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Who Speaks for France? Vichy, Free France and the Battle over French Legitimacy: 1940-1942

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ABSTRACT
In June 1940 the French metropolitan government signed an armistice with Hitler's Germany, which effectively removed France from the conflict. At the same time, the little known French General Charles de Gaulle was in London establishing himself at the head of the Free French resistance movement. This set the stage for arguments over who represented the French nation and its interests. This article explores how the Vichy government and the Free French movement constructed their respective claims to legitimacy using legal, moral and historical arguments. And it considers how these claims were fought through armed clashes over French colonial territory.

Introduction

On 17 June 1940 the French General Charles de Gaulle and the British Liaison Officer to the French, Edward Spears, boarded a plane bound for England. Five days later French Premier Marshal Phillippe Pétain signed an armistice with Hitler's Germany, which went into effect on 25 June. The armistice had different consequences for France and the French colonial territories. Metropolitan France or *l'hexagone* was divided into occupied and unoccupied zones in the north and south respectively. The French army was demobilised, although a force of 100,000 was retained to ensure internal order.[1] The French empire and its protector, the French fleet, remained in the hands of Pétain's government, which on 1 July settled in the French spa town of Vichy.

While Pétain's government was installing itself into the various hotels and casinos of Vichy for what it thought would be only a temporary stay, de Gaulle was finding his feet on London's political stage. On 18 June de Gaulle delivered his now famous broadcast on the BBC, encouraging Frenchmen to join him in continuing the struggle

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[1]Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 127.

alongside Britain against the Axis forces. At the time, the radio broadcast received only scant attention and it was not recorded by the BBC. On 28 June, after any more 'qualified' and perhaps better-known Frenchman had failed to appear, the British government officially recognised de Gaulle as the 'leader of all the Free French.' Nine days later, on 7 August, de Gaulle and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill concluded a Memorandum of Agreement, formalising de Gaulle's relationship with the British government.[2]

The establishment of de Gaulle's Free French movement, as a rival to Pétain's metropolitan government, created a division in French politics – over what policy should be and who could legitimately speak for French interests. It forced civilians and government officials inside and outside of the French metropole to decide where to place their loyalties. On one side was the Franco-British alliance, which envisaged Axis defeat and French liberation. On the other side were promises of French renewal, which would be carried out under the guidance of First World War hero Philippe Pétain within a Europe dominated by Germany. General de Gaulle's Free French movement and Marshal Pétain's government were competing to represent France and legitimate French interests. This article argues that the battles over French legitimacy that developed between the Free French and the Vichy government were conducted on two planes. First, both sides constructed their legitimacy rhetorically, through the language of official agreements, statements and broadcasts. These arguments attempted to root authority in a legal but also a cultural and historical framework. Second, both sides sought to convey its legitimacy through more material, but still highly symbolic actions. These actions most often took place within French imperial territories. Being able to lay claim to imperial territory was a vital asset and a visible marker of loyalty to either the Free French or the Vichy government.

There is no shortage of research about French identity. Scholars have explored this concept from national and global perspectives in volumes whose chronologies span hundreds of years.[3] There is a rich collection of scholarship exploring the renegotiation of French identity after 1945 and specifically, how best to situate Vichy in the French past.[4] Researchers have also assessed the evolution of Free French and Vichy policies

[2]Ibid., p. 390.

[3]See, for instance, Fernand Braudel, *L'Identité de la France,* vols. 1-3, (Paris: Éditions Flammarion, 1990). Patrick Boucheron and Stephane Gerson, eds. *France in the World: A New Global History,* (New York: Other Press, 2019); Pierre Nora, ed. *Rethinking France: Les Lieux de Mémoire,* vol. 1, *The State,* trans. Mary Seidman Trouille, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001).

[4]See, for instance, Hugo Frey, 'Rebuilding France: Gaullist Historiography, the Rise-Fall Myth and French Identity (1945-58)', in Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800,* (London:

and strategies throughout the Second World War. Eric Jennings, Julian Jackson, Jay Winter and Antoine Prost have considered the methods (imperial, military and legal) used by de Gaulle and Free French officials to craft the Free French as a legitimate wartime actor.[5] Peter Jackson, Simon Kitson and Yves Durand have examined the Vichy government's attempts to maintain its sovereignty and legitimacy, both inside the metropole and in the eyes of a more global audience.[6] What this article will add to these findings is a comparative perspective, namely how the notion of a legitimate or authentic French identity was debated between Vichy and the Free French between 1940 and 1942.

Having this comparative perspective is important because it showcases how Vichy and Free French officials mobilised a range of different techniques to bolster their respective legitimacy. Discrediting each other was an important part of each side's strategy. Thus, this article will focus on the official arguments that each side mobilised to enhance its own legitimacy and simultaneously delegitimise its rival. It has two central aims. The first is to provide insights into the legal and cultural arguments that were used to assert the right to speak for the French nation and French interests. The second is to assess how these rhetorical frameworks impacted concrete military actions in French colonial territories. Focussing upon the period between 1940 and 1942 captures the Free French movement while it remained an 'unidentified political object.'[7] In other words, when it was in the process of constructing and consolidating its authority. It would not take the form of a fully-fledged provisional government until 1943. This time frame also follows Vichy's tenure as the appointed authority of unoccupied France. This position would be destroyed in November 1942, when

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Routledge, 1999), pp. 205-216; Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944,* (London: Harvard University Press, 1991); Henry Rousso and Eric Conan, *Vichy: Un Passé qui ne passe pas* (Paris: Fayard, 1994).

[5]Eric T. Jennings, *Free French Africa in World War II: The African Resistance,* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015), Chapters 1-2; Julian Jackson, *A Certain Idea of France: The Life of Charles de Gaulle,* (London: Penguin, 2019), Chapter 6; Jay Winter and Antoine Prost, *René Cassin and Human Rights: From the Great War to the Universal Declaration,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Chapters 5-6.

