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Patrons résistants? French industrialists during the Second World War

Drawing on previously unexploited archival sources from the Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie (CORSID), the article challenges the patron résistant thesis which has been widely accepted in the literature on Vichy France. It advances several important counter-arguments. It questions the motives of industrialists who undermined attempts to send French workers to Germany and shows that these actions were initially taken with the tacit support of the Vichy government and were motivated primarily by business interests. Drawing on post-war production figures, this article also challenges the claim that lower output during the war was due to conscious under-production by industrialists. Finally, it demonstrates that the handful of industrialists who allowed the Resistance to sabotage their factories were not motivated by resistance but were in fact blackmailed into such acts with threats by the Resistance. Based on original research, this article challenges the established view of the patron résistant by arguing that none of these industrialists' actions should be considered as resistance.

The role of French industrialists during the Second World War, and the extent to which they may have collaborated with Nazi Germany, has been one of the most significant debates related to the 'dark years'. The historiography on the French economy and particularly French industry under Vichy has been especially active over the past quarter century. For decades after the end of the Second World War, the French economy under Vichy was the subject of relatively few studies.ⁱ The 1990s, however, saw a proliferation of important works that re-evaluated the French economy during the war and particularly the role of industrialists in Vichy's and indeed the Third Reich's economy.ⁱⁱ Further publications on business under Vichy, particularly those associated with the CNRS research group *Les entreprises françaises sous l'Occupation*, have provided significant studies of a range of French industries during the war.ⁱⁱⁱ

One of the most important developments in this field has had to do with the association of industrialists and collaboration with the Nazi regime. In the immediate post-war period, industrialists were widely depicted as having profited from supplying the Reich with crucial products, while being equally complicit in the large-scale deportation of French workers to factories in Germany, particularly the Service du travail obligatoire (STO) set up in 1943. As one typically denunciatory article from *L'Humanité* put it in February 1945, 'big industrialists, the magnates of trusts... wallowed in the muck of collaboration' for four years.^{iv} De Gaulle expressed the sentiment in a slightly more polite formulation: at his first meeting with industrialists after the Liberation, he wryly noted 'I did not see many of you in London, gentlemen'.^v

While this portrait of the *patron collaborateur* endured well into the post-war period, a number of studies published in the 1990s provided a more nuanced evaluation. Frank, Flonneau and Mencherini proposed three distinct categories of collaboration in which industrialists engaged: *collaborationisme économique* (meaning helping the German war effort out of ideological support for Nazi Germany), *collaboration-profit* (meaning producing for the Reich motivated by the prospect of handsome profits), and *collaboration-survie* (meaning producing for the Reich in order to protect one's factory from seizure or closure by the Nazi authorities).^{vi} While these categories continue to be used by some historians, others quickly sought to refine them further.^{vii} In his landmark study published soon afterwards, Philippe Burrin advanced the notion of *accommodation* to describe the actions of industrialists in occupied France. For Burrin, supplying Germany with industrial products in order to preserve one's factory was not in itself collaboration, but rather accommodation, specifically *accommodation contrainte*.^{viii} In an influential article as well as a book chapter, François Marcot agreed that such coerced actions must not be considered as collaboration, and suggested the term *adaptation-contrainte* to describe the phenomenon.^{ix}

More significantly, Marcot not only argued that it was inaccurate to describe most industrialists' actions as collaboration, but advanced the idea of the *patron résistant*. In the aftermath of the Liberation, many industrialists claimed to have engaged in acts of resistance on the grounds that they had opposed the deportation of French workers to German factories, and that they had insisted on focusing on civilian rather than military production for the Germans. To this list Marcot added the 'smoking gun' of the *patron résistant* thesis: Jean-Pierre Peugeot, the president of the eponymous automotive company, was in contact with a member of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and tacitly supported the sabotage of machinery in Peugeot's factories by the Resistance.^x A similar example has been found by Christophe Capuano for the steel industry, focusing on the actions of Charles Schneider.^{xi}

Since the publication of Marcot's influential work, the *patron résistant* argument has been applied to a wide range of sectors.^{xii} Despite its pervasiveness, however, this thesis has thus far largely escaped critical scrutiny; this article is the first thorough re-evaluation of the notion of the *patron résistant*. By reassessing each component of the argument in turn, this study advances the argument that none of the actions of industrialists hailed as *résistants* in the literature can accurately be described as resistance.

In re-evaluating these claims, this article draws largely on previously unused archival sources, particularly the detailed minutes of the meetings of the Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie (CORSID) between 1940 and 1944.^{xiii} Created in November 1940, CORSID consisted of four industrialists and was granted wide-ranging powers to coordinate

production and allocate resources to all steel firms in France. The Organisation Committees (*comités d'organisation*) were the central pillars of the industrial system set up by Vichy in 1940, and the industrialists who ran the committees were in constant contact with employers from virtually every firm in the industry. Given how well-informed members of the committee were about the minutiae of the industry, and how candidly they discussed a wide range of issues at their meetings, these minutes from throughout the war constitute a uniquely enlightening source for re-evaluating the *patron résistant* argument. These documents are particularly valuable as the official archives of the Organisation Committees were destroyed, which has presented an obstacle to historians of French industry during the Second World War.^{xiv} The newly discovered minutes of CORSID's meetings, preserved in the archives of the Marine et Homécourt steel firm, thus reveal in unprecedented detail the substance of the discussions around the French steel industry under Vichy. Based on these debates, and supplemented by a wide range of other state and private archival materials, this article reassesses the *patron résistant* argument while improving our understanding of the Organisation Committees under Vichy. While this study focuses on industrialists, its conclusions regarding the actions of individuals and the use of terms such as 'collaboration' and 'resistance' to describe them contribute to broader debates on Vichy France.^{xv}

I

The Organisation Committees were among the first economic institutions established by the Vichy regime.^{xvi} Following the Fall of France in June 1940, German authorities quickly began plundering French factories and placing orders directly with firms, to the consternation of industrialists and French officials alike. By the beginning of August 1940, Vichy had developed a solution, 'confirm[ing] that the French Government desires that relations between French industry and the German authorities be centralised, for each industry, by an [Organisation Committee]. This will facilitate the establishment of a common plan to make full use of French and German means of production and to distribute raw materials'.^{xvii} It also confirmed that 'the French Government is ready to collaborate with the German Government to organise a planned economy for Continental Europe'.^{xviii} On 16 August 1940, this readiness was manifested when Pétain's government passed the law creating 'Organisation Committees'. These new bodies, created for each branch of industry, would be responsible for receiving production orders from the German authorities and allocating the orders along with the concomitant raw materials to the various French firms. Before a single CO was up and running, Jacques Barnaud, Chief of Staff to the Minister for Industrial Production, wrote to industrialists explaining that 'the negotiations taken' by the Organisation Committees 'must fit into the framework of a Franco-German economy'.^{xix} The impromptu and inefficient plunder of June and July was thenceforth replaced by an organised system of production for

Germany. From the very beginning, the COs were meant to help coordinate French and German industrial production and to contribute to the Reich's economy while it carried on its war with Britain.^{xx}

The Organisation Committee for Steel was formally established on 9 November 1940, coinciding with the dissolution of the pre-war employers' association, the Comité des forges. By this time Alsace-Lorraine, a crucial centre of French steel production, had been *de facto* annexed to the Reich, while the industrialised regions in Nord and Pas-de-Calais were administered by the German authorities in Brussels. As such, CORSID's jurisdiction extended to the Non-Occupied southern zone, which included the town of Vichy, and the Occupied Zone of northern and western France. The committee consisted of three industrialists from some of France's larger steel companies while its president, Jules Aubrun, was poached from the Lazard Bank, where he had been working as a consulting engineer. One of the four, Léon Daum, had in fact accepted an invitation from Pierre Laval, Pétain's deputy, to be Minister for Industrial Production in the first Vichy Cabinet, although the offer was ultimately withdrawn; in the end Daum was appointed to the Conseil national, a consultative assembly created in January 1941 as an alternative to the dissolved parliament, in addition to his position with CORSID.^{xxi}

A report prepared by the Comité français de Libération nationale (CFLN) in 1943 later observed that 'the Vichy Government was careful to appoint to the Organisation Committees [...] individuals notorious for their devotion to the cause of the so-called National Revolution', Vichy's ideological project.^{xxii} While the CFLN's assessment was hardly unbiased, it does seem to be the case that the individuals who accepted positions in the nascent Organisation Committees at least initially supported the new regime and were willing to work within the framework whose stated goals included forging a 'Franco-German economy'. As industrialists, however, they were also motivated by business reasoning, namely considerations of what would be best for their firms and their branch of industry as a whole. In the months and years following the creation of CORSID, these two motivations sometimes clashed as the Vichy Government pursued Franco-German cooperation by pooling both labour and industrial production.

