

CHIEFS OF STAFF: TWO PORTRAITS IN PROFILE

DONALD COWIE

THERE is no lonelier situation in time of war than that of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, unless one thinks of the position of the Chief of the Air Staff. To begin with—how many people regard these functionaries as aught but just that, a couple of decorative if somewhat mysterious figures at the vague top of the War Office and the Air Ministry hierarchy? How much more clear-defined and “glamorous” are the actual commanding and fighting presences of an Eisenhower, a Montgomery! But secondly, there is a very real isolation around the respective staff chiefs which proceeds from the nature of their office.

Nominally they stand at the head of their Services, but their actual functions being twofold, on the one hand to tell the War Cabinet what the Army and Air Force can do, and on the other hand to tell the Army and Air Force what the War Cabinet expect them to do, they exist in a kind of limbo. They really belong to either world, the Service or the political; and, very like kings, they can have no “friends.” Yet as eternal scapegoats they must bear the ultimate responsibility for every blunder in their departments of the war—and expect no popular recognition of success. When Alamein and Tunis and Sicily and southern Italy were won, who thought of giving any public credit to—Field-Marshal Sir Alan Brooke?

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There is a curious parallel between the lives of the soldier appointed to organize the defence of Britain at the most dangerous period of its modern history, and that of Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, who saved the country at an earlier time. Both came from that sturdy Anglo-Irish stock of hard-living squires which has given the Empire so many of its military leaders; both learned their French at school on the Continent; both became soldiers in India—and both impressed their colleagues as being different from the rank-and-file of commanders, unconventional, impatient of text-book ruling, very human.

It is interesting to observe that Sir Alan Brooke was born at Bagnères de Bigorre—61 years ago—and went to school at Pau, where his father, Sir Victor Brooke, was for many years Master of the Pau Hounds, a pack reputed to be direct descendants of the hounds hunted by the Duke of Wellington and his officers during

the Peninsular War. It was a sporting youth. Not only was Sir Alan's father a famous big-game hunter, but the boy spent his holidays at Colebrooke, County Fermanagh, the country seat of the family, where woods and rivers encouraged outdoor pursuits.

Thence young Brooke went to the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich—what could he be but a soldier?—and was eventually posted to the Royal Field Artillery, for service at once in Southern Ireland and South Africa, sharp finishing schools for sheltered subalterns. Next he was transferred to India, for a last polish with the Royal Horse Artillery (N. Battery). In those days the gunners' job was the most advanced of the Army. Today's mechanization started there. Napoleon had been an artillery man, and many great leaders after him. So the young Brooke landed in France in September, 1914, with the first Indian contingent, in command of the Ammunition Column, Secunderabad Cavalry Brigade.

That is another point about today's C.I.G.S. which is worth noting. From time to time accounts appear in the papers of his visits to the Canadian Corps and his talks to them. Brooke has been connected from the first with the forces of the Empire overseas. When so much depends upon effective liaison between these forces and the Command at Home, he is essentially the Empire man. During the First German War, he was for a considerable period attached to the Canadian Corps himself—as a General Staff Officer, Royal Artillery. Ultimately he became G.S.C.I., Royal Artillery, to the First Army, serving with gallantry.

Thus Brooke was mentioned in despatches six times, won the D.S.O., then a bar to that decoration, as well as the Belgian *Croix de Guerre*. Still more important, he was responsible for many advances in the science of artillery at that period. The barrage map, which came into general use for the direction of barrage fire, was his invention.

If it is not unusual for distinguished soldiers to have nicknames, it is rare for such marks of esteem to combine professional recognition with the usual *bonhomie*. Brooke has been known for years among his subordinates and colleagues as "The Wizard".

This testimony to the man's professional capabilities is explained by his remarkable work for the British Army during the years between the wars. The ordinary record of his labours then is itself unrevealing. He was an instructor at the Staff College, Camberley, then at the Imperial Defence College, a

Commandant of the School of Artillery, Inspector of Artillery, Director of Military Training, Commander of the Mobile Division, Commander of the Anti-Aircraft Division, and G.O.C. the Southern Command.