[6]Peter Jackson and Simon Kitson, 'The Paradoxes of Vichy Foreign Policy, 1940-1942', in Jonathan R. Adelman (ed.), *Hitler and his Allies in World War II,* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 79-115; Simon Kitson, *The Hunt for Nazi Spies: Fighting Espionage in Vichy France,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). On the importance of maintaining French sovereignty as a factor in collaboration, see, Yves Durand, 'Collaboration French-Style: A European Perspective', in Leonard V. Smith, Laura Lee Downes, Sarah Fishman, Robert Zaretsky & Ioannis Sinanoglou (eds), *France at War: Vichy France and the Historians,* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 61-76.

[7]Winter and Prost, *René Cassin,* p. 122.

German troops occupied the Southern zone in the wake of the allied Operation Torch invasions in North Africa.[8]

This article draws from a wide range of French and British archival materials. It relies upon policy making documents created by the Vichy government and the Free French movement. The documents themselves focus upon the official statements and agreements that were used to establish Vichy or Free French authority. The aim of this article is not to assess the broader propaganda campaigns that were carried out on each side. Rather, it seeks to understand how governments set about establishing their authority and the strategic tools they use to do this. Although the primary focus is on these two French actors, British policy makers also played an important role in this story. British resources were essential to de Gaulle, especially in the early days of his movement. British materials and manpower played a crucial role in supporting de Gaulle's claims of legitimacy – rhetorically and militarily. Moreover, the image of Anglo-Free French collaboration was central to the Vichy government's efforts to marginalise de Gaulle.

The Rhetoric of Vichy and Free French Legitimacy

In the wake of the Franco-German armistice, representatives of Free France and Pétain's Vichy government used a variety of official statements and agreements to assert themselves as the legitimate authorities of the French state and its interests (in the present and the future). The use of rhetoric to shore up power and influence has long been considered essential to political practice. In 1971 Maurice Cowling asserted that 'high politics' is 'a matter of rhetoric and manoeuvre' by statesmen.[9] Establishing the credibility of a government, and the policies it is making, means being able to justify those policies to a range of constituencies and interested parties. In other words, the language that justifies a policy is an essential part of constructing and implementing that policy.[10] Rhetoric, or the strategic language of high-level decision making, explains why a given policy is needed in the present, and how it will contribute to a particular vision of the future. In the words of Reinhart Koselleck, 'an ability to speak

[8]Operation Torch was the first major American led operation in the war. American and British forces invaded French North Africa on 8 November 1942. On 11 November German troops occupied the Southern Zone of metropolitan France, rendering the Vichy government largely ineffectual.

[9]Maurice Cowling, *The Impact of Labour 1920-1924: The Beginning of Modern British Politics,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 4.

[10]Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics,* vol. 1, *Regarding Method,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 174.

convincingly about the future…has become one of the requisites of legitimate authority in modern politics.'[11]

The Pétain government and Charles de Gaulle's Free French movement both used rhetoric in order to lay claim to authority and to attempt to remove authority from its rival. This happened in two ways. First, each side tried to establish its legitimacy through a legal framework, which included competing notions of French sovereignty. What made these disputes particularly interesting was that they combined traditional legal arguments with moral and sentimental imagery. The result was that competing notions of French legitimacy developed around the language of official agreements as well as more historical notions of French honour and culture. Second the metropolitan government argued that France was now a neutral territory while Free French claims situated France as a combatant in the on-going conflict.

Even before the British government officially recognised de Gaulle as the head of a Free French movement on 28 June, his official addresses were resituating French sovereignty, from the metropole to London. In his first, 18 June address broadcast over the BBC, de Gaulle proclaimed, 'I…am conscious of speaking in the home of France.'[12] Thereafter, de Gaulle concluded a series of official agreements and established a number of committees that were designed to give his movement legitimacy on a wide scale. The first of these was a Memorandum of Agreement, concluded on 7 August. French Jurist René Cassin played a significant role in crafting the agreement, which established the juridical bases for cooperation between de Gaulle and the British government.[13] It also committed the British government to funding the Free French movement. The second was a declaration delivered by de Gaulle from the capital of French Equatorial Africa.[14] The Brazzaville Manifesto (27 October 1940) gave Free France its political form and led to the establishment of the Conseil de Défense de l'Empire Français (Empire Defence Council) on 29 October 1940. These shifts in imperial loyalties also signalled the importance that empire would play as tangible proof of the right to speak for French interests. Finally, the Comité National Français (French National Committee or CNF) was established on 24 September 1941. It replaced the Empire Defence Council and would remain active until 3 June 1943, when it was succeeded by the Comité Français de Libération

[11]Jon Cowans, 'Visions of the Postwar: The Politics of Memory and Expectation in 1940s France', *History and Memory*, 10, no. 2 (1998), p. 70.
[12]Charles de Gaulle, *Discours et Messages Pendant le Guerre Juin 1940-Janvier 1946,* (Paris: Plon, 1970), 18 June 1940.
[13]Winter and Prost, *René Cassin*, p. 111.
[14]Between 26 and 28 August the French Equatorial African colonies of Chad, the Cameroons, the French Congo, and Oubangui-Chari joined the side of Free France. Gabon would rally to Free France in early November.

National (The French Committee of National Liberation or CFLN). Both the Empire Defence Council and the CNF were intended to give de Gaulle's movement the trappings and appearance of a functioning constitutional authority. This article will focus on the Memorandum of Agreement, the Brazzaville Manifesto and the Empire Defence Council.

When René Cassin met de Gaulle for the first time on 29 June 1940, he recalled saying to the General, 'I understand totally that we are not a foreign legion in the British army. We are the French army.'[15] Cassin was emphasising the importance of ensuring that the Free French were viewed as the continuation of the French war effort. He did not want the notion of a French struggle to be lost in images of an exclusively British fight. However, de Gaulle went one step further. He corrected Cassin, asserting 'we are France.'[16] One way that de Gaulle and Cassin established the legal character of the Free French movement was to draw a line of continuity between the outbreak of war in September 1939 and the continuation of the struggle after 22 June 1940. The *Journal Officiel de France Libre,* published from de Gaulle's headquarters in Carlton Gardens, symbolised the legal continuity between the French Republic and the Free French movement. It published de Gaulle's statements and broadcasts as well as the text of founding documents and agreements. The *Journal* also played a crucial role in laying out the legal framework of the Free French movement and undermining that of Vichy.