One of the most common claims made by industrialists immediately after the war in their attempt to prove their alleged 'acts of resistance' against the Reich was that they protected workers in the factories from the STO. Marcot has calculated that roughly two-thirds of metalworking industrialists in the Paris region claimed to have shielded their workers from this loathed scheme, presenting this as 'patriotic', 'anti-German', and even 'resistance'.^{xxiii}

Following the return of Pierre Laval as Head of Government in Vichy in April 1942, labour deportations were institutionalised in a series of initiatives, beginning with the so-called *Relève*. Under this scheme, launched in June 1942, France agreed to send workers to Germany in exchange for the release of French POWs interned in the Reich; one POW was to be released for every three French workers sent to Germany. This was followed by Vichy's establishment of the labour draft in September 1942, which conscripted workers across France to work in the Reich. Finally, in February 1943, the STO was put in place. In total, approximately 650,000 French workers were sent to Germany.^{xxiv}

How did the members of the Organisation Committees respond to these schemes? Consulting the minutes of CORSID's meetings, what is striking is not just how ardently French steel industrialists opposed the idea of sending French workers to Germany, but indeed how early their opposition to such plans began. Already in March 1941, well over a year before the *Relève* was instituted and nearly two full years before the creation of the STO in France, the Organisation Committee for Steel heard complaints about German attempts to recruit temporarily unemployed workers from French steel firms. German firms offered French workers higher wages and better food if they were willing to work in Germany voluntarily. In some cases, the occupiers took matters into their own hands and assigned workers to German construction projects on French soil. The German authorities in Brittany, for example, allocated workers from the Hennebont steel firm who were 'not very busy' to work on the construction of a German U-Boat base in nearby Lorient. Léon Daum encouraged employers to 'prepare for the possibility of employing workers for general work'. 'We mustn't be lacking in ideas when we are suddenly faced with the question of unemployment', warned Daum, as 'the witnesses of the occupying army are keeping an eye on the availability of our personnel'.^{xxv} As the German authorities showed their willingness to poach workers on the grounds that they were 'not very busy', CORSID went to great efforts to conceal any underemployment in the country's steel firms.

Over the winter of 1940-41, the shortage of raw materials and particularly coal was causing the production of steel across France to drop. Unable to match pre-war production levels due to the lack of coal, factories experienced periods of underemployment. This was noticed by the occupation authorities, who requested that firms provide lists of workers who had 'become available' due to the decline in industrial activity. They also pressed firms to increase the working week to forty or even forty-eight hours so that more workers could 'become available' for work in Germany. Yet CORSID resisted such pressures as best they could. Daum explained to other industrialists that 'labour that might appear to be surplus must automatically be taken on by us', even if this meant assigning them to tend the factories' gardens or to clear nearby wooded areas. Daum stressed that 'we must get a head start to ensure that any presence of surplus labour

not be revealed. We must also have the charade ready for any situations that may result from the precariousness of our supply of coal'.^{xxvi} As Daum made clear, an improvement in the provision of coal would restore production levels in factories, but only so long as they still had the necessary labour force.

One important revelation from the minutes of CORSID's meetings is that the industrialists' position on maintaining French workers in their given factories was backed by the Vichy government. Henri Coqueugnot, the Director for Steel in the Ministry for Industrial Production who attended CORSID's meetings, agreed with Daum's advice to industrialists and reiterated that firms 'must develop further initiatives capable of preventing the unemployment of their personnel'.^{xxvii} At this stage, the efforts of steel industrialists to conceal unemployment from the German authorities enjoyed Vichy's tacit support.

Industrialists' attempts to conceal excess labour became increasingly difficult as shortages of raw materials worsened. By March 1941, steel firms had an average working week of between thirty-two and thirty-four hours, being as low as twenty-four hours in some areas.^{xxviii} The following winter, it was admitted that the piecemeal tasks in factory gardens and wooded areas 'appear to be fairly weak compared to the degree of unemployment'.^{xxix} Such efforts were handed a far greater challenge with the establishment of the *Relève* in June 1942.

CORSID's initial reaction to the *Relève* was relatively sanguine. Its Vice-President, Eugène Roy, noted in July 1942 that the situation 'leaves us hope that we will not see calls for labour that are too great'.^{xxx} Following the imposition of the labour draft by Laval's government in September 1942, however, CORSID noted that 'important departures are underway in most factories', a trend that only worsened with the establishment of the STO in France on 16 February 1943.^{xxxi} The minutes of CORSID's meeting held that very day are enlightening. While the Ministry for Industrial Production had supported the industrialists' earlier attempts to prevent the departure of French workers for Germany, the ministry's position in February 1943 was markedly different. Robert Baboin, who had replaced Henri Coqueugnot as Director for Steel in Vichy's ministry, pressed industrialists to 'inform him of workers who are not employed in their area of specialty', adding that 'the answers received so far are insufficient'.^{xxxii} It was clear to all that such information would be used to compile lists of workers who would be deported to Germany. Yet the industry continued to frustrate such requests; Baboin reiterated his request in April that year, grumbling that most firms had still not provided the lists demanded months earlier.^{xxxiii}

While steel industrialists stalled in surrendering the names of workers ripe for deportation, CORSID appealed to the Vichy and the German authorities alike for various exemptions. In May 1943, Daum lobbied the Ministry for Industrial Production to have steel recognised as ‘an essential industry to the economic life of the country’, which would entail being ‘exempt from all departures [of workers] that are not immediately compensated’ with substitutes, which would keep the number of workers relatively constant.^{xxxiv} Other attempts were made to ensure that deported workers were replaced by others, to ensure that factories’ labour forces remained steady. Interestingly, there are several cases of deported French workers being replaced with workers from Tunisia by the German authorities.^{xxxv}

What, then, does this overview of steel industrialists’ attitudes towards labour deportations under Vichy add to the debate over the *patron résistant*? One important revelation is just how early industrialists’ opposition to the departure of workers from their factories manifested itself. Previous studies that have noted employers’ attempts to thwart labour deportations focus on the STO, set up in February 1943.^{xxxvi} Yet the minutes of CORSID’s meetings reveal that such opposition existed two years earlier than that. More surprisingly, these early ‘charades’ to hide surplus labour to keep workers in France were known to and backed by Vichy’s Ministry for Industrial Production. Only later, following the establishment of the *Relève* under Laval in June 1942 and the labour draft three months later, did industrialists find themselves at odds with the ministry.