What those facts do not explain is Brooke's intense interest in mechanization and scientific soldiering during that period. Only the skeleton of a mechanized British Army existed on the outbreak of the Second German War, but that skeleton provided the basis for future expansion, and Brooke had had a great deal to do with its building. Study those dry appointments again.

As an instructor in artillery, Brooke realised at an early date how conditions would quickly be transformed in another war: he struggled against opposition for the official adoption of the 25-pn dr. gun, later to be the best weapon of its kind on any side. As Director of Military Training, he endeavoured to prepare the Regular Army for the tremendous job of mass-training it would soon have to handle. As Commander of the Mobile Division—an entirely new conception at that time—he was the first in our Army to practise, however tentatively, the tactics which later won the Germans a lightning victory in the Battle of France. As Commander of the Anti-Aircraft Corps, he did his best to elevate a Cinderella service to that vital position in home defence which it had soon to occupy.

It was inevitable that on the outbreak of war Brooke should be sent at once to France—he went as Commander of the II Corps—and his acquaintance with the local *patois* was then of great assistance. But he made his mark felt in other ways at once. There is a story that before embarking he addressed his staff Corps thus: "You have all read your military textbooks, and don't ever forget what is in them. But you must think for yourselves, for this is a war of new methods." Then he astonished some of his less supple-minded colleagues by requiring one of his Staff officers to deliver each week a talk on world affairs—which later became a regular duty for officers everywhere.

During the French fighting, Brooke's Corps always made the best of a bad job. The General was placed in command later of the "Second B.E.F." south of the Somme, and had to extricate his men from that most difficult of positions among the conflicting orders of the French High-Command at the last stage. The Imperial General Staff, and the British Government, in full possession of the unpublished facts about this campaign, had no hesitation in choosing Brooke on the strength of them for the next vital fighting command—Commander-in-Chief of the

defenders of Britain. His were the barbed wire and concrete improvisation, the hasty organization of a few shattered divisions, which *did* keep the enemy at bay. When Sir John Dill relinquished his appointment as C.I.G.S., Brooke was selected to replace him, and he has remained in the supreme position ever since, a remarkable achievement in itself! Under his hand the forces of the Empire, often without recognising the guidance, have gradually marched away from defeat towards victory.

Here is an unusual soldier, with his horn-rimmed glasses and clipped dark moustache, his energy and quick-witted thinking, his sense of humour and love of free discussion. Only the deep lines above his nose reveal the unnatural strain of that spiritual loneliness.

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Now for Portal.

The fighting forces of the British Empire had many leaders of potential greatness when they entered the second round of the death-struggle with Germany. But none had more startling personal credentials than Charles Frederick Algernon Portal, appointed by Mr. Churchill's Government in October, 1940, to wield the sharpened weapon of the Royal Air Force.

Two hundred and fifty years before, his ancestors had come to England—in a wine-barrel. Like their descendant, they were fighters against oppression, Huguenot refugees from the French terror. They bequeathed him, perhaps, those hawklike features, the strong, Wellingtonian nose, sharp chin, slender, dark head. His fiery temperament, allied with keen, logical brain, was a similar legacy. Thus the world began to speak in 1940 of the strange impression created by Portal on visitors to the London Air Ministry. They would be passed from one typical R.A.F. functionary to another; plain, regulation fellows, with their clipped moustaches and blue eyes. Then they would be facing this saturnine, dynamic man.

But predominantly the impression would be one of youthfulness. Portal now was only 47 years of age. He had been educated at Winchester and Christ Church, Oxford, then had gone to read his law at the Inner Temple. But, already requiring the stimulus of something stronger than torts, he had bought one of the early motor-cycles, and become renowned in his generation for breakneck daring. Just before the outbreak of war in 1914 he was taking part in motor-cycle races at Brooklands.

Portal and his friends mounted their machines and rushed

through the wondering streets to Oxford, appealing to the University and military authorities for an immediate chance to fight. They were told that they must be trained, and could not expect to see France for some months. But Portal's prowess with motor-cyclist attracted attention. If he cared to volunteer as a despatch-rider, he might have work at once. Within a few days the young man and his machine were across the Channel.