Cassin recognised that Free France was not, legally, the same as a French government.[17] However, he argued that this did not matter, because Free France represented true French interests: 'to save French honor, to defend the French Empire, to free France and to give back their liberties to the French people.'[18] The fact that Free France was not a fully-fledged government was less important than its claim to represent the majority of French interests, in the metropole and abroad. Moreover, administratively and militarily, Cassin made sure that Free France developed all of the trappings of a legitimate representative body. The 7 August accords were an example of this approach. The resulting text was 'rhetorically powerful, but legally obscure.'[19] One of the most important things that the accords did was to establish the independence of the Free French movement from the British government. This made Free France a representative of French interests and the embodiment of the French war effort, rather than an agent of the British government. The accords preserved

[15]Winter and Prost, *René Cassin*, p. 112.
[16]Ibid.
[17]René Cassin, 'Vichy or Free France?', *Foreign Affairs*, 20, no. 1 (Oct. 1941), p. 104.
[18]Ibid.
[19]Martin Thomas and Richard Toye, *Arguing about Empire: Imperial Rhetoric in Britain and France 1882-1956,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 166.

recognisable symbols of the French state. Free French fighters would continue to communicate in French, wear French uniforms and adhere to French military regulations. The memorandum of agreement stipulated that de Gaulle's force would 'retain the character of a French force in respect of personnel, particularly as regards discipline, language, promotion and duties.' [20] Moreover, British financial support was classified as a loan, which further enhanced the independence of the Free French, if not in the present, then certainly in the future.

Three months later, de Gaulle's Brazzaville Manifesto and the creation of the Empire Defence Council extended the authority of the Free French movement.[21] Britain recognised the Empire Defence Council on 5 January 1941. This recognition and the opening of an American consulate in New Caledonia, were used by the Free French as proof that it fulfilled international standards to be received as a *de facto* government.[22] For de Gaulle, French Equatorial Africa became a preeminent symbol of the legitimacy of his movement. Empire was the physical proof of de Gaulle's sovereignty and of his right to speak for France.[23] In his manifesto, de Gaulle stressed that his actions were being taken in the name of France. And he strengthened the image of his movement by claiming that millions of French subjects were choosing to continue the war, rather than accept the armistice. He concluded his address by calling on Frenchmen to join him in resisting the enemy, in the metropole and abroad, and laying out the foundation for the Empire Defence Council.[24]

The Empire Defence Council reinforced the legal appearance of de Gaulle's movement. Its framework and membership were defined through two *ordonnances* and a total of ten articles. Ordonnance 1, articles 4-6 gave the Council the powers that were traditionally the preserve of a sovereign state, namely, the right to pursue

[20]The UK National Archives (hereinafter TNA), FO 371/24340, Memorandum of Agreement, 7 August 1940 .

[21]The Brazzaville Manifesto was the first official Free French declaration. Delivered by de Gaulle on 27 October 1940, it stated that Pétain's Vichy government was both illegal and illegitimate. The Manifesto was followed by an 'Organic Declaration' on 16 November 1940, which claimed that de Gaulle's movement represented the legitimate continuation of the Third Republic.

[22]Cassin, 'Vichy or Free France?', p. 111. New Caledonia, an isolated island in the Pacific Ocean, rallied to Free France on 19 September 1940.

[23]For more on the significance of empire to the Free French movement see, Eric T. Jennings, *Free French Africa in World War II: The African Resistance,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Chapters 1-2.

[24]"Manifeste du 27 Octobre 1940 relatif à la direction de l'effort français dans la guerre', *Journal official de la France libre*, 20 January 1941, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96166400/f3.item. Accessed 1 October 2020.

juridical, administrative and military policies in the interest of France and the French empire.[25] Ordonnance 2, article 1 listed the 9 men who would serve on the Council. These were men, according to de Gaulle, who 'symbolisent les plus hautes valeurs intellectuelles et morales de la nation.'[26] Despite its rather hazy governing structure, the Council still played an important role. It rooted the legitimacy of the Gaullist movement in French colonial territory. De Gaulle recognised that empire gave Free France and Free French Africa an authority, or a seriousness, that it could never have achieved by operating exclusively on British soil.[27]

While de Gaulle was building Free French legitimacy on the basis that France remained an active wartime combatant and ally of the British, the Vichy government was repositioning France as a neutral state. Like de Gaulle, it mobilised a combination of legal and moral arguments. The legality of the metropolitan government was established through its governing structure, and the chain of events that had led to that structure. On 9 July the French Parliament voted 624 to 4 in favour of revising the French constitution. The following day a second proposal was passed, which specifically gave Pétain the authority to modify the constitution. And on 11 July Pétain passed a series of acts which effectively ended the Third Republic. Parliament was adjourned indefinitely. Pétain's new position as Head of the French State gave him almost unlimited judicial, legislative and executive control.

From a legal point of view, the Vichy government stood on firmer ground than the Free French. Between 1940 and 1941 Vichy was granted diplomatic recognition by 40 countries.[28] These included the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan and the Vatican, although the USA would end its recognition after the German occupation of Vichy in November 1942, while the USSR withdrew it shortly after Operation Barbarossa was launched. Adding to this external validation, much of its internal legitimacy was derived from Pétain's personal authority. Even in the face of increasing food shortages over the winter of 1940-1941, Pétain's popularity remained largely intact well into 1942.[29] This is important because it meant that Pétain's popularity conferred a sense of representational legitimacy on the metropolitan government.

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[25]'Ordonnance No. 1, Organisant les pouvoirs publics Durant la guerre et instituant le Conseil de Défense de l'Empire,' *Journal official de la France libre*, 20 January 1941, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96166400/f3.item. Accessed 1 October 2020.

[26]Translated as: 'Symbolise the highest intellectual and moral values of the nation.' 'Manifeste du 27 Octobre 1940', https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96166400/f3.item. Accessed 1 October 2020.

[27]Jennings, *Free French Africa,* pp. 49-50.

[28] Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 134.

[29]Ibid., p. 278.

