which grew consistently throughout the war. The newspaper extolled a patriotism based on an anti-Nazi, anti-Vichy, anti-capitalist, anti-totalitarian philosophy. The newspaper professed a desire to return to democracy and a republic.⁹⁴

One journalist wrote:

The liberation of territory must correspond to the liberation of a nation. It is because General De Gaulle took a double engagement in a single bound, that from the first day, Libération-Nord was engaged in a double fight.⁹⁵

The movement called for a government that would govern in the interests of the nation. The movement

⁹³ Granet, Défense de la France, pp. 61-66.

⁹⁴ Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," pp. 428-30.

⁹⁵ Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," p. 432.

wanted rulers who would destroy the collaborators' policy of blackmailing. In October, 1943, another journalist wrote:

The Republic is the government of the people, by the people, by the mandates named by the people and taken away by the people: this is democracy. Our politics consist, after liberation, of freeing the nation from the hateful tyranny of the power of money and of the economic feudalism which has found here a way of making heard those who do not know about politics.⁹⁶

Many articles in Libération-Nord expressed a desire for freedom. On July 3, 1942, an article appeared about the French national anthem, "La Marseillaise." The resisters in the north found it difficult to believe that the Vichy government ignored the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the song which talks against foreign domination.⁹⁷ Later that month, the northern resisters expressed their envy of the resisters in the south who took the initiative to celebrate Bastille Day, which commemorates the destruction of the Bastille, the castle-like fortress in Paris built in 1369. It was used as a state prison until it was stormed and destroyed in 1789.⁹⁸ Slogans appeared in the newspaper similar to those in Défense de la France: "Don't forget: our circulation is

⁹⁶Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," p. 432.

⁹⁷Libération-Nord, July 3, 1942.

⁹⁸Libération-Nord, July 12, 1942.

a duty of your courage,"⁹⁹ and "To sabotage is to paralyze and demoralize the adversary. To sabotage is to fight."¹⁰⁰

Many people who belonged to Libération-Nord were also members of the Socialist Party. Some were members of trade unions. Others were members of the underground socialist party, Comité d'Action Socialiste (C.A.S.), which was friendly to Libération-Nord. Granet discussed the relationship between movements and parties:

In all due recognition to the merit of particular movements in the Resistance, Libération thought that the parties would also have their role to play after the war. Movements and Parties do not oppose each other, each to its place, its need to be determined.¹⁰¹

This point is crucial to our understanding the role of clandestine newspapers in relationship to resistance movements and political parties. An article written in April, 1943, explains further:

The movements did not replace the parties which would play their normal role after the war. The government presided by General De Gaulle will be a government for national defense and republican defense charged to lead France to victory and to prepare her to return to a legal republic. . . . The Republic will insist on large spiritual families which will form parties led by the test of purity and other origins.¹⁰²

Jean Texier, a leader of Libération-Nord, envisioned the regeneration and regrouping of former parties, of those

⁹⁹Libération-Nord, July 26, 1924.

¹⁰⁰Libération-Nord, April 18, 1942.

¹⁰¹Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," p. 433.

¹⁰²Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," p. 434.

who at least had been resisters, and not the constitution of new parties. He was thinking of certain forces and men on the left who had tried to imagine a working partner after liberation.¹⁰³

When Christian Pineau was asked in February, 1941, whether or not Libération-Nord was Gaullist, he responded, "We have only one Party: France, and one enemy: Nazism. The rest for the moment is secondary."¹⁰⁴ In January, 1942, Pineau was forced to take a more precise stand:

De Gaulle or Pétain? De Gaulle? For all the patriots he is the symbol . . . for those who thought of the destiny of the country for whom the word of honor has conserved the sense. . . . Behind De Gaulle, the Free French have died, for the cause of our prisoners, for the lost provinces, of our future liberty. . . .¹⁰⁵

In December, 1942, the newspaper referred to De Gaulle as the movement's leader.

According to Michel, of all the parties the Communist one changed the most in its attitude in conformity with the course of the war. L'Humanité's fight for liberation was smeared with Communist propaganda. Michel said that the Party "swung from neutrality towards Nazi Germany to the most savage struggle against her."¹⁰⁶ After the Russo-German pact was broken in 1941, L'Humanité went so

¹⁰³Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," p. 435.

¹⁰⁴Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," p. 440.