Portal was not only among the pioneers of that profession; he might almost be described as the prototype of all motor-cycle despatch-riders. His services were employed constantly during the dreadful dislocation of the first months. Up and down the retreat from Mons he rode with his charmed life, a single connecting-link between the harassed front lines and bewildered headquarters. He so impressed the authorities with his ruthless daring and competence that he was mentioned in Sir John French's first despatch from the front, and was promoted with a commission to command all the other motor-cyclists.

Then the first military aircraft appeared, used haltingly for reconnaissance work at that period, but infinitely more exciting than the slow motor-cycle below. Portal immediately applied for a transfer to the new arm, and in 1915 was posted to the Royal Flying Corps as an observer—because he had not yet learned to fly. He served with the renowned No. 3 Squadron from June to December, 1915, and the experience he gained in that observer's uncomfortable seat laid the foundation of the later skill of the airman. "Those six months in France saved my life many times afterwards, because they made me rather cunning as a pilot," he told a friend in later years.

Eventually he achieved his ambition and learned to fly, returning from the training-field in England direct to Fighter Squadron No. 60, where he did his best for some months with the Morane biplanes of that time, Lewis guns fore and aft, but death-traps to the unwary pilot. That best was so good that soon Portal was sent back to his original No. 3 Squadron as a Flight-Commander, and in June, 1917, he was given command of the No. 16 Army Co-operation Squadron. He now earned his first reputation for ruthlessness and deadly efficiency in command. He ended the war with the D.S.O. and M.C., as well as experience of the whole range of Air Force work.

Portal's prestige in the Force already was shown by his appointment (1919-1922) to be Chief Flying Instructor at the R.A.F. college of Cranwell. He served at the Air Ministry from 1923 to 1926, and for the next two years was in command of a bomber

squadron, enlarging his experience still further. His squadron won the trophy in the annual bombing competition for the R.A.F. both years, and Portal was himself the chief bomb-aimer.

The skill of that hawklike eye of his is a tradition in the Service; and Portal's hobby is falconry.

From 1929 to 1933 he was at the Air Ministry again, leaving it in 1934 to round-off his practical experience in the appointment of Officer Commanding at Aden, where he acquainted himself at first-hand with the conditions under which so much of the future air war would be fought. He was flying instructor at the Imperial Defence College, London, and then he was suddenly appointed Director of Organization at the Air Ministry (1937). His was now the task of preparing the ground for the later expansion; indeed, today's successful structure of the higher organization of the R.A.F. is largely due to Portal's work then.

So war came again. Portal continued to organize. But it was widely felt that the British air weapon, though superbly fashioned, was not being wielded with full effect. Accordingly Portal was appointed, in April 1940, to be Chief of Bomber Command. Within a short time he had planned and started to put into effect the programme of bombing raids on Germany and occupied territories which will always be regarded as the classic enterprise of its kind. Slowly the public began to realize that this was no haphazard attack but a carefully-considered scheme, aimed scientifically at the vulnerable parts of the German war machine one by one. It was Portal's work.

Thus his final appointment to Chief of the Air Staff six months later was the seal set on a perfectly patterned career. He had fought and worked himself in every branch of the Service he was now to command; he had displayed just those qualities of mingled strength and imagination that make the great military leader. His weapon would soon be irresistible—and then!

Then retirement amid a blaze of conventional honour while the public (after this war) thinks of other, more conspicuous heroes.

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E. R. ADAIR

WHAT do the French people mean to the ordinary foreigner? A nation of soldiers still following the eagles of Napoleon; diplomatists whose language has dominated Europe; manufacturers of beauty whose styles, whose perfumes, whose fine fabrics are coveted wherever women worship fashion. Yet the Frenchman is really none of these things; or possibly it would be truer to say that such matters represent the everyday interests of only a very small part of the French people; for the two classes that are still predominant in France, both in numbers and in importance, are those of the independent peasant proprietor or small farmer, and the *petit bourgeois*. Neither the Great War nor the crises that followed it brought any permanent disaster to them. Down at any rate to 1940, the *petit bourgeois* was still the *rentier*, the small holder of state securities; he still regarded the keeping of them at a high value as one of the most important ends of political government; and by value it was not enough to mean face value, he was naturally deeply concerned as to their real value, as to how much a franc would buy, and therefore what his savings estimated in francs were actually worth. Devaluation or inflation was to him the last word in political or economic despair. Every French politician knew the opinions of the *petit bourgeois*, and knew that they could not be ignored.

