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## **France**

### **French - German Relations**

The following is an article published in the March issue of the French underground journal „Combat“:

#### **"The Future of Germany"**

"The Daily Mail has started a questionnaire amongst its readers on the future of Germany. It has received the most varied answers ranging from complete annihilation to the need for a thorough cleansing of public life everywhere. Combat is glad to be able to convey to its British colleague an opinion of the French Resistance Movement, which has a special right to have its say on this subject.

It is impossible to achieve complete unanimity in the Resistance Movement with regard to the fate of Germany. I still remember Frenay **[1]**, two years ago, putting forward to our friends in Marseilles his conception of a truly European peace, at the same time both hard and generous: the unusualness of these views provoked a considerable amount of criticism from several of our comrades, who were imbued with the traditional attitude of French patriotism towards Germany.

It is a fact however that the revolutionary spirit of the Resistance Movement is unanimously looking towards the future Europe - and that this Europe cannot be created without Germany.

It is a fact that the Resistance Movement is equally far from indulging in humanitarian sentimentalism as in petit-bourgeois sadism. To-day, the cruel sufferings of the German people seem to us to be the only means of imprinting in the flesh and blood of this tragic nation the horror of war, but to-morrow we do not wish that the life of every German should be made into a martyrdom.

It is a fact that we are perfectly aware that Versailles is responsible for Nazism: one only needs to have known, in the years between 1920 and 1930, that humiliated and desperate youth of a destitute nation which imbecile statesmen drained of her resources amidst the most idiotic economic conditions, and at that for the sole benefit of international capitalism.

It is a fact on the other hand, that we are equally aware that Nazism is not only the product of the economic conditions. It is also the latest incarnation of that mad obsession of Germanic greatness exploited by a decaying capitalism and as

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always organised by Prussian militarism. To create a Germany worth living in, it will not be sufficient to obliterate from the face of the earth the leaders of this league against the human race, and to punish the war criminals. It will not even be enough to change the regime in Germany. Whilst Germany should be given the chance to lead an honourable existence, at the same time she must also be kept in political and cultural tutelage for a certain number of years. But this tutelage cannot be justified and will not be accepted unless it is followed by the renunciation, by all the nations of Europe, of part of their national sovereignty in favour of a European federation. Only such a federation will have the moral right to take measures to make sure that in Germany and elsewhere the children are educated to respect human beings and to hate oppression. Only a federation will have the right and the power to use force if all other means fail to remedy abuses committed by Germany or other countries.

It is also a fact, however, that we neither believe in the plans for the reconstruction in the midst of the 20th century of a Germany divided into small states modelled on the treaty of Westphalia in accordance with the degenerate ideas of Maurras [2], nor do we believe in the idyllic reestablishment of the impotent Weimar republic. A federated Socialist Europe will include a Socialist Germany. What will be the political regime of such a Germany? Nobody can tell.

Finally we wish to say that we have not forgotten that the German resistance movement was the first to rise up against the Nazis and the first to be martyred. We have not forgotten Dachau and the many militant Socialist, Catholics, and Communists who 'disappeared without any traces'. We shall not forget you, our murdered friends. We shall try and help your children to create a new fatherland."

### **[Programme of the French Resistance Movement]**

The following is the programme of the French Resistance Movement for the Liberation of France and for the development of France after the liberation quoted from "Franc-Tireur", one of the underground journals belonging to the National Council of Resistance (Conseil National de la Résistance).

"THE WHOLE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IS UNITED IN SUPPORT OF THIS ACTION  
PROGRAMME  
for the struggle for liberation and the Social Republic."

"Born of the fierce determination of the French people not to accept defeat, the Resistance Movement has no other aim than to carry on the daily struggle with ever increasing intensity.

This mission to fight must not end after the liberation. For it is only by concentrating all her forces around the almost unanimous aspirations of the Nation that France will reestablish her moral and social equilibrium and will present to the world the image of her greatness and the proof of her unity.