The Vichy government also rooted its legitimacy in the fact that it was governing from France itself. Official statements argued that French sovereignty resided exclusively in the metropole. On 17 June, the day that the metropolitan government requested armistice terms from Germany, Pétain and his Minister for Foreign Affairs Paul Baudouin delivered radio addresses that fixed the French nation and French sovereignty firmly in the metropole. Baudouin's address in particular, which was also reprinted across the French metropolitan and imperial press, mobilised a narrow definition of nationhood and sovereignty. He concluded that the existence of the French nation meant maintaining 'the purity of the French soul' and the 'spiritual heritage' of the homeland.[30] This kind of imagery would be essential to Vichy rhetoric throughout the war. It advanced a notion of 'true France' that celebrated the history and culture of individual French villages and regions but that called for loyalty to the body of France above all.[31] Legitimising the metropolitan government using the claim that the French nation could only exist on French soil also meant legitimising the Franco-German armistice.

The authenticity of the Vichy government was tied to its claim that the Franco-German armistice had ended France's war. The armistice allowed Pétain and Baudouin to remove France from the conflict and re-establish it as a neutral actor. In classic just war theory, neutrality is a concept that concedes particular rights but also responsibilities on its claimants. In particular, it bound Vichy to take no action that would positively benefit either the Allies or the Axis.[32] This was a position that would become increasingly difficult to sustain as the conflict continued. It will be explored further in the second half of the article.

In the immediate weeks and months following the conclusion of the Franco-German armistice, Vichy officials used rhetoric to establish a clear division between France as a belligerent and France as a neutral state. Official statements first explained why France had been defeated and then shifted the focus towards peacetime policies based on French renewal and regrowth. Pétain and Baudouin praised the heroic and noble efforts of the French forces. They explained that they had been defeated by an enemy that was technologically and numerically superior.[33] Pétain also used official statements in order to meet British challenges to the legality of his government. Churchill argued that the metropolitan government did not possess 'freedom, independence' or

[30]Ibid.

[31]Herman Lebovics, *True France: The Wars over Cultural Identity, 1900-1945,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 175.

[32]Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations,* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), p. 235.

[33]'Le Maréchal Pétain président du Conseil parle à la France', *L'Echo d'Alger,* 18 June 1940, p. 1. 'Poignante déclaration de M. Baudouin', *L'Echo d'Alger,* 18 June 1940, p. 1.

'constitutional authority.'[34] On 23 June Pétain met these accusations head on. He insisted that French forces had been outnumbered on every front and that only by accepting an armistice could France begin the process of rebuilding.[35] French renewal could only take place if it removed itself from the conflict.

Of course, an important aspect of Vichy and Free French rhetoric involved addressing each other's claims to speak for France. For both sides, constructing its respective legitimacy meant simultaneously destroying the credibility of its rival. This happened in two ways. First, Gaullist rhetoric attempted to undermine the Pétain government's constitutional *and* representative legitimacy.[36] Second, the Pétain government delegitimised de Gaulle and his adherents by taking away their claims to French identity. Essentially, it argued that Free Frenchmen were not French.

Perhaps because arguments against Vichy's legal status were tenuous at best, Gaullist rhetoric tended to emphasise at the same time that Pétain's government was both immoral and dishonourable. This more emotive rhetoric added something that purely legal arguments could not. It drew on deeply rooted social and cultural definitions of right, wrong and national honour. On 22 June, de Gaulle broadcast for the second time over BBC airwaves. He described the armistice as contrary to 'good sense, to honour and to the higher interests of the Fatherland.'[37] The next day he broadcast again, announcing that he would set up a French National Committee to represent French interests. A British government communiqué followed on the heels of de Gaulle's statement, which reinforced the illegitimacy of the Vichy government in favour of de Gaulle's Provisional National Committee. The statement alleged that the French metropolitan government could no longer be regarded 'as the government of an independent country.'[38] BBC Broadcasts in French and English stressed that the armistice deprived Pétain's government of the 'right to represent free French Citizens.'[39] In print and over the radio, the metropolitan government was uniformly

[34]'France is Not Dead', *The Times*, 24 June 1940, p. 6.
[35]TNA PREM 3/174/4, French Broadcast from Bordeaux, 23 June 1940. Philippe Pétain, *Les Paroles et les Écrits du Maréchal Pétain, 16 Juin 1940-1 Janvier 1942,* (Éditions de la Légion, 1942), p. 13.
[36]British rhetoric made many of the same arguments, in an attempt to preserve the notion of Franco-British wartime continuity. See, for instance, Rachel Chin, 'After the Fall: British Strategy and the Preservation of the Franco-British Alliance in 1940', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 55, no. 2 (2020), pp. 297-315.
[37]Jackson, *A Certain Idea of France,* p. 133.
[38]Ibid., p. 134.
[39]French Archives Nationales (hereinafter AN), AG/3(1)/257, France Libre, Dossier 2, 23 June 1940.

referred to as 'the Pétain government,' signalling that it did not represent the authentic France.[40]

Cassin knew that he could not claim that Free France was a genuine French government. But this did not stop him or de Gaulle from asserting that Pétain's government was illegal. Cassin argued that Pétain's government was 'both illegal and illegitimate….[this] fact is important both from a legal and moral point of view.'[41] From the legal side, Cassin claimed that the metropolitan government had risen to power by *coup d'état,* making it invalid. The events of 10 July had made Pétain into an absolute monarch, forced the National Assembly to assent to its own demise and violated the French Constitutional Laws of 1875.[42] From a moral point of view, he asserted that this government did not accord with 'national tradition or [have] the support of public opinion.'[43]

De Gaulle's Brazzaville declaration and the series of communiqués that he issued in its wake made similar claims. Sidestepping the status of his own movement, de Gaulle alleged that no French government existed. Vichy, he added was illegal (it was unconstitutional and a puppet government) and immoral (contrary to French honour). Il n'existe plus de gouvernement proprement français. En effet, l'organisme sis à Vichy et qui prétend porter ce nom est inconstitutionnel et soumis à l'envahisseur. Dans son état de servitude, cet organisme ne peut être et n'est en effet qu'un instrument utilisé par les ennemis de la France contre l'honneur et l'intérêt du pays.[44]

In his *Déclaration Organique* of 16 November 1940 de Gaulle laid out the juridical basis on which his movement and the Empire Defence Council was exercising power. He established legal continuity between the Third Republic, the 1875 constitution and the Free French. By departing from Republican law, Vichy had invalidated itself. According to de Gaulle, 'l'organisme dit 'Gouvernement de Vichy' qui prétend remplacer le

[40]Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (MAE), 10GMII/291, 'Relation sommaire de la situation a Londres', 17 June-20 July 1940.
[41]Cassin, 'Vichy or Free France?', p. 106.
[42]Ibid., p. 107.
[43]Ibid., p. 106.
[44]Translated as: 'There is no longer a proper French government. Indeed, the organization based in Vichy and which claims to bear this name is unconstitutional and subject to the invader. In its state of servitude, this body cannot govern and indeed is only an instrument used by the enemies of France against the honour and interest of the country.' 'Manifeste du 27 Octobre 1940 relatif à la direction de l'effort français dans la guerre ;, *Journal official de la France libre*, 20 January 1941, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96166400/f3.item. Accessed 1 October 2020.