Nor could those of the independent peasant, for France is not only still an agricultural country, it is a country of small farmers. In 1921 54% of the total population was rural, as against 49% in the United States and only 20% in England; and though there has been a decline in the rural population of France during recent years, even in 1936 it still represented 49% of the whole people. In this connection it is very significant that when Petain's government made proposals for changing the constitution of France in July, 1940, it put forward as one of its main objects that "France should again become, to its advantage, agricultural and peasant in the highest degree." Moreover out of the 8,951,000 persons engaged in agriculture, about 5,000,000 are still their own masters. This state of affairs is the result of a variety of causes: during the eighteenth century the French nobles, unlike many of the English ones, were not usually interested in farming, and large scale farms were there-

fore rare with small tenant farms very common; then came the French Revolution which broke up many large estates and so created a great number of peasant proprietors; these have been made still more numerous by the French laws of inheritance, under which land did not descend to the eldest son alone, but was divided among all the children. The small peasant farmer is therefore still the most typical member of the French rural population. Hence the importance of the peasant mind and of the peasant point of view, and this is rendered all the more vital by the fact that it is often a point of view very similar to that of the *petit bourgeois*.

André Siegfried has summed up with loving and cynical care the attitude of the middle and lower middle class Frenchman determined on establishing his economic independence:

He wants to be self-sufficient intellectually, and similarly some hidden instinct prompts him to make himself also self-sufficient economically. To acquire a little property, a little house, a little business, a little income from investments is the dream of millions of French people, a dream that is narrow and devoid of romance. It is the counsel of wisdom, if you will, but the result borders on mediocrity . . . He is astonishingly devoid of sentiment when his interests are at stake, and he takes into his calculation matters that seem to have but the remotest bearing on the subject. He is wonderfully calculating about matrimony, and equally so when it comes to adding to the population. Although they had certainly never heard of Malthus, the French *bourgeois* and peasants of the nineteenth century were really the first Malthusians. When at last he considers himself independent, with enough for his own wants, he ignores with beaming self-satisfaction everything that does not appertain to his own community, almost to his own person. Materially he falls into a rut, and geographically he shuts himself off, as if he were alone in the world.

It does not vitally alter this picture of the French temperament to argue that industrialization has made considerable inroads on the agricultural and small trader characteristics of France; for industrialization has not turned all the workers connected with industry into mere factory hands, as has happened so often in other countries. In France 19% of the workers in industry are their own masters, and are just as individualistic and economically independent as the small farmer or the small shopkeeper. In addition, even the factory hands have not abandoned their connection with the land as completely as has been the case in England. As Paul Morand writes: "His day's work done, the English miner goes off to play foot-

ball; the French miner, still a peasant, goes to work in his garden." Morand might have added a passion for raising whippets and canaries to the English side of the picture, and there is also no doubt that the last war and the years that followed brought a great many allotments and small holdings into English industrial workers' lives, but for France what he says still stands true; and the important point about this is that here there is no artificially created revival of interest in the land, it is a natural inheritance that the French workman has never lost.

Therefore though the point of view of Paris may appear to be of supreme importance, it is really so only in sudden political emergencies, when the mere fact that the government is located in Paris enables the city to drive its opinions home. In the long run, however, it is still the provinces that count, it is rural France and the medium-sized provincial towns that really set the political tone. Provincial *bourgeois* and peasant alike support the republican regime and the established order, and they are quite content with a very gradual drifting to the Left in politics; they want no violent changes. Radicals and even Socialists need their assistance in order to secure anything like a majority; but as the middle classes are on the whole satisfied with existing social conditions, though no doubt attracted by solid discussions of future improvements, the very fact that they often do lend radicals their support, serves merely to retard all but the most modest radical measures, for the aid of the *bourgeois* and peasant representatives can be bought only by bargain and compromise. This is largely the reason why in France there is so much talk of social and economic reform, and yet so little is ever accomplished.