Thus the representatives of the resistance organisations, of the trade union movement and the parties or political groups forming part of the National Council of Resistance (C.N.R.), in their plenary session held on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1944, decided to agree

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on the following programme which includes both an immediate plan of action against the oppressor and measures intended to establish a more just social order as soon as

the territory is liberated.

The following is an outline of the main points of the programme:

### **Plan for Immediate Action**

The representatives of the resistance organisations, the trade union movement and the parties of political groups forming parts of the C.N.R. recall that 50,000 members of the Resistance Movement have already fallen for France.

They proclaim their determination to liberate their country by collaborating closely in the military operations which the French and Allied armies will start on the Continent, but also to hasten that liberation to shorten the sufferings of our people, and to save the future of France by continuously intensifying by every means in their power the struggle against the invader and his accomplices which has been carried on over since 1940.

They beseech the British and American governments no longer to disappoint the hope and confidence which France like all the oppressed countries of Europe has placed in their determination to destroy Nazi Germany, by starting military operations on a vast scale which will secure as quickly as possible the liberation of the invaded territories and will thus enable the French who are inside France to join forces with the allied armies for the decisive battle.

### **The Formation of Fighting Committees all over the Country**

In order to mobilise the immense resources of energy of the French people and to direct them towards action in complete unity of opinion, the C.N.R. has decided:

To call on the leaders of the organisations already in existence to form town, village and factory committees by coordinating these committees which exist at the moment and by setting up committees where none existed up till now, and to recruit into these committees those patriots not yet organised.

All these committees will be placed under the direction of the departmental committees of liberation (C.D.L). They will be under the authority of the C.D.L. who will pass on to them as directives the programme of action and the political line decided on by the C.N.R.

### **For the Armed Struggle**

The fight against deportation, the hunting down of traitors, acting in solidarity with those who are imprisoned and deported, the struggle against the requisitioning of supplies; all these are daily tasks of the town, village, and factory committees, but they should also carry out the following:

1.) Reinforce the armed organisations of the French forces of the Interior (F.F.J.) by increasing the groups of

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patriots: freedom groups, franc-tireurs and partisans, recruited mainly from those who have rebelled against the present régime.

2.) Organise in cooperation with the national, regional and departmental headquarters of the FFI militias of patriots in the town, country and factories, who can be put in the command of engineers, technicians, teachers, civil servants and officers of

the reserve, and who should be used to preserve public order and to defend the lives and property of the French people against terror and any form of provocation, they should also secure and maintain the effective establishment of the authority of the departmental committees of liberation over everything which has been and will be set up in this sphere, by firmly adhering to the F.F.I., whose authority and discipline would be respected by everyone.

3.) Organise the struggle in the most rational manner according to a plan laid down with the help of the competent authorities in the national, regional and departmental sphere, in order to obtain the maximum results.

4.) Coordinate the military activity with the resistance activity of the mass of the people.

Thus through the effort and sacrifice of everyone the hour of the liberation of our territory will be brought nearer; thus the lives of thousands of Frenchmen can be saved and immense wealth can be preserved.

Thus in the midst of the struggle a purer and stronger France will be created, capable of undertaking on the morrow of liberation the greatest task of all, the reconstruction and renovation of our country.

### **Measures to be applied immediately the Territory is Liberated**

United as to the goal to be attained and as to the means to be used to achieve this goal which is the rapid liberation of the territory, the representatives of the movements, groups and parties organised inside the C.N.R. proclaim that they are determined to remain united after the liberation:

1.) To secure the establishment of the provisional government of the republic formed by General de Gaulle to defend the political and economic independence of the nation, and to reestablish the greatness and power of France together with her universal mission.

2.) To see to it that the traitors are punished and that in the sphere of administration and professional life all these who have come to terms with the enemy or have actively associated with the politics of collaborationist governments, are expelled from their positions.

3.) To secure the confiscation of the property of the traitors and the profiteers of the black market.

4.) To ensure:

The establishment of the widest form of democracy by allowing the French people to express their will through the reinstatement of universal suffrage.

Full freedom of thought, conscience and expression.