¹⁰⁵Granet, "Un Journal Socialist," p. 440.

¹⁰⁶Michel, The Shadow War, p. 181.

far as to suggest that a Franco-Soviet friendship replace the German-Soviet Pact which ultimately would contribute to a durable peace.¹⁰⁷

L'Humanité was always filled with highly politicized inspirational slogans and statements. Unlike Défense de la France and Libération-Nord, L'Humanité recognized only the Communists as the saviors and not the Resistance as a whole. The newspaper's direction of propaganda did not lie in the patriotism of France but in the Communist Party. As early as August, 1940, the Communists revealed an enthusiastic confidence in themselves as a means of arousing people's faith in the Party.

In the summer of 1940, one journalist wrote:

There is only one party in sight. There is only one party with reason. There is only one party that has not been proved an accomplice; only one party which has had the courage to fight. This party is the Communist party, the French party of the people at the service of the people.¹⁰⁸

The drive behind the Communists was to attract all kinds of people to resist the Nazis.

That men and women of good wish, that the old and the young unite in the town, in the village, all over in popular committees of solidarity . . . to organize assistance for refugees, strikes, the sick, the wounded, to organize a revitalization which in numbers

¹⁰⁷ Auguste Lecoer, Le Parti Communist Français et la Résistance (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1968), pp. 23-29.

¹⁰⁸ L'Humanité, August 15, 1940.

in isolated communities can create a spirit of brotherly solidarity based on the principle one for all for one.¹⁰⁹

L'Humanité issued such statements as: "Long live the Communist Party, the hope of the people of France. Long live the government of the people, at the service of the people." Firey slogans appeared in the newspapers: "Don't throw away this paper, circulate it." Headlines aroused the people: "Enough French Blood!" The Communists attracted people by talking about familial catastrophes: "Mothers, wives of prisoners of war, workers without resources are chased from every enterprise. . . ."¹¹⁰ In January, 1941, one author wrote, "Courage and confidence, Comrades. The future lies in us. The future lies in the cause of Communism. . . . The future is in the power of the workers."¹¹¹

In February, 1941, to inspire the people a resister referred to the historical roots of the Communist Party:

On February 23, 1918, the Red Liberation Army of the people was born. The Red Army is the largest army in the world. The Red Army cultivates the hopes of the workers in the entire world. . . .

It is the army of the workers and of the free peasants, the army of the Revolution of October, the army of the dictatorship of the proletariat.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹L'Humanité, August 15, 1940.

¹¹⁰L'Humanité, November 17, 1940.

¹¹¹L'Humanité, January 9, 1941.

¹¹²L'Humanité, February 20, 1941.

Stalin and Molotov signed the Russo-German Pact without consulting the International Russian Communists and some of the French Communists thought that Geobbles was spreading false propaganda because ever since 1935, the USSR and the International Party machine had vehemently opposed the Nazis.¹¹³ The signing of this pact created the greatest problem for the French Communists:

There the Communists were torn between their duty to their country and loyalty to their ideology: the rigidity of Stalinist monolithic theory left them no room for manoeuver. . . . In the Communist press, the USSR was no longer held up as the country of peace; it now showed the way to war and road to liberty. It was still praised to the skies as the only true democracy. . . .

In all countries the columns of the party's clandestine press were full of his (Stalin's) services and catalogues of his accomplishments. . . .

Communists in all the occupied countries, therefore . . . followed the same clandestine warfare strategy aiming towards broad-based unity, continuous bellicosity in the short term and "mass action" to further simultaneously the material interests of the worker and the liberation of the country.¹¹⁴

From 1943 on, the Communists played an increasingly important role in the Resistance. Their clandestine press had the largest circulation and as a whole the movement was responsible for news and the most sensational acts of sabotage and assassinations. According to Michel, amidst their pro-Stalin and pro-Russian stand, they still managed to support De Gaulle:

¹¹³Michel, The Shadow War, p. 182.

¹¹⁴Michel, The Shadow War, pp. 182-87.

