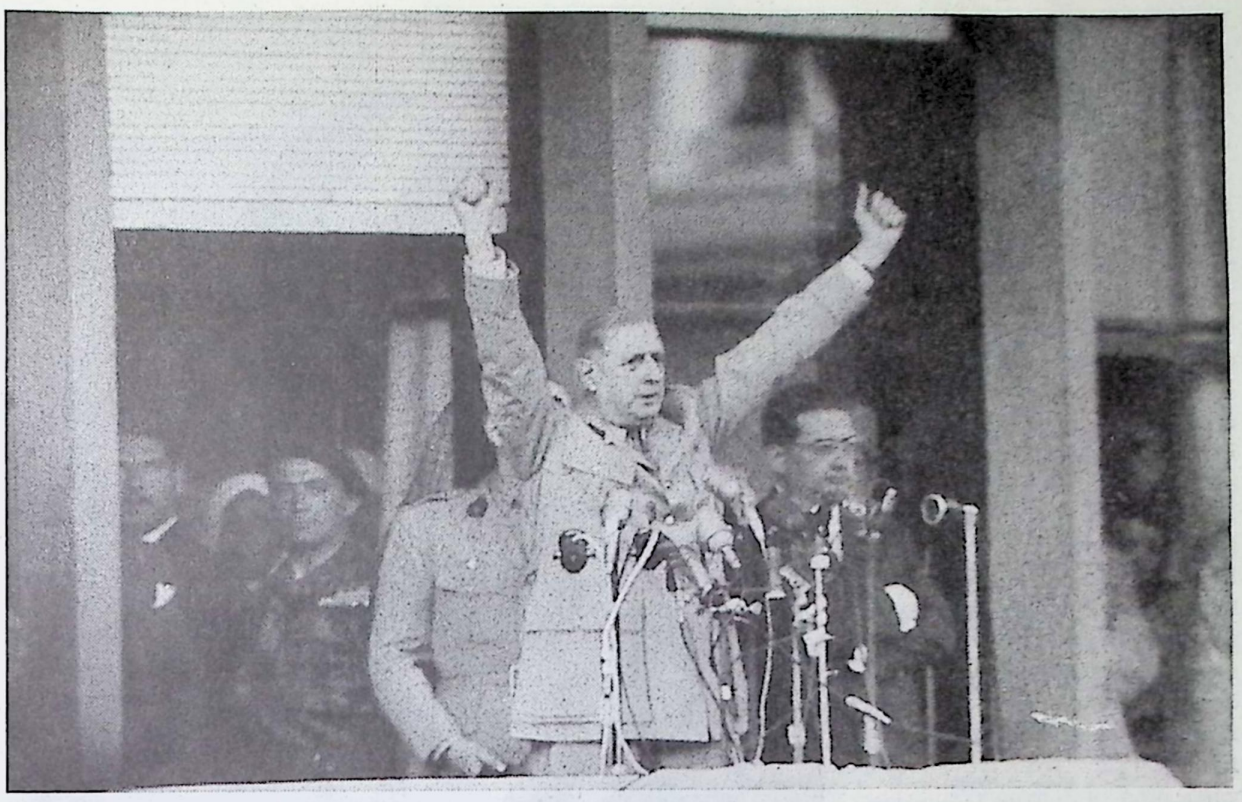




treason. General de Gaulle (top, right) commuted his sentence to life imprisonment, on account of both his advanced years and his past services to France. There were people to whom Petain was no collaborator, but the shield to De Gaulle's sword.

Pierre Laval, the prime minister of Vichy France, had also held high political office before the war. He was found guilty of high treason after a hurried trial, and executed. Paul Touvier was found guilty of collusion and treason, and sentenced to death in absentia in 1946. He remained in hiding until pardoned by President Pompidou in 1971, a decision which incensed many Frenchmen. Fresh charges of crimes against humanity were levveled against him in 1973. Again he escaped and was not apprehended until 1989. In April 1994 he was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison. Maurice Papon was a Gaullist politician. He was vested with the Legion of Honour by de Gaulle in 1961. In 1981, there were media reports that he had deported Jews to internment camps during the Vichy regime. Following a long investigation and legal battle, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison for crimes against humanity in 1998. He was released at the age of 92 for health reasons in September 2002.

Robert Brasillach was a writer of promise, who, as the editor of a hard line fascist weekly, used his considerable skills to support Nazi policies and collaboration. He was tried in January 1945 for collaboration and condemned to death. A group of 59 eminent writers, including Camus, Mauriac, Paul Valery, Collette Cocteau, and Jean Anouilh, addressed a petition to Gen. de Gaulle seeking clemency for Brasillach. They did not share his politics, but felt that a civilised nation should not shoot its writers, more so when others more directly responsible for atrocities were treated lightly. De Gaulle declined to intervene.

There were a few trials in Britain too. John Amery's father was a cabinet colleague of Churchill. The two were at Harrow at the same time. John was stridently anti-communist and pro-fascist. It was his brainchild that British POWs be recruited for a volunteer force to fight communists. He also made propaganda broadcasts over radio from Germany. He was found guilty of treason in 1945 and condemned to death. But Churchill did not seek clemency for the son of an old colleague. The story of William Joyce is similar. He had made propaganda broadcasts to Britain from Germany, and had also tried to recruit POWs for the so-called British Free Corps. He was executed for high treason in 1946.Certainly, the treatment of Brasillach, Amery and Joyce, differed greatly from that of Field Marshals Kesselring, Von Rundstedt and Von Manstein.

The British Raj considered members of the INA to be collaborators or war criminals, a view not shared by countless Indians. For them, the