The French Revolution preached liberty, equality and fraternity, and support of the principles of the French Revolution is still a very potent political argument in France; but for the middle classes equality and fraternity apply only within their own social group, and liberty too often means little more than a right to block anything which might threaten to damage their security or their traditional social and economic position, while at the same time it confers upon them the privilege of posing as radicals. Thus in many ways the Frenchman was, until very recently, in the happy position of both having his cake and eating it, for the *bourgeois* and small farmer classes were sufficiently in the majority to dare to gratify their intellectual vanity by flirting with Socialism and by throwing sops

to the workmen, knowing full well that they were politically strong enough to prevent reform from going too far. This peculiar situation has often deceived foreigners and led them to declare that France was rapidly becoming a Socialist country; this is quite untrue. All the same the industrial lower classes have been growing in power, and during the last few years the French middle class has not felt quite so secure. Yet the *Front Populaire*—an alliance of Radicals, Socialists and Communists—won the election of May, 1936, not just because of the strength of the working class or because they promised "to give bread to the workers, work to the young" to quote the words of the declaration of July 14, 1935, or even because they undertook to "break the power of the two hundred families who control the economic life of the nation". They secured a majority because they appealed to the sacred principles of 1789, because they fought the Fascist organizations in France about whose violent activities the *bourgeois* were getting thoroughly alarmed; they were elected because previous governments of a more conservative colour had been hopelessly discredited by corruption and financial scandals such as those associated with the name of Stavisky, and middle class investments had therefore suffered; and above all, they won because fear of the rising power of Mussolini and Hitler called for unity. Fright had made the *bourgeois* lend their support to a programme of real economic reform, but as soon as the fright commenced to wear off, their old political caution began to assert itself, the *Front Populaire* fell, and Chautemps, Bonnet and Deladier slipped into power to keep France and the franc safe for the *rentier*. The French *petit bourgeois* remained true to his fundamental principle of economic conservatism.

France is still predominantly agricultural; an important result of this is that she is able to produce almost all the food that she requires. Consequently she is not violently interested, as England is, in protecting the sea routes along which food can be imported, or in allying with countries from which food can be bought. To this can be added the fact that France exports only a relatively small proportion of the things that she manufactures; normally over 50% of her industrial products are made for home consumption, even though, since the Great War, there has been an increase in the export of iron and steel, as the result of the acquisition of Lorraine. Along with this must be remembered the further fact that a good many of her exports belong to the class of highly finished luxury articles, which are

often sold upon the reputation that France or Paris has acquired in the past, rather than upon that of their own intrinsic quality; such things as *objets d'art*, women's clothes, perfume, occur to the mind at once as typical. It is not suggested that the quality of these goods is not excellent, but as people buy them because they have the hall mark of Paris, the French manufacturer does not usually have to meet serious competition in the markets of the world from similar products made in other countries. Consequently he does not need to go abroad and drum up his trade.

Therefore some very important branches of the French export trade really take on the aspect of domestic business, and consequently the French manufacturer is not vitally interested in the character of foreign countries, not very curious about the people who live in them, because he has been, until recently, happily able to disregard their taste and sell them his goods just because those goods were French. It might almost be true to say that the more completely French his product was and the less it was distorted by any knowledge of the outside world, the more would buyers flock to his door. Consequently their foreign export trade has never succeeded in teaching the French very much about foreign countries. Moreover, to many Frenchmen the export trade has never been a matter of importance at all, compared to the manufacture of goods for home consumption. Therefore while the protection of their home markets has seemed vital, the fight for international markets has never provoked any real interest among the general population. And as a natural result of all this, foreign affairs, whether they be political, economic or social, leave most Frenchmen completely cold. Outside a few large exporting centres, such as Lyons with its silks, Bordeaux with its wine, and Paris and Rouen with their textiles, the average Frenchman has regarded foreign affairs as no business of his. Instead they are looked upon as a very specialized field left almost exclusively to professional diplomatists; no ordinary deputy ever cared to interfere, the ignorance of the general public was profound, and it was an ignorance so much accepted as a matter of course that its existence was hardly recognised. During the nineteenth century exactly the same state of affairs was to be found in the United States, and for exactly the same reasons; for even though a good many people were interested in the export of wheat, very few wanted to know anything about the nations that bought it.