Probably following directives from Stalin, the party resigned itself to an important but secondary role; it lined up behind General De Gaulle and took its place in the limited Resistance: it played the democratic game; more important still, it made efforts to restrain the revolutionary tendencies resulting from occupation . . . it advised the workers against striking and on his return from the USSR Maurice Thorez himself disarmed the "patriotic military."¹¹⁵

The Comparison

The Resistance newspapers fought for liberation. Their prime objective was to rid themselves of the German invaders and to bring down the Vichy government. The difference between the newspapers lay in their means of achieving liberation. All three newspapers supported De Gaulle to one extent or another. After some deliberation Défense de la France supported the General and recognized him as the leader of the Resistance. The socialists' views expressed in Libération-Nord did not inhibit support for De Gaulle. L'Humanité, which was so heavily influenced by Stalin and the Communist Party, supported De Gaulle out of necessity. Stalin was cautious to keep the French Communists in their place so that they would not gain too much power. Of the three newspapers, L'Humanité was most influenced by a political ideology in determining a policy for fighting for liberation.

According to Michel, all resisters believed that the collaborators should be punished and that De Gaulle

¹¹⁵ Michel, The Shadow War, p. 345.

was the leader and symbol of the Resistance movement. As soon as De Gaulle could prove he was speaking for the whole Resistance, he presented himself to the major Allies as the mouthpiece of the movement; it was his leadership which finally ended the Vichy regime and its pretenses.¹¹⁶

According to Almond, the most important function of the Socialist groups was the publication of newspapers:

. . . As a matter of policy they (the Socialists) did not engage in militant resistance as a party. There can be little doubt on the basis of available evidence that the Communists in contrast to the socialists greatly strengthened their political position through their role and tactics in the Resistance.¹¹⁷

Michel furthers Almond's point by saying that although the socialists were a major factor in the Resistance, "they were the theorists rather than the leaders; with an eye to the post-war period, they attempted to channel it towards certain programs, their own."¹¹⁸

However, that is not to say the Communists and Socialists were politically and selfishly motivated and that those people who were inspired by De Gaulle and purely nationalistic desires were not selfish as well:

Even De Gaulle's most circumspect apologists have not denied that the General and his friends seduously exploited the circumstances of the Resistance

¹¹⁶ Michel, The Shadow War, p. 308.

¹¹⁷ Almond, "Resistance," pp. 35-38.

¹¹⁸ Michel, The Shadow War, p. 308.

experience to build mystique that has remained De Gaulle's most persistent attribute.¹¹⁹

Moscow directed the French Communists' policy of "unity of action" among the Resistance groups. The French Communists had to support this policy because they relied on the French and British for military supplies; without the Communists' cooperation, the Resistance movement would not have supported the Communists.¹²⁰ The French Communists promised to support De Gaulle but L'Humanité still gave precedence to the Red Army's victories and to Stalin's policy statements.¹²¹

However, the French Communists' policy of "unity of action" was clearly limited in time, until liberation, and eventually, it was evident that they were not willing to merge at the risk of losing their own identity.¹²² Although they supported De Gaulle officially, they did not back him as much as he had hoped and frequently did not live up to their commitments.¹²³ Moscow's purpose was:

. . . To make it easier for the French to rally their armed forces against the enemy, to increase Soviet prestige among the French people and to

¹¹⁹Edward Mead Earle, Modern France, Problems of the Third and Fourth Republics (New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), p. 256.

¹²⁰Rieber, Stalin, p. 32.

¹²¹Rieber, Stalin, p. 34.

¹²²Rieber, Stalin, p. 59.

¹²³Rieber, Stalin, p. 42.

facilitate the efforts of the French Communists to capitalize in their new-found prestige as a leading factor in the Resistance.¹²⁴

In fact, the French Communist Party was the only party which maintained its identity and cohesion before and during the war. Rieber clearly sums up the French Communist position:

. . . The French Communists had the advantage of a well-organized clandestine force, an uncompromising attitude in the struggle against the combination of their own and the enemy's propaganda machines spreading the word of the Communist preponderance in the underground struggle.¹²⁵

However, according to Wright, even though the Communists gained so much strength during war,

in the end, . . . its strength was offset by the growing prestige of Charles De Gaulle whose Free French movement served as an alternative pole of attraction. By 1943 . . . he was able . . . to establish himself as head of a kind of an unofficial government in exile.¹²⁶

Thus, we have seen that many people struggle for liberation. The Communists strived to attain control through an organized party. Their goals were not altogether selfless. Rather, they wanted power and prestige. Those resisters working for Défense de la France and Libération-Nord wanted liberation for France, before considering internal political policies. Party politics could wait until after the war.