While industrialists claimed after the war that trying to foil the departure of French workers for Germany amounted to resistance, it is necessary to consider the motivations of industrialists during the war. The overriding preoccupation that emerges from their discussions over the course of the war is the maintenance of their productive capacity and particularly of their labour force. The inconsistency of coal deliveries throughout the war meant that production levels varied significantly from one month to the next, even though the trajectory over the four years was one of decline. This emphasis on preserving the productive capacity of one’s factory can be seen by industrialists’ efforts to receive replacement workers in compensation for those lost to the labour draft. While industrialists claimed after the war that attempts to protect their workers from deportation to Germany were patriotic and even acts of resistance, their preoccupation seems instead to have been to maintain a stable labour force; hence industrialists were satisfied to receive replacement workers from North Africa or elsewhere. Rather than revealing French workers being shielded by a *patron résistant*, the evidence instead suggests that employers were more interested in preserving a steady number of relatively interchangeable workers to ensure the viability of the firm. If we accept Marcot’s definition of resistance as ‘a voluntary and illegal action aimed at hindering the objectives of the occupier or their collaborators’, then it is clear that CORSID’s actions

fall short of resistance.^{xxxvii} None of their actions, ranging from hiding unemployment to refusing to hand over lists of workers in a timely fashion, were illegal, and their motivation seems to have been to protect their factory and retain their labour force. Indeed, the fact that the industrialists' ruses to prevent the removal of French workers were known to and, at least until 1942, quietly supported by Vichy make it hard to claim that this was 'resistance'. Nevertheless, the archival sources should conclusively dispel the claims made by some in the early post-war years that workers were deported 'because of the Organisation Committees'.^{xxxviii}

II

Along with the allegedly patriotic sheltering of French workers from the labour draft, the other most common assertion made by post-war industrialists attempting to exonerate themselves was that they minimised the production of military goods for Germany, insisting instead on civilian production.^{xxxix} This claim can be dealt with relatively easily. Throughout the occupation, Germany preferred that military goods be produced within the Reich rather than in occupied territories such as France: in 1943, ninety-one per cent of total armaments production for the Reich took place on German soil, with France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the General Government (Poland), Denmark, Norway, and Serbia combined providing a mere nine per cent. This preference was in part due to worries that sabotage and Allied bombardments would be more likely in occupied territories such as France.^{xl} As a result, the majority of orders made by German firms with French factories were for civilian rather than military goods, a reality determined not by self-declared *patrons résistants* but instead by the policies of the Third Reich. As early as 1941, firms adopted German rather than French specifications for a variety of civilian products, since they were intended overwhelmingly for the German market. CORSID set up an office to oversee the 'standardisation' of steel products, which included new 'standard dimensions' for steel products, which were in fact the German dimensions.^{xli} By June 1943 CORSID provided German firms with an extensive list of steel products made to German specifications which could be ordered from French factories.^{xlii}

Later that summer, France's contribution to the German war economy was confirmed with the Speer-Bichelonne agreement. Jean Bichelonne, then Vichy's Minister for Industrial Production, met the German Minister for Armaments and War Production, Albert Speer, in Berlin in September 1943 to discuss France's place in the 'new European order'. Speer made it clear that 'the German government would prefer to place orders in France for consumer goods and military equipment, rather than armaments', as this would allow factories in Germany 'to stop production of certain civilian goods entirely so as to further develop [Germany's] armaments programme'.^{xliii} Bichelonne impressed upon Speer that 'this joint endeavour entails complete trust between the two

administrations'; indeed, Germany's decision to shift important civilian production to French factories implied a degree of interdependence between the two countries.^{xliv} Bichelonne also noted that by taking on an even greater share of German civilian production, France was offering 'economic support for the German war effort'.^{xlv} Crucially, this contribution to the Reich's war effort came with an alluring promise for industrialists: all factories producing civilian goods for Germany under the agreement would be exempted from labour drafts. Producing more for the Reich thus allowed industrialists to maintain their pool of workers; similarly enticing was the promise that Germany would provide the raw materials for the execution of these orders, which would ensure that French factories kept running. Not surprisingly, the Speer-Bichelonne agreement was welcomed by CORSID.

It is in this context that industrialists' post-war claims, which have been largely accepted in some of the recent literature, must be understood. Focusing on civilian production rather than producing armaments was not in itself an act of resistance, or even evidence of opposition to the Reich. On the contrary, it was part of a Franco-German agreement whereby civilian production in France constituted 'economic support for the German war effort', as it allowed the Reich to intensify its own armaments production drive. While this does not mean that industrialists producing civilian goods for the German market were collaborators, it would be equally inappropriate to claim such actions were resistance.

A related claim in the existing *patron résistant* literature is that industrialists deliberately restrained (*freiner*) production so that the Germans received as little as possible from French factories. In the case of Peugeot, Jean-Louis Loubet has argued that the firm's dramatic drop in output between 1938 and 1944 – production plummeted from 3,396 vehicles per month in 1938 compared to an average of 489 under the Occupation – 'speaks for itself' and that Peugeot engaged in '*patron-résistance*'.^{xlvi} For Marcot, this drop in production amounted to a 'failure of the exploitation of the Peugeot factories' that can be explained by the '*mauvaise volonté*' of the directors of the company.^{xlvii} Christophe Capuano has similarly argued that the Schneider steel firm in Creusot 'restrained production' out of patriotic opposition to the Reich.^{xlviii}

This under-production thesis is inherently problematic. First of all, it is largely based on a comparison of production figures from before and during the war. Yet it is utterly unsurprising that production was significantly lower after 1940: even proponents of this argument recognise that myriad factors, from worsening shortages of raw materials and labour to the intensifying bombardment of factories by the Allies, all contributed to the decline in output.^{xlix} In such a context, attributing a drop in production to the undeclared political sympathies of company directors requires significantly more evidence.

Confusing matters further are the explanations of industrialists themselves. For obvious reasons, during the war they never claimed to be deliberately restraining production, lest they be subjected to punishment by the German authorities; for equally obvious reasons, countless industrialists claimed after the war that they *had* consciously under-produced in an attempt to exonerate themselves. The most critical analysis of alleged under-production during the war is Talbot Imlay's excellent study of Ford France; he concludes that 'a circumstantial case can be made' that the automotive firm under-produced in 1943-44, that is to say, they produced less than they could have for the Germans, in large part because they were able to get away with it. He nevertheless stresses that 'this under-production should not be viewed as resistance', since the company 'was never opposed in principle to producing for the Germans'.¹ Again, if an act of resistance is defined as 'a voluntary and illegal action aimed at hindering the objectives of the occupier or their collaborators', then supplying goods to the Nazis at a less-than-optimal rate falls short of the criteria.

In the case of the steel industry, the decline in production seems to have been determined overwhelmingly by the shortage of raw materials, particularly coal. In 1939 France was the world's largest importer of coal, relying on the United Kingdom for a full third of French domestic consumption.^{li} The severing of trade between the two erstwhile allies following the Fall of France thus deprived French industry of an irreplaceable source of coal. Germany's redrawing of the map of France in 1940 – incorporating much of Lorraine, with France's most modern coal mines, into the Reich and appending Nord and Pas-de-Calais, the site of France's largest coal deposits responsible for two-thirds of domestic production in the 1930s, to Belgium – aggravated the situation further still.^{lii} By using its existing stock of raw materials, the French steel industry was impressively able to match the production levels of 1938 in the last quarter of 1940.^{liii} Once these stocks had been depleted, however, production declined as deliveries of coal from Germany never came close to matching the pre-war coal supply. By May 1941, CORSID noted that 'factories are currently surviving day-to-day and even the slightest failure [in coal deliveries] leads to stoppages' in production.^{liv} By the summer of 1942, industrialists feared that, 'if the reduction in coal allocations remains [at current levels] or worsens, it will be impossible to avoid reducing the number of factories in operation'.^{lv} While coal allocations to the Non-Occupied Zone at that time were 34,000 tonnes, that figure had fallen to a mere 7,500 tonnes by the spring of 1944.^{lvi} Under such circumstances, it is self-evident that steel production dropped considerably. By March 1943, steel production across the whole of France had declined by forty per cent compared to 1938 levels, and production dropped off further in the following months.^{lvii} To attribute such drops in production to deliberate under-production on the part of industrialists instead of the steadily worsening availability of raw materials is, at best, to focus on a secondary cause;

even the most ardently pro-Nazi industrialist would have found it impossible to approach pre-war production levels under such conditions.