Freedom of the press and its integrity and independence of the government, financial powers and foreign influences.

Freedoms of association, of assembly, and public

demonstration.

The privacy of the home and of correspondence. Respect of the human personality.  
The absolute equality of all citizens before the law.

5.) To promote essential reforms:

a) In the economic sphere:

The setting up of a real economic and social democracy which would necessitate taking the direction of economic life out of the hand of economic and financial magnates.

A rational organisation of the economic system guaranteeing the subordination of private to public interests and freed from the industrial dictatorship established on the model of the fascist states.

The restoration to the nation of the vast monopolised productive forces, the fruits of the work of the community, the sources of mechanical power, the riches beneath the earth, the insurance companies and the big banks.

The right of the workers possessing the necessary qualifications to have access to the management and administration of the factories, and the participation of the workers in the control of economic life.

b) in the social sphere:

The right to work and the right to rest in particular through the reestablishment and improvement of the system of working in accordance with contracts.

A considerable readjustment of wages and the establishment of a minimum standard of wages and pensions which will guarantee security and self respect to each worker and his family and the possibility of leading a full human life.

The guarantee of national purchasing power by a policy aiming at stabilising the currency.

The reinstatement of independent trade unionism with all its traditional freedom of action and endowed with extensive powers over the organisation of economic and social life.

Security of employment, the regulation of the conditions of engaging and dismissing of labour, and the reinstatement of shop stewards.

The raising and the stabilisation of the standard of life of the agricultural workers.

The provision of a pension enabling aged workers to end their days in a dignified way.

The compensation of the victims of accidents and the granting of pensions to the victims of fascist terror.

c) The extension of political, social and economic rights to the native populations.

d) The real possibility for French children to enjoy the benefits of education and to have access to the most developed form of culture whatever the financial position of their parents, so that the highest position will be accessible to all those who have the abilities required for the job and that in this way a veritable élite will come into being, not through birth but through merit, which will be constantly renewed by an influx from the people.

Thus will be created a new republic which will sweep away all vestiges of the evil régime installed by Vichy and which will restore to the democratic and popular institutions their effectiveness which they were deprived of by the corrupt and venal institutions which existed immediately preceding the capitulation.

Thus a democracy will become possible which combines the effective control exercised by the elected representatives of the people with stability of government.

The unity of the representatives of the resistance movements for present and future action which places the interest of the country in the forefront should be a pledge of confidence and a stimulus for all Frenchmen. It should encourage them to eliminate all forms of sectarianism, all sources of discord which could hinder their actions and would only help the enemy.

Forward then, united with all the Frenchmen around the C.F.L.N. (National Committee of Liberation) and its president General de Gaulle. Forward into the struggle, forward towards victory so that France can live!

The National Council of Resistance."

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## *Editorische Anmerkungen*

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- 1 - *Henri Frenay (1905-1988), französischer Politiker und Mitglied der Résistance, Flucht aus deutscher Kriegsgefangenschaft (1940) und zunächst Unterstützung Pétains, dann aber Anschluss an die Résistance (1941), Gründer der Gruppe „Combat“, Mitherausgeber einiger Untergrundzeitungen, Flucht vor der Gestapo nach Algier (1943), von General de Gaulle zum Kommissar für Gefangene, Deportierte und Flüchtlinge des „Comité Français de la Libération Nationale“ (CFLN) berufen (1943), nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg Präsident der „Union européenne des fédéralistes“, Amtsniederlegung wegen Ablehnung der EVG (1954).*
- 2 - *Charles Maurras (1868-1952), französischer Politiker und Schriftsteller, Antisemit und Feind jeder Form von Demokratie, Mitbegründer der „Action Française“, einer monarchisch-chauvinistische Bewegung (1908), propagierte die Rehabilitierung des Katholizismus als Staatsreligion, Inhaftierung wegen Morddrohung gegen Abgeordnete der Deputiertenkammer (1936-1937), nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg Verurteilung zu lebenslänglicher Haft wegen Kollaboration mit der deutschen Besatzungsmacht (1945), Begnadigung (1952).*