Gouvernement de la République, ne jouit pas de cette plénitude de liberté qui est indispensable à l'exercice intégral du pouvoir.'[45]

Situating legal and moral arguments side by side was not simply a rhetorical ploy. It reflected the inherent uncertainty surrounding the character and role of both de Gaulle's movement and the Pétain government. Julian Jackson has argued that one way de Gaulle chose to sidestep the trickier questions of Free French legality was by emphasising the more nebulous notions of legitimacy or illegitimacy.[46] Moreover, legality did not always confer legitimacy. Late in October, following Pétain's meetings with Hitler at Montoire, the American Chargé in France, Harrison Freeman Matthews, suggested that the Vichy government was nothing more than a puppet state and that French 'foreign policy' was a farce.[47] By the same token, British public opinion from June 1940 tended to view Pétain's government with disdain. Ministry of Information public opinion analyses concluded 'at all levels of society the opinion is bitterly and vigorously expressed that the French people have been betrayed by 'the politicians'.'[48] Vichy's legal standing was recognised by powerful neutral actors such as the United States. But it was simultaneously undermined by American and British perceptions of the Vichy government as a tool of Germany and a puppet state. This is what made moral and honour-based arguments so important.

For the Vichy government, an important part of establishing its legal standing as the legitimate voice of France meant determining which individuals had a claim to 'Frenchness'. Andrew Shennan has shown that one of the central tenets of Vichy policy was to divide the French population on the basis of good and bad or 'French and anti-French.'[49] The result was to prohibit particular minority groups from making claims to be French. Vichy rhetoric operated in a similar way when it came to the Free French. It marginalised Free French actors by revoking their identity as Frenchmen. Talking points distributed by Vichy to its diplomatic personnel overseas following the

[45]Translated as: 'The body known as the "Vichy Government", which claims to replace the Government of the Republic, does not enjoy that fullness of freedom which is essential for the full exercise of power.' 'Declaration Organique, Complétant le Manifeste du 27 Octobre 1940', *Journal official de la France libre*, 20 January 1941, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96166400/f3.item. Accessed 1 October 2020.
[46]Jackson, *The Dark Years,* p. 134.
[47]Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), The Chargé in France (Matthews) to the Secretary of State, 26 October 1940, Document 474, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1940v02/d474. Accessed 1 October 2020.
[48]TNA INF 1/264, 'Public Opinion on the Present Crisis', 24 June 1940.
[49]Andrew Shennan, *Rethinking France: Plans for Renewal 1940-1946,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 26.

failed Anglo-Free French attempt to capture the French Senegalese port of Dakar stressed that the aggression had been committed by Britain and 'l'ex-général de Gaulle.' This title would become a regular feature in Vichy's descriptions of the General and his movement.[50] According to Vichy, de Gaulle and individuals loyal to his movement or the ideals upon which it was founded were traitors to France.[51] Vice Premier Pierre Laval also castigated the British for backing the 'traitor de Gaulle.' As for other Frenchmen opposed to the Vichy government, they were those 'miserable people who fled France – most of them Jews…'[52] On the other hand, Secretary General of the French Foreign Office Charles Rochat suggested that it would be possible to rehabilitate some of the lost Frenchmen. 'The rebels are for the most part good Frenchmen who have been misled.'[53] Making loyalty to the Free French movement synonymous with treason and to the very notion of what it meant to be French was a way to discredit Gaullist visions of the conflict.

Conveying Legitimacy through Action and Ownership

By the end of 1940 de Gaulle's Free French movement and Pétain's Vichy government had established the rhetorical foundations upon which they would develop and refine their respective claims to be the true representative of France. However, these arguments over legitimacy were not confined to a war of words. They were also played out in a series of high-level armed clashes in French colonial territories. Two of the most significant of these clashes took place in Dakar in September 1940 and in the French Levantine Mandates of Syria and Lebanon in June and July 1941. The clashes themselves, the rhetoric surrounding them and the retaliations that followed illustrated the role that decisive military actions played in the struggle over French legitimacy. Here, the strategic and symbolic significance of empire was at the fore.

The Vichy government used internal and external policies in order to shore up its appearance as a legitimate sovereign state. Its determination to preserve a neutral veneer, however, resulted in it pursuing a range of complex and often contradictory policies. Simon Kitson has illustrated how Vichy officials were simultaneously arresting

[50]MAE, 10GMII/338, Télégramme au départ, de Vichy, 24 September 1940. Jackson, *A Certain Idea of France,* p. 134.

[51]Although outside the scope of this article, this kind of imagery was a regular feature of Vichy propaganda until the liberation. See, for instance, Kay Chadwick, 'Radio Propaganda and Public Opinion under Endgame Vichy: The Impact of Philippe Henriot', *French History*, 25, no. 2 (2011), p. 242 & p. 248.

[52]FRUS, The Chargé in France (Matthews) to Secretary of State, 14 November 1940, Document 479, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1940v02/d479. Accessed 1 October 2020.