Proponents of the *patron résistant* thesis sometimes take the consequences of this well-documented collapse in the provision of raw materials as evidence of deliberate under-production. To take one example, it has been argued that the failure of the Director General of the Schneider steel firm to light an additional blast furnace in 1944, and later to shut off the steel mill's largest blast furnace in Creusot, were patriotic acts of defiance against the occupier aimed at minimising production for the Reich.^{lviii} The minutes of CORSID's meetings, however, document the shortage of raw materials facing Schneider in the region. The month before Schneider had to shut off its largest blast furnace, CORSID observed that 'the stocks [of cast iron] have decreased [and] factories with Martin blast furnaces in operation are encountering difficulties as a result of their provisions in cast iron'.^{lix} The following month, CORSID confirmed that 'Creusot had to stop one of its blast furnaces because of a lack of cast iron'.^{lx} Based on the evidence in the archives of the Organisation Committee for Steel, there is nothing to suggest that the temporary closure of this blast furnace was caused by anything other than the acute shortage of raw materials facing the firm.

One attribute of all existing studies advancing the *patron résistant* narrative is that they only consider the period 1940-1944. While the choice to focus on the Vichy period exclusively makes sense, it nevertheless accentuates the 'parenthesisation' of the Vichy period and removes it from the broader context of French industry in the twentieth century.^{lxi} Extending the scope of the discussion beyond 1944 is particularly instructive. Given that the under-production argument rests on the fact that production was lower in 1943-44 than in 1939, it is worth looking at production levels following the Liberation of France. If under-production in early 1944 was chiefly the result of patriotic opposition to Germany, it would be reasonable to assume that the Liberation of France and the concomitant change of regime would lead to an immediate increase in production, as the *patrons résistants* stopped consciously under-producing. Simply put, this did not happen. Indeed, steel production *worsened* over 1944, with production for November and December 1944 amounting to a mere forty per cent of that for November 1943, when under-production was meant to have been at its height.^{lxii} Of course, these figures only tell part of the story: while Creusot was liberated in September 1944, November and December of that year saw intense fighting in the important steel-producing region of Lorraine. Yet even by November 1945, six months after the end of the war in Europe, blast furnaces remained unlit due to a lack of coal.^{lxiii} Meanwhile France's largest trade union confederation, the CGT, criticised the low levels of steel production, which were blamed on the lack of coal.^{lxiv} Ultimately, it was only in 1949 that French steel output matched 1939 levels.^{lxv} The under-production argument claims that low production levels

in the first half of 1944 can be explained by patriotic opposition to the Vichy regime and the Reich rather than by the severe shortage of raw materials, among other reasons, even though production levels continued to drop following the re-establishment of a republican government in France. While it is impossible to conclusively prove whether a particular firm did or did not consciously under-produce, the fact that production fell rather than increased following the Liberation suggests that the overall effect of under-production, if it occurred at all, was negligible.

A related component of the *patron résistant* argument is that some firms, including Schneider, scattered production across several different factories to be less efficient and thereby restrained production for Germany.^{lxvi} Indeed, while in Berlin to meet with Speer, Bichelonne discussed the issue with Hans Kehrl, one of Speer's closest collaborators. Kehrl was critical of the tendency among French industrialists to 'spread orders [across its factories] far more than is necessary', insisting that 'it would be much more practical to concentrate production in the hands of a small number of firms'.^{lxvii} Yet Bichelonne defended the dispersion of production across factories, provided the individual factories made efficient use of coal.^{lxviii} Moreover, this proved to be the best defence against Allied bombing: the concentration of production in a small number of easily targeted factories would risk paralysing entire industries if they were subjected to bombardment. The fact that two major aerial attacks adversely affected output in Schneider's factories in Creusot affirms the soundness of the strategy of dispersing production across several sites.^{lxix}

Interestingly, industrialists revived this argument in 1951 with Jean Monnet, then head of French economic planning and in the midst of setting up the European Coal and Steel Community. Monnet suggested, as Kehrl had eight years earlier, that steel production in France should be concentrated among a smaller number of larger firms. Industrialists in the Loire adamantly opposed such plans, insisting that 'in the eventuality of armed conflict [...] dispersal [of factories] is still, after all, the best means of defence', adding that maintaining a greater number of smaller factories was thus 'an imperative of National Defence'.^{lxx} While this line of argument was less compelling in the early 1950s than it would have been during the war, it does demonstrate that steel industrialists were eager to keep existing factories running and resisted efforts to concentrate production in fewer but larger sites, regardless of whether the push towards concentration came from Speer's office in 1943 or from Monnet's and the French republican government in 1951.

Extending the frame of reference beyond 1944 for this study reveals one further contribution to this debate: the evolution of the allegation of under-production. Immediately after the Fall of France, Republican and Vichy figures alike alleged that industrialists in 1939-40 had failed to mobilise sufficiently and 'refused to accept the sacrifices necessary to create a true war economy'.^{lxxi} High-profile industrialists like

François de Wendel thus had to spend their first months under the Vichy regime denying that they had under-produced during the *drôle de guerre* and thereby contributed to France's defeat.^{lxxii} What is particularly interesting is that industrialists who had strenuously denied charges of under-production for the period 1939-40 made recourse to that same alleged activity when trying to exonerate themselves in 1944-45. If under-production implied undermining the regime of the day, then by 1945 it was considered traitorous if committed in 1939-40, yet patriotic if committed in 1943-44.

The charge of under-production quickly resurfaced at the end of the war. While industrialists like Schneider and Peugeot were claiming that they patriotically under-produced under the German occupation, some *résistants*, particularly those associated with the French Communist Party, asserted that these same employers began deliberately under-producing only *after* the Liberation. Speaking in March 1945, Benoît Frachon, who had been one of the leaders of the clandestine French Communist Party during the war, denounced 'the *patrons collaborateurs* who restrained or sabotaged the recovery [of production] after having spent four years producing for the enemy'.^{lxxiii} Industrial production had certainly fallen in the year following the Allied landings of June 1944, and steel production in France for the year 1945 was a mere 1.6 million tonnes compared to 7.9 million tonnes for 1939.^{lxxiv} In this context, restraining or even sabotaging production in the first half of 1944 would be seen as patriotic and even an act of resistance, and was seized upon by industrialists; these same actions, if committed in the latter half of 1944 or the following year, were similarly seized upon by Communist *résistants* to denounce industrialists as collaborators and traitors.

The accusation of under-production lasted well into the post-war era, and re-emerged in the debates surrounding the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in the early 1950s. During a protracted feud with the president of the employers' association for steel – none other than CORSID's President, Jules Aubrun – Jean Monnet alleged that the French steel industry was consciously under-producing in a bid to keep prices of French steel products artificially high. Monnet was pushing for a common market for steel products in Western Europe, which was largely opposed by Aubrun. Yet Monnet's allegations clearly hit a nerve – Aubrun felt obliged to 'formally reject any accusation of restraining production (*freinage*)' by the French steel industry.^{lxxv} While under-production was a charge levelled against industrialists in 1939-1940 and again following the Liberation, it was vehemently denied by industrialists. The post-war claims of industrialists that they deliberately and patriotically restrained production during the Occupation thus represents a curious appropriation and inversion of this perennial attack, and a dimension that has thus far been overlooked in the literature on the *patron résistant*.