To this generalization, that the average Frenchman is not interested in foreign affairs, certain qualifications must be made: and first of all it must be admitted that, as in the rest of the world, foreign affairs have undoubtedly attracted much more attention in France since the conclusion of the Great War, than they had ever done before; even though, until the late thirties, that attention was still inclined to be lukewarm and very intermittent, and to be mainly confined to the large cities. But there have been, ever since 1870, two topics of foreign policy, upon which an almost militant interest could always be aroused: revenge on Germany by the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine, and security from invasion. Both these interests really spring from the same source, the Franco-German war, and they have always proved during the last seventy years to be sound political slogans. They have, for instance, made France swallow conscription, and all the waste and expense that it entails; and after the end of the last war they still persuaded her to swallow it, though since 1919 it has been the retention of Alsace-Lorraine, not its recovery, that was the vital issue.

This lack of any very spirited interest in foreign peoples and in international politics is increased by the obvious fact that few Frenchmen travel abroad. The French are often said to be better linguists than the English, but that is because the average Frenchman never tries to talk any other language than his own; and he rarely has occasion to do so, while hordes of English tourists have from sheer necessity to try to blast their way through the niceties of a foreign tongue. Again it must be admitted that during the past twenty years the French have been travelling abroad for pleasure rather more frequently than used to be the case, but the numbers of such travellers were still small as compared with the English or the Germans. And if pleasure does not lure them to the study of foreign tongues, business, as has already been pointed out, does not stimulate their interest in them, for it makes little call upon them to send their salesmen to markets where a knowledge of foreign languages would be necessary. To all this may be added the fact that the French possess, to quite as great a degree as do the English, a contented insularity: they are satisfied with France as it is, and they do not desire to imitate other countries which the French middle class are usually inclined to despise; therefore why worry about getting to know them?

To some degree this is also both the cause and the result of the fact that the French have never felt any real urge to leave

France in order to build up a colonial empire. Of course empire has appealed to them as an element of glory, but that was an empire of the Napoleonic type, the empire gained by the conquest of established rivals. And, of course, to-day the French possess a very considerable colonial empire; but it was acquired largely as a result of the government's desire to satisfy French *amour propre* and to divert attention from failures at home; the French took possession of it, but they were never very excited about it. What was true of French Canada in the eighteenth century is true of the French colonies to-day: except for certain coastal areas in Tunis and Algeria, the French do not want to go to their colonies to live, they are merely sent there as officials or in order to exploit their economic possibilities. It is an exile, and unless his passion is aroused by the advances of a rival nation, the average Frenchman has little interest in the French empire; consequently it has served to teach him nothing of the world outside France.

Since the Great War, France has of course been entangled in foreign alliances whether she liked it or not, because she has been profoundly anxious to preserve the very considerable gains which that war had brought her. Yet, on the whole, the ordinary Frenchman viewed the whole business with great suspicion; these alliances were expensive luxuries, for France's allies were always asking for loans; and usually their efforts to arouse the Frenchman's interest in them have met with little success; even though France has been plastered with striking coloured posters exhorting the French to spend their holidays in Czechoslovakia or Poland, most of the middle class saved their money and stayed at home.

In precisely the same way the French people never felt that thrill of hope that moved Western Europe when the League of Nations was inaugurated. Usually the French were just not interested in a foreign institution that offered them nothing of immediate advantage; the few who really considered the League seriously viewed it with suspicion, as a body that might be used to diminish France's gains or to interfere with the schemes her professional diplomatists were evolving in order to secure for her a dominant position in European affairs. It was not until M. Briand began to preach collective security in a world that was steadily getting more dangerous for France's private interests, that France discovered that the League of Nations had some use after all. Even then the interest of the ordinary Frenchman was strongly mixed with suspicion, and was

confined very largely to the doings and sayings of the French representatives and the extent to which they were getting something that would be of tangible assistance to France. Of all European countries France is still probably one of the least internationally minded. French may be the language of diplomacy, but foreign diplomacy is not the language of France.