[53]FRUS, The Ambassador in France (Leahy) to the Secretary of State, 20 May 1941, Document 138, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1941v02/d138. Accessed 1 October 2020.

and even executing German spies and supporters of the Free French movement.[54] Similarly, Vichy's very existence was contradictory. It could not reconcile the tension between its attempts to emphasise its own sovereignty and its decisions to pursue policies of collaboration.[55] Vichy's claim to be a neutral actor also played a significant role in how it responded to external pressure from the United States, Britain and the Free French. In November 1940 US Secretary of State Cordell Hull warned the French Ambassador that Pétain's government 'has no rights in its acts and utterances' to aid Germany in any way.[56] The Vichy government's policy choices were thus limited in material ways by its desire to preserve its claims of sovereignty and neutrality. This will become particularly evident in how it responded to threats to its colonial empire. De Gaulle also recognised that the legitimacy of his movement would be greatly enhanced by material assets, especially colonial territories. Brazzaville was a physical capital for his movement, and it provided prestige and authenticity in a way that London could not. At the same time, de Gaulle, like Vichy, also had to balance a range of potentially contradictory policies. Colonial territories that appeared to rally freely to his movement added to his representative legitimacy. They leant credibility to de Gaulle's claims that Vichy did not represent popular French opinion. However, appearing to force French colonial territories to swap allegiance at gunpoint (and British guns at that) risked damaging the image of the Free French in the eyes of the French public. De Gaulle recognised early on that any conflicts between Free French and Vichy personnel would need to be framed and justified very carefully. In the Memorandum of Agreement that de Gaulle concluded with the British government in August he was careful to stipulate that he would not consent to use Free French forces to 'make war against France.' However, de Gaulle added that 'he would not regard a puppet French Government…as being covered by the word "France".'[57]

The armed clashes that erupted over French colonial territory were a product of Vichy and Free French attempts to preserve their respective claims to legitimacy. The Free French, with British backing, directly challenged Vichy's claims to neutrality by arguing that Germany was the true powerholder in France and French territory. Strategic operations at Dakar and in the Levant States forced the Vichy government to engage militarily in order to defend its sovereign territory. Vichy responded to the attacks, rhetorically and militarily. But it was careful to situate these clashes outside

[54]Kitson, *Hunt for Nazi Spies*.
[55]Jackson and Kitson, 'The Paradoxes of Vichy Foreign Policy, 1940-1942', p. 79.
[56]FRUS, The Secretary of State to the Chargé in France (Matthews), 6 November 1940, Document 554, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1940v02/d554. Accessed 1 October 2020.
[57]TNA FO 371/24340, 'Draft Note by the Chairman of the Allied Forces (Official) Committee', August 1940.

the framework of the wider conflict in order to preserve its position as a neutral actor. According to the Vichy government, these imperial conflicts were not a continuation of the war, but rather, unwarranted acts of aggression against a sovereign and neutral state. Moreover, Vichy's response marginalised the Free French by describing the attacks as one more instance of British perfidy in a longer history of Franco-British imperial rivalry. On the other hand, the Free French movement was severely limited in terms of material resources. This meant that strategic operations at Dakar and in the Levant relied heavily on British and British colonial forces and equipment. Yet, the way in which the operations were planned and carried out recognised that they should appear to be French initiatives or to benefit French interests. Thus, military manoeuvres contained an element of symbolic as well as strategic importance.

In September 1940 a contingent of British and Free French forces sailed to the French Senegalese port of Dakar. Plans to bring Dakar over to the Free French side had begun to crystalise in late July. From the beginning, de Gaulle was adamant that the operation should retain as much French character as possible that that it should make every effort to avoid bloodshed.[58] Strategists and planners in the British Service Ministries also agreed that operations involving French colonial territories had to appear to be French initiatives.[59] These mindsets were integrated into the sailing orders issued by joint mission commander Major General Noel Irwin: participants should 'make every effort clearly to establish the Free French character of your force.'[60]

However, after Operation Menace commenced on 23 September in heavy fog, it quickly became evident that the Dakar Garrison and its leader Governor General Pierre Boisson were loath to abandon their loyalty to the Vichy government. When Boisson refused to surrender to Anglo-Free French forces, British ships bombarded the garrison. Vichy guns returned fire with deadly accuracy, despite extreme limits in visibility. Two days after the operations had begun, de Gaulle had to concede defeat. He justified his decision as a desire to avoid a fight between Frenchmen. But he also claimed that the operation had been carried out in response to numerous French citizens who had entreated de Gaulle to come to Dakar so that it could join the Free French. These calls had only been foiled by a small group of men loyal to Vichy and under the thumb of their German oppressors.[61] De Gaulle contrasted images of a

[58]TNA, CAB 80/16/58, 'Memorandum by General de Gaulle on Operation "Menace"', 19 August 1940.
[59]TNA, PREM 3/276, 'Note on Political Considerations of Dakar Movements', August 1940.
[60]Churchill College Archive Centre (hereinafter CCAC), SPRS 136, 'Sailing Orders for Dakar Operations', 20 September 1940. General Irwin and Admiral Cunningham served as joint mission commanders in charge of military and naval forces respectively.
[61]TNA, ADM 223/507, Force M to Admiralty, 23.30, 23 September 1940.

majority of 'true' Frenchmen with others of a minority of 'Vichy men' in order to marginalise the metropolitan government. He also continued to argue that the operations were entirely French in nature, and that British ships and personnel were present only in an observational capacity.[62]

In the wake of military failure at Dakar, de Gaulle tried to shore up the legitimacy of his movement by attributing the defeat to the actions of a few outlying traitors and the overwhelming pressure of the German occupiers. For Vichy, the operations were proof of the authority of the metropolitan government at home and in its empire. Its response was consistent with its claims to represent a neutral nation, and it was conceived and justified in a way that marginalised the Free French as a legitimate force. Vichy communiqués argued that the attacks were another example of British aggression, the first being the British bombardments of the Free Fleet at Mers el-Kébir in early July. Vichy's Minister for Foreign Affairs Paul Baudouin met with the French and foreign press. He distributed talking points to Vichy's diplomatic missions urging them to condemn the aggression committed by the British government against French territory.[63] A cable from Pétain to Boisson was published across the French press to further reinforce the British character of the operation and emphasise that French participants were traitors, rather than true Frenchmen. 'France' Pétain wrote, 'is following with emotion and confidence your resistance to mercenary treason and British aggression.'[64] Even the British press took note of the fact that the Vichy government was describing the operation as entirely British in nature. An article in *The Guardian* observed, 'It would appear that Vichy describes all the actions of General de Gaulle and his forces as British.'[65]