The fact that production was significantly lower in 1943-44 than in 1938-39 is by no means conclusive evidence that industrialists consciously under-produced – just as comparing output for 1945 with that for 1939 should not be taken as proof that industrialists traitorously sabotaged France’s recovery immediately following the Occupation. The fact that French industrial output dropped dramatically in 1940, worsened until 1944-45, and in the case of the steel industry only matched pre-war production levels by the end of the decade suggests that any deliberate attempts to slow production for the Germans in 1943-44 had negligible results in terms of overall output. Based on the available archival evidence, it seems that the lack of raw materials that blighted French industry throughout the Occupation and well into the post-war years was the chief cause for this decline, compounded by the increasingly devastating Allied bombing campaign which focused on industrial sites. Historian Philippe Mioche has also pointed out that machinery used by steel firms wore down over the course of the war, which explains in part the declining output during the war and the delay in returning to pre-war production levels.^{lxxvi}

Did some industrialists deliberately restrain production in individual factories, even if this had little impact on the German war effort? In his recent study of Ford France under the Occupation, Talbot Imlay has plausibly argued that the firm produced ‘enough to keep its factories running and to appease the German (and French) authorities, but no more’. With an Allied victory becoming increasingly likely, the firm had little incentive to produce more than was strictly necessary for the Germans. Yet these decisions ‘were never motivated by any principled opposition to the occupiers or by a desire to undermine the German war economy’, and thus ‘did not constitute resistance’.^{lxxvii} This assessment is consistent with what can be observed in the minutes of CORSID’s meetings throughout the war. Opposition to the German authorities was only raised in the context of labour deportations, never in that of producing goods for the German war economy. Indeed, the Organisation Committees were created in large part to coordinate French production for the Reich, and CORSID welcomed the Speer-Bichelonne agreement that was meant to increase France’s contribution to the German war economy. CORSID’s efforts were focused on ensuring that as many of its factories as possible remained in operation – which inevitably involved producing for Germany – although factories had little incentive to maximise production for Germany or to be exceptionally efficient. Whether this can be described as ‘under-production’ is very much open to interpretation, but it is difficult to maintain that producing slightly less than one might have been able to would constitute ‘resistance’.

III

Historians who have advanced the *patron résistant* thesis have at times been ambiguous about whether undermining the STO and under-producing for the Germans truly constituted ‘resistance’ or whether such actions should better be described as ‘patriotic’, ‘opposition’ or ‘reluctance’ to the German authorities.^{lxxviii} Only one action undertaken by French industrialists has been unanimously agreed by these historians to deserve the title of ‘resistance’: the sabotage of factories producing for the German war economy. While very few cases of such action exist, it does seem that a small handful of industrialists were in contact with the organised Resistance and agreed to provide them with information that would allow them to sabotage machinery at their own factories – while the industrialists themselves turned a blind eye – thereby restraining production for the Germans.^{lxxix} Contact was made either through French agents of the British-led Special Operations Executive (SOE) or of the Conseil national de la Résistance (CNR), which in turn were in communication with Charles de Gaulle’s Free France movement (and its successors) and the British authorities.

The most cited example is that of Jean-Pierre Peugeot, who was in touch with a French agent of the SOE and at whose factory a total of 18 different acts of sabotage were committed.^{lxxx} In the steel industry, Charles Schneider was similarly in contact with representatives from the CNR and aided their efforts to sabotage the machinery at his own factory in Creusot.^{lxxxi} For François Marcot, such actions ‘consciously crossed the line of what was lawful and acceptable and entered into resistance’, adding that ‘there is no doubt about [Peugeot’s] joining the Resistance’.^{lxxxii} The fact that certain industrialists were in touch with the Resistance (including French agents of the SOE) and helped its efforts to stop their own factories from supplying the Germans has since been accepted as irrefutable evidence conclusively demonstrating the existence of the *patron résistant*.^{lxxxiii}

Yet this claim has thus far avoided critical scrutiny. In the first instance, it is important to understand the context in which these arrangements with the Resistance were made. In each case, they took place in 1943 and 1944, by which time the ultimate outcome of the war was becoming increasingly clear. In November 1942, the Allies landed in North Africa, establishing a crucial foothold from which the Allies launched the Italian campaign in September 1943. In response to the North African landings, the German authorities invaded what had until that time been the Non-Occupied Zone of southern France, where the Vichy government was based, undermining the regime’s remaining claims to sovereignty. From the viewpoint of industrialists, however, the most important development of this period was the intensification of the Allied bombing campaign in France: roughly one-fifth of all Allied bombs dropped in Europe during the war fell on France, causing a total number of deaths comparable to those caused in Britain by the Luftwaffe during the whole war. This bombing campaign intensified dramatically in 1943

and peaked in the early months of 1944, with industrial sites – particularly factories known to be producing goods for Germany – being key targets.^{lxxxiv}

Peugeot and Schneider both saw their factories suffer several aerial attacks in this period. The Schneider factory at Creusot, for example, was subjected to a bombardment in October 1942, causing more than 350 casualties. A second attack in June 1943 killed more than 360, with nearly 1,000 casualties. While these air raids destroyed the housing of hundreds of factory workers – and also ravaged the local hospital and several schools – industrialists could not ignore the damage inflicted on their firms. The factory buildings at Creusot were severely damaged, as were rolling mills and forging machinery, with the June 1943 bombardment affecting every aspect of production.^{lxxxv} In July 1943, an RAF air raid on the Peugeot factory at Sochaux missed its target and instead devastated the town, causing hundreds of casualties.^{lxxxvi}

It was against this backdrop that the SOE and the CNR entered into contact with Peugeot and Schneider, respectively, with a proposition: their factories would be spared from future bombardment from the Royal Air Force – if the industrialists allowed the Resistance to sabotage machinery in the factories instead. Given the looming threat of more and increasingly destructive bombings, such a deal had obvious advantages. The targeted sabotage of specific machinery would cause far less damage than the indiscriminate aerial attacks to which the factories were being subjected. It would also avoid the complete paralysis of production, as some machines would continue to operate whilst others were being repaired following the sabotage. As such, factories could be kept running and their labour force retained, even while production for Germany dropped. Faced with the threat of further devastation from Allied bombs, Jean-Pierre Peugeot and Charles Schneider accepted the demands of the Resistance and provided them with details that would allow them to sabotage targeted machinery as efficiently as possible.^{lxxxvii}

Not all industrialists accepted the SOE's terms. Most were never given the choice, as it seems that only a small number of firms were even approached by the SOE or the CNR. Others who were contacted, notably Michelin, spurned the proposed deal and were consequently heavily bombed by the RAF.^{lxxxviii} Having given into the Resistance's demands, on the other hand, Peugeot and Schneider were spared any further Allied bombardments for the remainder of the conflict.

Given the stark choice between conceding to the limited sabotage of their machinery or suffering a wholesale aerial bombardment that would be far more devastating for the factory, it is easy to understand why Jean-Pierre Peugeot and Charles Schneider opted for the former. But is it appropriate to label such a choice 'resistance'? Some historians have

used the term *collaboration-survie* to describe industrialists agreeing to produce for the German war economy in order to protect one's factory.^{lxxxix} Given the coercion applied by the SOE and the CNR, with the backing of the RAF, Peugeot and Schneider opted to protect their factories by accepting limited sabotage rather than a more wide-scale destruction of their factories. To the extent that such actions were resistance, I would suggest that they should be more accurately described as *résistance-survie*.

When setting out the *patron résistant* argument, Marcot defines resistance as 'a voluntary and illegal action aimed at hindering the objectives of the occupier or their collaborators'.^{xc} Applying such a definition to the actions of Peugeot and Schneider, however, is problematic for two reasons. First of all, while the sabotage at their factories certainly hindered production for Germany, it is unlikely that these industrialists were motivated primarily by a desire to undermine German objectives; rather, they were seeking to protect their factories from destruction at the hands of the Allies.