Thus if a composite picture were to be drawn of the average Frenchman, it would show a man of the solid *bourgeois* or peasant farmer class, profoundly individualistic, thrifty and most easily alarmed by any threat to his pocket, parochial, interested in the affairs of France, but caring very little about those of other nations, strongly believing in the French republic though often willing to try a little flutter towards greater radicalism, so long as it involved theory rather than practice, conservative in action, but possessed of considerable shrewdness in politics and really interested in them as they were seen from his local position. And there can be added, looming vaguely behind this sturdy figure, the spectres of the Monarchy and the Church, waiting for the floodlight of some national disaster to give them reality once more in the political life of France.

This is the man who, in the long run, is going to decide what will be the future of France. The German occupation will not have any very profound and permanent effect on the peasant proprietor, and, while the *bourgeois* class will have lost the greater part of their savings, they will almost certainly start to recoup themselves by added thrift, added conservatism and natural shrewdness. The Communists have played a considerable part in the underground movement, the factory workmen will be very favourably inclined to their doctrines, which will probably command considerably increased support, all the more so as the fall of France was in a great measure due to the follies and treacheries of big business and high finance. It is therefore quite likely that there will be a strong movement towards Radicalism, Socialism and even Communism itself, as soon as the Germans are driven out. This would be similar to the tendencies of 1848 and the Commune of 1871. But it is equally likely that, as in these two cases, so will it be to-day; the middle class will ultimately assume control, for there is no real liking for Communism or even for Socialism among the great majority of the French people; they are individualists and small independent capitalists to the backbone.

There is, of course, the other alternative—a dictatorship, as a natural reaction against democratic muddling and civil war;

it would be in the good Napoleonic tradition. But that this will happen is unlikely; that if it happened, it would have any permanence, is almost incredible. Dictatorships at the moment have a bad name. In France a dictatorship would probably be supported by the parties of the Right, by the monarchists and the clericals—not so much because they liked it, as because they would see in it a barrier against growing radicalism. But monarchists and clericals will also not be well thought of by the people who have driven the Germans out, for they have been too closely associated with the events leading to the German occupation, with Petain and the Vichy government. And then finally, there is no man apparent who could fill the position of ruler: the monarchist claimants are not highly esteemed, though the Comte de Paris has been trying to catch the public eye; and though General de Gaulle obviously thinks very well of himself, he is not the stuff of which successful rulers are made.

The republican principle is still strong in France; the republic may have started in 1871 as a mere makeshift, a government that was to pacify France after the Franco-German war so that the monarchy might be restored; but during the seventy years of its existence it has by its very adaptability secured the support of the average Frenchman who, strong in his national individualism, resented coercion by a government or a party; sympathetic neither to royalism nor to communism, because each would seek to regiment him into a settled routine, he supported the republic very largely because it gave him freedom to say how much he disliked it.

There will no doubt be much turmoil in establishing the new French government; it is quite likely that it will be well to the Left; it is certain that there will be drastic changes made in the form of the senate and the chamber of deputies, for their very obvious defects have been recognized for years. But when the smoke clears away, the middle class, the *bourgeois* and *rentiers* and the peasant farmers will once more be in the saddle; they will still be conservative, even though in form of government they may have moved towards the Left; and the average Frenchman will view the rest of Europe, and especially the United States, with even more profound suspicion than before. He already sees schemes to lop off pieces of the French colonial empire in the interests of England and America—or even of a vague internationalism; he will undoubtedly be convinced that the victorious Allies have not been too anxious to see France

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restored to all her sovereign power and glory; he will find France part of an international organization which he will probably feel has been thrust upon her and in which he is likely to have little trust. More than ever is he going to be determined to see that France clings to all that she possesses, and there is a real danger that *la patrie et la gloire* are going to be symbols for a narrow and bitter spirit of French nationalism and French distrust.