Depicting the attacks at Dakar as a continuation of those at Mers el-Kébir three months earlier allowed Vichy to marginalise de Gaulle's movement. Challenges to Vichy's sovereignty were represented as a Franco-British imperial crisis rather than a Vichy-Free France crisis over legitimacy. The violence at Mers el-Kébir and Dakar were placed side by side in a poster that asked, 'where else will Britain spill French blood?'[66] For Vichy, taking actions, militarily and rhetorically, to defend its empire was essential to its existence. A report evaluating the conflict suggested that resistance at

[62]CCAC, SPRS 136, De Gaulle to Larminat, Leclerc and Éboué, 27 September 1940.
[63]Paul Baudouin, *The Private Diaries of Paul Baudouin: March 1940-January 1941,* trans. Sir Charles Petrie (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1948), p. 247. MAE, 10GMII/338, Télégramme au départ, de Vichy, 24 September 1940.
[64]'More Vichy Reports', *The Guardian,* 25 September 1940, p. 2.
[65]'Dakar Forts Fire on Free French Warships', *The Guardian*, 25 September 1940, p. 5.
[66]Ruth Ginio, *French Colonialism Unmasked, the Vichy Years in French West Africa,* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), p. 16.

Dakar could be used as a tool to extract concessions from Germany.[67] As it had done after the attacks at Mers el-Kébir, Vichy launched retaliatory air raids on Gibraltar. These raids signalled its willingness to defend its territories and commitment to defining these clashes as an exclusively British attack. The willingness of Vichy's colonial garrisons to fight against British and Gaullist forces became tools that Pétain's government mobilised to reinforce its claims of legitimacy. They also undermined de Gaulle's arguments that Free French ideals and policies were consistent with the majority of French metropolitan and imperial opinion.[68]

Nearly ten months later Anglo-Free French forces carried out another attack against Vichy territory – the French mandated states of Syria and Lebanon. Between 8 June and 14 July 1941, a contingent comprising British, British Imperial and Free French troops led by General Henry Maitland-Wilson fought against Vichy forces under the leadership of General Henri Fernand Dentz.[69] The decision to intervene in Syria was taken by British officials after Vichy granted German troops access to Syrian aerodromes. The Germans used the aerodromes as bases from which to provide support to an anti-British coup that had broken out in Iraq in April and May.

The military operations in the Levant were a significant point in the battle over French legitimacy. Vichy's decision to give German forces access to French mandated territory undermined its claims to neutrality. These claims had been on increasingly shaky ground since Admiral François Darlan became Vice President of the Council (essentially Premier) in February. For British decision makers, Operation Exporter became an opportunity to secure valuable strategic territory. And for the Free French, the Levant states increased their status as a legitimate governing body.

What made the Levant operations different from those at Dakar was the strength of local nationalist sentiment. In the Levant, established nationalist groups were calling for independence from the French mandate regime. For de Gaulle and the Free French, this meant that its claims to represent the authentic French state were tied to promises to grant independence to both mandates. On 8 June General Georges Catroux, de Gaulle's choice for French Delegate and Plenipotentiary in the Levant, issued a declaration that established the Free French as the true representative of France and promised to end the mandate. Edward Spears, Britain's representative to the Free French, also recognised that military operations should be coupled with

[67] MAE, 10GMII/338, 'Conséquences de ~~l'agression~~ la victoire de Dakar', 26 September 1940.
[68] Thomas and Toye, *Arguing about Empire,* p. 168.
[69] TNA WO 216/10, Official statistics reported that the taskforce was made up of 9,000 British, 18,000 Australian, 2,000 Indian and 5,000 Free French troops. Cypher, C. in C. Middle East to War Office, 4 July 1941.

efforts to enhance the legitimacy of Free France's position in the Levant. Spears advised that statements issued in the Levant should be both anti-Vichy and pro-Free French. He believed that overt British support for Free French personnel would spark local resistance to German infiltration and encourage French administrators and their families to switch allegiance from Vichy to de Gaulle. As de Gaulle had done after Dakar, official statements stressed Vichy's inherent un-Frenchness. Spears suggested deploying Napoleon's adage, 'the man who obeys the orders of a captive General is a traitor' in order to emphasise the moral authority of the Free French movement.[70]

For de Gaulle, occupying Syria and Lebanon introduced another challenge to Free French legitimacy. Britain's obvious military and material superiority as well as its established regional interests in the Middle East threated to limit de Gaulle's ability to make and implement policy in the Levant. De Gaulle knew that his authority in the Levant relied on British cooperation, and he placed Britain under pressure to comply. He warned Churchill against undermining the French position in the Levant saying that international opinion would be 'watching closely the attitude which Great Britain will take towards the position of France in this region.'[71] A Free French memo noted that material imbalances between British and Free French power should be masked so as not to undermine Free French authority. It would be essential, the memo stressed, to present the image of an *entente parfaite.*[72]

De Gaulle's fears that Britain could compromise his legitimacy in the Levant were not entirely unfounded. British interests regionally, but particularly in Palestine and Egypt, meant that its policies towards the Levant were always conceptualised with one eye on how they would impact British prestige and influence in the Middle East. Spears, who had earlier championed Free France's position in the Levant wrote in late July, 'No French officer however high in rank must ever be allowed to run down British authorities and if any should forget, as some apparently do, that we are the predominant partner in the Alliance, they must be gently reminded of this fact. No French soldier would have a rifle in his hand or a franc in his pocket were it not for us.'[73]

For Vichy, losing the Levant territories substantially reduced its claims of imperial sovereignty. With little recourse to launch a sustained military response, Vichy tried

[70]Middle East Centre Archive (MECA), GB165-0269 Box 1A, Spears to Foreign Office, 28 May 1941.
[71]TNA PREM 3/422/6, Cypher, de Gaulle to Churchill, 29 June 194,. MAE, 18GMII/39, De Gaulle to Churchill, 29 June 1941.
[72]AN AG/3(1)/202, 'Memoire concernant l'administration des etats de Syrie et du Liban', July 1941.
[73]MECA, GB165-0269, Box 1A, Spears to Spears Mission, Brazzaville, 23 July 1941.