Second, and even more doubtful, is the assertion that giving into threats by the Resistance can be considered 'a voluntary action'. Indeed, Marcot insists that the label *collaboration-survie* should be rejected on the grounds that producing for the Germans as a result of coercion is not 'a voluntary action'. He contrasts 'coerced actions to free actions that we may call *intentional*': 'an action necessitated by seeking to survive seems to fall under coercion and, as such, must be distinguished from collaboration, [which is] a free choice based on a political or economic project'. Marcot concludes that '*collaboration, like resistance, must stem from intentionality, from a choice*'.^{xcii} Yet if such a choice cannot be freely made due to coercion – as was the case with Peugeot and Schneider – then it falls short of Marcot's own definition of resistance. Indeed, in his history of the SOE in France, Michael Foot describes the 'deal' presented to Peugeot and other firms as nothing but a 'rare and commendable type of blackmail'.^{xciii}

Existing studies of industrialists' actions during the war have presumed that only the Germans and, to a lesser extent, the Vichy authorities were in a position to threaten the existence of a factory in order to coerce industrialists into contributing to the war effort, regardless of individual industrialists' political convictions. The above re-evaluation of the *patron résistant* argument has shown, however, that the Allies, via the French Resistance, were similarly able to threaten factories in order to coerce industrialists into helping the Allied war effort. By 1943–44, the Germans no longer had a monopoly on the ability to threaten and coerce industrialists. As we have seen, few historians today would consider as genuine collaboration succumbing to German blackmail to safeguard one's factory. Yet the focus of some recent scholarship on qualifying alleged collaboration has led to a skewed view of industrialists, evident in the proliferation of recent studies of *patrons résistants*. Just as business reasoning and the desire to survive the war explain

industrialists accepting to produce for the German war economy, these motivations similarly account for alleged acts of resistance, from undermining the deportation of workers and producing less than desired by the German authorities to accepting targeted sabotage in their factories.

This argument also contributes to the literature on the Resistance in France, building on recent studies which have rightly emphasised the polymorphous nature of Resistance movements and the myriad motivations for individuals taking action against the Vichy regime and the occupiers.^{xciii} This article has revealed a new category, namely committing acts that might be thought to be ‘resistance’ as a direct result of coercion by the Allies and Resistance organisations. While I have suggested *résistance-survie* as a term to describe the phenomenon, one may question whether such actions should be counted as resistance at all. To the extent that resistance and collaboration alike must stem from ‘a voluntary action’, giving into blackmail to protect one’s factory, regardless of whether one is being coerced by the Germans or by the Allies, cannot be considered to be either collaboration or resistance.

The above study has raised another overlooked aspect of how industrialists experienced the Second World War, namely against the growing fear of Allied bombings. Recent studies on the Allied bombardment of France during the war have underlined not only the scale of these aerial attacks – astonishingly, the Allies dropped seven times more tonnes of bombs on France than the Luftwaffe dropped on the United Kingdom during the entire war – but also why these Allied bombardments have largely been expunged from narratives of the Second World War in France. The fact that British and American pilots dropped hundreds of thousands of bombs – and killed tens of thousands of French civilians – sits uneasily alongside narratives of benevolent Allies and malevolent Nazis.^{xciv} This blindspot explains in part why the coercion applied by the Allies on French industrialists has been overlooked and its results misunderstood as genuine resistance.

IV

Drawing on the archives of the Organisation Committee for Steel, this critical re-evaluation of the *patron résistant* thesis has provided a more nuanced assessment of French industrialists’ actions during the war. Throughout the occupation, industrialists were overwhelmingly guided by business reasoning: they wanted to protect their factories and to keep them running as smoothly as possible. This rationale explains why industrialists overwhelmingly opposed the depletion of their work force through labour deportations to Germany. Indeed, as this article has shown, such opposition to the

departure of French workers was detectable in the steel industry from the beginning of 1941, two years before the establishment of the STO, and was initially supported by the Vichy regime. Industrialists resorted to a range of tactics to disguise unemployment in their factories and stalled when asked for lists of their workers ripe for deportation. When unable to prevent the departure of their workers, industrialists were satisfied with replacement workers to restore their dwindling labour force.

If business sense demanded that industrialists oppose the deportation of their workers, it similarly demanded that they produce extensively for the German war economy. Indeed, following the Fall of France and the loss of markets beyond the Continent, producing for Germany was the only viable means of keeping factories running. While such actions have been described as *collaboration-survie*, proponents of the *patron résistant* argument assert that industrialists found ways to ‘resist’ even while supplying the German war economy. Yet these claims, widely accepted in the recent literature, are problematic, as this article has shown. The assertion that industrialists ‘resisted’ by focusing on civilian production rather than armaments is undermined by the fact that the Nazi government explicitly stated its preference that armaments be produced on German soil and accordingly requested that France take on more civilian production to free up capacity in German factories for military output. It is difficult to maintain that producing civilian goods constituted any sort of resistance, when this was precisely what the Reich’s Armaments Minister demanded and was described by Vichy’s Minister for Industrial Production as providing ‘economic support for the [German] war effort’.

A related and much more complex claim is that some French industrialists consciously restrained their production for Germany as a means of hindering the Reich’s war effort. While such an assertion is impossible to either affirm or to disprove conclusively, as its advocates themselves make clear, this article has offered a number of original arguments to cast doubt on the thesis. The steadily worsening shortage of raw materials facing French industry was extensively documented at the time, and in itself accounts for the substantial decline in output from 1940 to 1944. Rather than shortages of raw materials being used as a mere excuse to camouflage deliberate under-production by industrialists, the archival evidence instead suggests that the drastic penury of coal, in particular, accounts for the important drop in production throughout the war. If industrialists did consciously choose to produce slightly less than what the German authorities demanded, the effects of such actions on overall production were minimal, and would have been guided by business reasoning rather than by opposition to the occupiers or to Vichy.

This article has also taken an innovative approach by extending the scope of the study beyond the end of the Vichy regime in 1944. Consequently, it has made several original contributions to the debate. In the first instance, it has shown that steel production

dropped following the Liberation and only belatedly recovered. The fact that production was so low into 1946 casts doubt on the claim that reduced production levels in France were the result of patriotic opposition to a regime that had ceased to exist by September 1944. Similarly, this article challenges the suggestion that dispersing production across a larger number of smaller factories rather than concentrating activity in a small number of large firms was a wartime strategy to restrain production for Germany. The fact that French steel industrialists continued to oppose such initiatives to concentrate production in the early 1950s – this time at the insistence of the French Republican government – suggests that patriotic opposition to the Third Reich does not adequately explain their position. Rather, regardless of the regime in place in France at the time, French steel industrialists were keen to protect their individual factories and their labour force, irrespective of the ideological affiliations of their perceived adversary.

This study has also advanced the first critical examination of the ‘smoking gun’ of the *patron résistant* thesis, namely that a small number of industrialists were in touch with the Resistance and allowed sabotage to be carried out in their factories. It has shown that in each case, industrialists were presented with a sobering choice: they could allow Resistance groups to perform limited sabotage on some of the firm’s machinery, or the factory would be targeted for devastating aerial bombardment by the Allies. Giving into such ‘blackmail’ must not be equated with voluntarily choosing to ‘join the Resistance’, as some historians have argued. While the literature on the French economy under Vichy has so far focused on German coercion to force French industrialists to help their war effort, the examples of Peugeot and Schneider reveal hitherto obscured cases of the Resistance coercing French industrialists to help the Allied war effort. This opens up new possibilities for future research on the competing use of threats and coercion by both sides, particularly as the Allies’ leverage – and their willingness to bomb French targets on a large scale – increased over 1943 and 1944. This article has shown that industrialists were consistently guided by business reasoning in their reactions to such pressures, regardless of whether these came from the Nazis or the Allies.

ⁱ Important early studies include H. Ehrmann, *Organized Business in France* (Princeton, 1957), A. Milward, *The New Order and the French Economy* (Oxford, 1970), J. Freymond, *Le IIIe Reich et la réorganisation économique de l'Europe 1940-1942* (Paris, 1974) and R. Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France: Renovations and Economic Management in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1981).