¹²⁴Rieber, Stalin, p. 54.

¹²⁵Rieber, Stalin, p. 85.

¹²⁶Wright, France in the 20th Century, p. 148.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the various types of propaganda used in the French clandestine press during the early years of World War II, 1940-1942, and to determine to what extent three newspapers were influenced by specific political ideologies. The thesis examined the background of the underground movement as a whole, including the political climate, the evolution of the Resistance movement and their use of propaganda, the birth of the clandestine press, the German response to it, and the production of newspapers.

All three newspapers bitterly complained about the German presence in France. To rid the country of the invader meant to many a preliminary step to solving internal problems. Both Défense de la France and Libération-Nord opposed the Germans from the onset of the war. However, due to the Russo-German pact, L'Humanité did not condemn the Germans until the pact was broken in 1941. After that, the French Communists regretted their mistake and began a campaign against the Germans. All three newspapers complained of the hardships the French people

suffered, including a lack of food and clothes due to the Germans' policy of draining France of her resources. The resisters also complained about French laborers being forced to go to work in Germany. All three newspapers expressed anger against Germany's persecution of the Jews. Although Libération-Nord and of course L'Humanité were concerned with the mistreatment of the Communists, Défense de la France was almost as afraid of them as they were of the Nazis and consequently not too sympathetic towards the Communist minority. Although L'Humanité expressed contempt towards the German persecution of Jews, they lumped the Jews with all minority groups, including themselves, who suffered. Their policy of "unity for all" meant that no one should be persecuted.

Not everyone was against the Vichy government from the beginning of the war. After all, it was the French government run by French people. Défense de la France was composed of a variety of people with different political views. Because of this, initially, they limited their propaganda to that against the German invader. Some members of the movement supported Pétain and it took them a trip to Vichy to realize the crimes of the collaboration government. By 1942, Défense de la France avidly protested the Vichy government and supported De Gaulle. Libération-Nord and L'Humanité condemned the Vichy government from the beginning. Their political views leaned to the left,

which naturally opposed the Vichy Regime, which leaned to the right.

Défense de la France had no particular political bias and by 1942 supported De Gaulle and fully recognized him as chief of the Resistance. While many resisters working for Libération-Nord were members of the Socialist Party and many of their ideas were socialist in theory, the newspaper supported a goal of liberation for France, they recognized De Gaulle as their leader, and did not allow their political bias to interfere with the policy of a unity in Resistance. L'Humanité, on the other hand, was influenced by Stalin and Russia, which frequently interfered with their cooperation with the rest of the Resistance. Being opportunists, they supported Germany in the beginning of the war, thereby delaying a strong position of unity among all resisters. Second, they supported De Gaulle only out of necessity to cooperate and because Stalin feared the French Communist Party would grow too strong. He felt he had to keep control of the French Communists. Third, the Communists' policy of "unity for all" only went so far as they did not have to sacrifice any of their standards or beliefs. Fourth, the Communists' means of achieving liberation meant complete faith and trust in the Communist Party.

Thus, in an overall view of these three underground newspapers, the Communist newspaper differed the most in that it was so heavily politicized under the influence of the Russian Communist Party. All three newspapers strived for liberation. The fact that De Gaulle came out as chief of the underground reinforced the point that the strength of the underground movement lay in a policy of the liberation of France meaning out with the Germans and down with the Vichy government. Political biases and party preferences were secondary and would be considered more seriously after the war.

EPILOGUE

When the Allies landed in France in 1944, the French Resistance movement had achieved the widest degree of unity France had ever known. De Gaulle was primarily responsible for the achievement and out of the confusion of the war, a new political forum emerged: Gaullism.

Of the three newspapers, Libération-Nord was the only one which disappeared after the war, once its mission had been accomplished. At the end of 1944, Défense de la France became France-Soir and began printing in the old office of l'Intransigeant where the Germans had also published Parisen Zeitung. Until 1946 its masthead read "Défense de la France, founded under the occupation of July 14, 1941." After France-Soir announced that quadruplets were born in one hour and nine minutes, the masthead changed to "the greatest circulation and the greatest sales of all French Newspapers." In the course of liberation, in Paris in 1944, L'Humanité along with one other newspaper took over the printing facilities at Le Petit Parisien, a collaboration newspaper. Today, it is the most important Communist newspaper in France.

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