to discredit British and Free French policy by continuing to emphasise its legal status, national sovereignty and historic rights in the Levant. Pétain's response to Operation Exporter replicated much of Vichy's earlier rhetoric. He accused British (not Free French) decision makers of forging a false pretext for aggression in order to seize the region for themselves.[74] Frenchmen in Syria, Pétain urged, should 'fight in a just cause and for the integrity of the territory entrusted to France by history.'[75] Vichy's Minister of Defence, General Charles Huntziger made an official statement that situated the invasions in the longer history of Franco-British rivalry. He described Britain as an invader 'whose perfidy is well-known to you' and proclaimed that 'the France of the Crusaders is today the France of Marshal Pétain.'[76]

At the same time as condemning British policy, Vichy rhetoric challenged the legitimacy of de Gaulle's movement. Pétain's initial radio declaration, subsequently published in the press, attacked de Gaulle's earlier promises never to engage in a fight against Frenchmen. 'The attack is led, as at Dakar, by Frenchmen serving under a dissident flag. Supported by British Imperial forces, they are not hesitating to spill the blood of their brothers defending the unity of the Empire and French Sovereignty.'[77] Vichy's sovereignty and legitimacy were rooted deeply in its imperial territories. As it had done at Dakar, it defended its position by marginalising the Free French movement in favour of historic and emotive images of Franco-British animosity.

For Vichy, empire symbolised French power and greatness. Retaining colonial territories was a way to shore up its legitimacy. But when imperial losses were unavoidable, Vichy was careful to fashion its response in a way that retained its status as a neutral actor. In this framework, empire had to be protected from the British: 'L'histoire prouve que l'Angleterre est l'ennemi héréditaire de cet Empire qui concurrence le sien. Elle a déjà attaqué l'A.E.F. et la Syrie – non pour la 'libérer', mais pour s'y installer…'[78] Vichy's hostility to Britain was articulated in imperial and historic terms. In this framework the Free French were reduced to traitors and British agents. Vichy could not portray British actions as acts of war. Doing so would jeopardise the rights and responsibilities it was claiming as a neutral actor. Thus, British and Free French operations in French colonial territory were represented as a continuation of a much longer history of Franco-British imperial rivalry.

[74]'Le Maréchal Pétain aux Français du Levant', *Echo D'Alger,* 9 June 1941, p. 1.
[75]Our Correspondent, 'Weygand and Vichy', *The Times*, 9 June 1941, p. 3.
[76]CCAC ABMS 1/2/2, Broadcasts in French for the French Listener, 9-15 June 1941.
[77]'Le Maréchal Pétain aux Français du Levant', *L'Echo d'Alger*, 9 June 1941, p. 1. 'What Vichy Says', *The Guardian*, 9 June 1941, p. 6. 'L'Attaque contre La Syrie et la Defense de Notre Empire', *Le Figaro,* 9 June 1941, p. 2.
[78]AN F/41/266, Guide: Les Thèmes de Propagande, no date.

After a month of fighting, on 10 July, General Dentz requested armistice terms. Even in this action, he refused to recognise the Free French movement, insisting that he would negotiate only with the British. Churchill complied, informing British Minister of State in Cairo Oliver Lyttleton that it was imperative that armistice terms were signed, even if this meant excluding the Free French.[79] Armistice terms were concluded on 12 July between General Wilson and Dentz's representative, General Joseph de Verdilhac. They were ratified two days later. De Gaulle was furious by this turn of events. Churchill attributed his anger to his failure to gain recognition for the Free French movement as the legitimate voice of France. The armistice signed on 12 July still listed de Verdilhac as the representative of the French government, rather than the Vichy government.[80] De Gaulle's frustration showcased the challenges associated with constructing his movement as the legitimate French nation. It also illustrated just how quickly notions of legitimacy could be challenged and undermined through words and actions.

Conclusion

The establishment of Marshal Pétain's metropolitan government and Charles de Gaulle's Free French movement in June 1940 set the stage for arguments over which group represented authentic French interests and the legitimate French nation. For both the Vichy government and the Free French, rhetoric played a central role as a tool to establish its own or contest its rival's legitimacy. The range of rhetorical techniques deployed by each side also showed how legal, moral and historic arguments could be combined to construct a particular notion of 'Frenchness'.

The issue of legitimacy was not confined to rhetorical spats. Respective Vichy and Free French claims were also fought through pitched battles over French colonial territory. Here, empire became a strategic resource. For de Gaulle, imperial territory gave his movement a physical capital, material resources and manpower – tangible tools with which to wage war. For Vichy, empire was also a source of material resources and a potential bargaining chip in its relations with the Axis powers. For both players, empire was also a powerful symbol of legitimacy. When battles over colonial territory did take place, they tested the rhetorical frameworks that each side had established.

In September 1940 Vichy troops triumphed over Anglo-Gaullist forces at Dakar. The willingness of Governor General Boisson and his troops to defend their garrison against any threats strengthened the image of Vichy's imperial sovereignty and damaged Free French prestige. In the Levant states in June and July 1941 Vichy troops again resisted against Anglo-Gaullist incursions. This time they were not successful. Losing claim to French mandated Syria and Lebanon was a blow to Vichy's prestige. However, the reality of Britain's strategic interests in the Middle East introduced a

[79]TNA WO 216/10, Note, Churchill to Lyttleton, 12 July 1941.
[80]TNA PREM 3/422/6, Cypher Telegram, Churchill to Lyttleton, July 1941.

new threat to de Gaulle's legitimacy. His attempts to shore up French prestige and influence in the Levantine mandates now had to contend with British interests, which were guarded by superior quantities of British material and manpower.

Debates over the legitimacy of Vichy and the Free French that began in 1940 continued to play a central role even after Vichy lost much of its credibility after the German occupation of the Southern zone in November 1942, and even into the post-war period. In August 1944 de Gaulle passed an ordinance declaring that the Free French movement had represented the Republic since 1940.[81] This eagerness to confirm the illegality of the Vichy government was born out of a desire to banish the men of Vichy from the French nation and from the understanding of what it meant to be French.

The debates over French legitimacy, which were begun in 1940, were far from finished.

[81]Julian Jackson, 'Historians and the Nation in Contemporary France', in Berger, Donovan and Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories*, p. 240.