ⁱⁱ Indicatively, M. Margairaz, *L'Etat, les finances et l'économie. Histoire d'une conversion, 1932-1952* (Paris, 1991), R. Vinen, *The Politics of French Business* (Cambridge, 1991), A. Beltran et al. (eds), *La vie des entreprises sous l'Occupation* (Paris, 1994), R. de Rochebrune and J.-C. Hazéra, *Les patrons sous l'Occupation* (Paris, 1995), D. Fraboulet, *Les Entreprises sous l'Occupation. Le monde de la métallurgie à Saint-Denis* (Paris, 1998), A. Lacroix-Riz, *Industriels et banquiers sous l'Occupation* (Paris, 1999), and O. Dard et al. (eds), *L'Occupation, l'Etat français et les entreprises* (Paris, 2000).

ⁱⁱⁱ H. Joly (ed.), *L'Economie de la zone non occupée, 1940-1942* (Paris, 2007), C. Chevandier and J.-C. Daumas (eds), *Travailler dans les entreprises sous l'Occupation* (Besançon, 2008), O. Dard, H. Joly and P. Verheyde (eds), *Les Entreprises françaises, l'Occupation et le second XXe siècle* (Metz, 2011).

^{iv} 'A Japy, Maurice Thorez fait acclamer les mots d'ordre « S'unir, combattre et travailler »', *L'Humanité*, 2 February 1945.

^v Quoted in J. Jackson, *De Gaulle* (London, 2003), 24.

^{vi} R. Frank, J.-M. Flonneau, R. Menchirini, 'Conclusion' in *La vie des entreprises sous l'occupation*, eds Alain Beltran et al. (Paris, 1994).

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- vii F. Lemmes, 'Collaboration in wartime France, 1940-1944' in *European Review of History : Revue européenne d'histoire*, 15:2 (2008), 157-177.
- viii P. Burrin, *La France à l'heure allemande* (Paris, 1995).
- ix F. Marcot, 'La direction de Peugeot sous l'Occupation : pétainisme, réticence, opposition et résistance' in *Mouvement social*, 189 (1999), 27-46 and 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant ?' in *L'Occupation, l'Etat français et les entreprises*, eds O. Dard et al. (Paris, 2000), 277-292.
- xx Ibid. See also J.-L. Loubet, *La Maison Peugeot* (Paris, 2009).
- xi C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation. Le cas des usines du Creusot' in *Le travail dans les entreprises sous l'Occupation*, eds C. Chevandier and J.-C. Daumas (Besançon, 2007), 187-207.
- xii Cf. Ibid., J.-L. Loubet *La Maison Peugeot*, H. Bonin, 'Peut-on imaginer des banquiers patriotes et résistants (1940-1944) ?' in *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 243:3 (2011), 45-58. The most nuanced articulation of the argument is by Talbot Imlay, who concludes that while Ford France deliberately under-produced for the Germans, this was not technically 'resistance'; see T. Imlay and M. Horn, *The Politics of Industrial Collaboration during World War II. Ford France, Vichy and Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, 2014).
- xiii While these meetings were technically for the Centre-Ouest grouping of CORSID (corresponding to the Non-Occupied Zone), all members of CORSID attended, as did the representative of the Ministry for Industrial Production, and issues were discussed pertaining to all regions of France, including the Occupied Zone. As such, these documents provide an incomparable view of the French steel industry during the Second World War.
- xiv According to Henry Rousso, the archives of the Organisation Committees were preserved until the 1970s in the fort of Montlignon but inexplicably 'disappeared or became unusable'. H. Rousso, 'L'organisation industrielle de Vichy' in *Revue d'histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale et des conflits et des conflits contemporains*, 29 (1979), 27-44.
- xv For two similarly targeted studies that have contributed to these debates, see M.O. Baruch, *Servir l'Etat français: l'administration en France de 1940 à 1944* (Paris, 1997) and Ludivine Broch, *Ordinary Workers, Vichy and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, 2016).
- xvi The only book-length study of the Organisation Committees remains H. Joly (ed.), *Les Comités d'organisation et l'économie dirigée du régime de Vichy* (Paris, 2004). See also L.-A. Brunet, *Forging Europe: Industrial Organisation in France 1940-1952* (Basingstoke, 2017).
- xvii A[rchives] N[ationales], F 60 1539, Letter from Célier to Elmar Michel, 5 August 1940.
- xviii AN, AJ 41 170, 'Note au sujet des relations financières et commerciales entre la France et ses colonies, d'une part, l'empire britannique, l'Egypte, les Colonies néerlandaises et belges, d'autre part', 31 July 1940.
- xix A[rchives] N[ationales du] M[onde du] T[ravail], AS 40 20, 'Note sur l'organisation industrielle', 30 August 1940.
- xx L.-A. Brunet, op.cit. Some historians have argued that the establishment of the Organisation Committees was in fact a patriotic, anti-German gesture that angered the Nazi authorities; see A. Radtke-Delacor, 'La position des comités d'organisation face aux autorités d'occupation: La pomme de discorde des commandes allemandes en 1940-1941' in *Les comités d'organisation*, ed. H. Joly, 63-71.
- xxi AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Groupement du Centre et de l'Ouest. Séance du 29 Janvier 1941'. Daum's participation in the *Conseil national* is also mentioned in M. Cointet, *Le Conseil national de Vichy* (Paris, 1989), 194-5. On Daum's proposed appointment to Cabinet, see R. Belin, *Du Secrétariat de la CGT au Gouvernement de Vichy* (Paris, 1978), 127-8. Cf. P. Baudouin, *The Private diaries of Paul Baudouin* (London, 1948).
- xxii The CFLN was the main Resistance organisation, led by de Gaulle, until it was recast in June 1944 as the Gouvernement provisoire de la République française (GPRF). AN, 3 AG 1 267, 'Exposé des motifs' prepared by the Commissariat au ravitaillement et à la production, 6 July 1943.
- xxiii F. Marcot, 'Qu'est ce qu'un patron résistant?', 281. Cf. D. Fraboulet, *Les Entreprises sous l'Occupation*.
- xxiv B. Garnier and J. Quellien, eds, *La main-d'œuvre française exploitée par le IIIe Reich* (Caen, 2003), P. Arnaud, *Les STO. Histoire des Français requis en Allemagne nazie 1942-1945* (Paris, 2010). This figure includes workers who went to Germany voluntarily, attracted by the prospect of higher wages.

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- ^{xxv} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Groupement Centre-Ouest. Réunion du 18 mars 1941'.
- ^{xxvi} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Groupement Centre-Ouest. Réunion du 29 avril 1941'.
- ^{xxvii} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 27 août 1941'.
- ^{xxviii} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Groupement du Centre-Ouest. Réunion du 18 mars 1941'.
- ^{xxix} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Réunion du Groupe Centre-Ouest du 21 janvier 1942'.
- ^{xxx} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Réunion du Groupe Centre-Ouest du 15 juillet 1942'.
- ^{xxxi} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 16 février 1943'.
- ^{xxxii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxiii} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 13 juillet 1943'.
- ^{xxxiv} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 18 mai 1943'.
- ^{xxxv} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 15 juin 1943'. Workers from North Africa were sent to the factories of Guérigny and Imphy, both in Nièvre (Bourgogne).
- ^{xxxvi} Richard Vinen has argued that 'Resistance to the STO... was in theory the policy of all COs'. See R. Vinen, 'The French Coal Industry during the Occupation' in *The Historical Journal*, 33:1 (1990), 105-130, here 123. See also F. Marcot, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant?' and T. Imlay and M. Horn, *The Politics of Industrial Collaboration*.
- ^{xxxvii} F. Marcot, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant?', 277.
- ^{xxxviii} 'Suppression des comités d'organisation', *L'Humanité*, 24 April 1946.
- ^{xxxix} Marcot calculates that roughly two-thirds of metallurgical industrialists from the Paris region made this claim in the immediate post-war period. F. Marcot, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant?', 281.
- ^{xl} A. Tooze, *Wages of Destruction. The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (London, 2007), 640.
- ^{xli} AN, 139 AQ 79, *The Bureau de normalisation de la sidérurgie* was established by CORSID in October 1941. See 'Circulaire du 27 octobre 1941'.
- ^{xlii} ANMT, 104 AQ 113, 'Prix, produits selon les spécifications allemands homologués', 4 June 1943.
- ^{xliiii} AN, 72 AJ 1926, 'Procès-verbal de la conférence tenue à Berlin le vendredi 17 septembre 1943 dans le bureau de Monsieur Speer', 17 September 1943. In Speer's memoirs, he recalls that the plan allowed the Reich to increase armaments production and 'seemed to be the only way [he] could harness French industrial production to [German] purposes'. He adds that 'Hitler proved content' with the agreement. See A. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 310-11.
- ^{xliv} AN, 72 AJ 1926, 'Procès-verbal de la conférence tenue à Berlin (Wannsee)', 17 September 1943.
- ^{xlv} AN, 72 AJ 1926, 'Procès-verbal de la conférence tenue à Berlin le vendredi 17 septembre 1943 dans le bureau de Monsieur Speer', 17 September 1943.
- ^{xlvi} J.-L. Loubet, *La Maison Peugeot* (Paris, 2009), 253, 260.
- ^{xlvii} F. Marcot, 'La direction de Peugeot sous l'Occupation', 32.
- ^{xlviii} C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation', 195.
- ^{xlix} F. Marcot, 'La direction de Peugeot sous l'Occupation', 32; C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation', 189-93; T. Imlay and M. Horn, *The Politics of Industrial Collaboration*, 9.
- ^l T. Imlay and M. Horn, *The Politics of Industrial Collaboration*, 268.
- ^{li} AN, AJ 41 170, 'Note du 31 juillet'.
- ^{lii} Coal production in the Non-Occupied Zone, centred around mines in the Loire, actually *increased* under Vichy, reaching 135 per cent of 1938 levels in 1941 and 150 per cent in 1942, although the total output from these mines did little to reverse the overall situation. T[he] N[ational] A[rchives], WO 219 3752, 'The Coal Economy of France under German Occupation'.
- ^{liii} AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 14 janvier 1941'. Production of Martin steel in the last quarter of 1940 was 101 per cent of that of the last quarter of 1938, although production of finished products was only seventy-one per cent of that of 1938.

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- liv AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Réunion des Usines de Centre-Ouest du 23 mai 1941'.
- lv AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 16 juillet 1942'.
- lvi AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 13 octobre 1942', 13 October 1942 and 'Réunion du 16 mai 1944'.
- lvii AN, F 12 10140, Rapport mensuel de la direction de la sidérurgie, March 1943.
- lviii C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation', 195.
- lix AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 13 juin 1944'.
- lx AN, 139 AQ 82, 'Comité d'organisation de la sidérurgie. Région du Centre et de l'Ouest. Réunion du 18 juillet 1944'.
- lxi See E. Conan and H. Rouso, *Vichy, un passé qui ne passe pas* (Paris, 1994).
- lxii AN, F 12 10024, 'Note hebdomadaire sur la situation de l'industrie', 28 December 1944. 20,000 tonnes were produced in both November and December 1944, compared to 50,000 in November 1943 and a monthly average of 65,000 tonnes in 1938.
- lxiii AN, F 12 10028, 'Note' for the Minister for Industrial Production, 23 November 1945.
- lxiv AN, F 12 10028, 'Note pour Vallon, directeur adjoint du cabinet du général de Gaulle', 23 November 1945. The note concludes that 'the solution is clear: we need more coal from the Ruhr'.
- lxv France as a whole produced 7.9 million tonnes of steel in 1939, compared with 1.6 million tonnes in 1945, 4.4 million tonnes in 1946, 5.7 million tonnes in 1947, 7.2 million tonnes in 1948 and 9.1 million tonnes in 1949. Françoise Berger, *La France, l'Allemagne et l'acier (1932-1952). De la stratégie des cartels à l'élaboration de la CECA* (PhD, Paris I, 2000), 678.
- lxvi C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation', 195.
- lxvii AN, 72 AJ 1926, 'Procès-verbal de la conférence tenue à Berlin le vendredi 17 septembre 1943 dans le bureau de Monsieur Speer'.
- lxviii AN, 72 AJ 1926, 'Procès-verbal de la conférence tenue à Berlin (Wannsee), 17 September 1943.
- lxix Schneider's factories in Creusot were subjected to two Allied bombardments in 1942 and 1943, respectively.
- lxx AN, 80 AJ 11, 'Rapport sur la modernisation de la sidérurgie de la Loire et les problèmes qu'elle se pose', October 1951. In the context of the Cold War, it was suggested that Soviet rather than British aeroplanes might want to bomb French steel mills.
- lxxi R. Vinen, *The Politics of French Business, 1936-1945* (Cambridge, 1991), 89.
- lxxii P. Mioche, 'Les entreprises sidérurgiques sous l'Occupation' in *Histoire, économie et société*, 11:3 (1992), 397-414.
- lxxiii 'Il faut un meilleur ravitaillement et des salaires suffisants pour obtenir un renforcement de la capacité de production, déclare Benoît Frachon au Comité National de la CGT', *L'Humanité*, 28 March 1945.
- lxxiv F. Berger, *La France, l'Allemagne et l'acier (1932-1952)*, 678.
- lxxv F[ondation] J[ean] M[onnet pour l']E[urope], AMG 8 5, 'Note sur l'évolution de la production sidérurgique française' by Jules Aubrun, 25 October 1950.
- lxxvi P. Mioche, 'Les entreprises sidérurgiques sous l'Occupation'.
- lxxvii T. Imlay and M. Horn, *The Politics of Industrial Collaboration*, 243-44.
- lxxviii Ibid.; F. Marcot, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant?'; C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation'; H. Bonin, 'Peut-on imaginer des banquiers patriotes et résistants (1940-1944)?'.
- lxxix Marcot writes that fewer than ten industrialists claimed to have engaged in such action after the war. Two cases, namely those of Peugeot and Schneider, are discussed below. See F. Marcot, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant?', 281. No mention of any such actions figures in the minutes of CORSID's meetings.
- lxxx Ibid. and F. Marcot, 'La direction de Peugeot sous l'Occupation'.
- lxxxi C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation'.
- lxxxii F. Marcot, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant?', 284-5.
- lxxxiii Ibid., J.-L. Loubet, *La maison Peugeot*, C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation'.
- lxxxiv A. Knapp, *Les Français sous les bombes alliées, 1940-45* (Paris, 2014).

^{lxxxv} C. Capuano, 'Travailler chez Schneider sous l'Occupation'.

^{lxxxvi} M.R.D. Foot, *The SOE in France* (London, 2004), 256 and J.-L. Loubet, *La maison Peugeot*, 250.

^{lxxxvii} Ibid. and F. Marcot, 'La direction de Peugeot sous l'Occupation'.

^{lxxxviii} M.R.D. Foot, *The SOE in France*, 256-7. The Michelin tyre factory at Clermont-Ferrand was targeted following the firm's refusal to give into the SOE's 'blackmail'. The automotive firm Berliet similarly refused the SOE's deal and was subsequently bombarded by the RAF. See F. Marcot, 'La direction de Peugeot sous l'Occupation', 38.

^{lxxxix} Frank et al., 'Introduction' and F. Lemmes, 'Collaboration in wartime France'.

^{xc} F. Marcot, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un patron résistant?', 277.

^{xc} Ibid., 279. Emphasis added.

^{xcii} M.R.D. Foot, *The SOE in France*, 257.

^{xciii} O. Wieviorka, *Histoire de la Résistance 1940-1945* (Paris, 2013) and R. Gildea, *Fighters in the Shadows. A New History of the French Resistance* (London, 2015).

^{xciv} A. Knapp, *Les Français sous les bombes alliées*, 17-22. See also L. Dodd and A. Knapp, 'How Many Frenchmen Did You Kill?', *French History* (26:4), 2008 and E. Florentin, *Quand les Alliés bombardaient la France, 1940-45* (Paris, 1997).