

The Role of North Africa in the Debates over Post-war Europe within the French Resistance¹

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Following the Allied landings in Algeria in November 1942, that country hosted the main organisations of the French external resistance, culminating in the creation of the French Committee of National Liberation (*Comité français de Libération nationale*, CFLN) in June 1943. Between November 1942 and the Allied landings in Normandy in June 1944, the question of what policies France should pursue in the post-war period were debated at length in North Africa. While the CFLN and Free France have been an enduringly popular topic among historians, studies of the CFLN's policy debates rarely take into account the geographical context in which they took place (Michel 1963, Crémieux-Brilhac 1996). This chapter seeks to return Algeria to the narrative of these debates by demonstrating how the implementation of certain policies in Algeria provided valuable lessons for the CFLN as they developed comparable measures for metropolitan France and ultimately for Europe.

The first European institution, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was the result of a French initiative, namely the Schuman Plan proposed in May 1950. Moreover, this project was based on the reorganisation of two crucial industries,

¹ This chapter draws on Luc-André Brunet, *Forging Europe: Industrial Organisation in France, 1940-1952* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

famously pooling the coal and steel industries of the member states. This chapter consequently focuses on how France reorganised its own heavy industry during and following the Second World War and how this impacted the creation of the ECSC. By focusing on the debates over industrial organisation within the CFLN while they were based in North Africa, this chapter argues that the CFLN's experience in Algeria decisively shaped not only France's post-war industrial organisation but also the first European institutions.

Vichy's New Industrial Order

Following the Fall of France in June 1940, the newly established Vichy regime radically reorganised the nation's industry. The most significant legislation in this respect was the law of 16 August 1940, which created a new set of institutions called Organisation Committees. One Committee was established for each branch of industry and was given sweeping powers to coordinate production, compile a census for the industry, and allocate raw materials to factories across France. While the Committees were dominated by industrialists – each Committee typically consisted of three to five employers plus a representative from the Ministry for Industrial Production – they fit into a thoroughly statist and *dirigiste* framework. With France cut off from its pre-war markets and its usual supply of raw materials, these new institutions played a crucial role in coordinating the use of scarce resources to maximise industrial output. They also had an important political function: they were explicitly modelled upon Nazi Germany's

analogous *Wirtschaftsgruppen* and were created with a view to realise economic collaboration with the Reich. In this goal the Committees were successful, and by 1943 85 per cent of production in the steel and automotive industries went directly to the German war economy (Imlay and Horn 2014, Brunet 2017).

This 'New Industrial Order' created by Vichy in 1940 was completed with the establishment of the Central Bureau for the Distribution of Industrial Products (*Office central de répartition des produits industriels*, OCRPI) in September. This Central Bureau, with Sections created for each industry corresponding to analogous Organisation Committees, was responsible for the allocation of raw materials to each industry; the Organisation Committee was then responsible for sub-allocating these materials to individual firms. Although this system of industrial organisation was set up hurriedly in the summer of 1940, it proved to be effective at keeping French factories running and facilitated the large-scale production of goods for the Reich throughout the war.

The new institutions created by Vichy to manage the French economy were successful in exerting control over industry not only in the non-occupied southern zone, but also in the occupied zone which included some of the country's most heavily industrialised areas. The Nord and Pas-de-Calais, with metropolitan France's most important coal mines, were detached from the rest of France and were instead administered by the German Military Authorities in Brussels. Alsace and part of Lorraine, meanwhile, were annexed directly by Germany, and their industries were overseen by the Reich's *Wirtschaftsgruppen* upon which the French Organisation Committees were based (Brunet 2017). In addition to these regions, three additional *départements* remained beyond the jurisdiction of Vichy's Organisation Committees:

Alger, Oran, and Constantine. Overall, Algeria remains strikingly absent from the literature on the French economy during this period. The only book-length study of the Organisation Committees (Joly 2004) fails to mention Algeria at all, while other major studies of the French economy during the Second World War similarly ignore North Africa (Kuisel 1981, Margairaz 1991, Beltran et al. 1994, Rochebrune and Hazera 1995, Dard et al. 2000). Works that focus on Algeria under Vichy, meanwhile, tend to treat questions of economic organisation as secondary, if they're considered at all (Lévisse-Touzé 1998, Thomas 1998, Cantier 2002, Cantier and Jennings 2004).

While the first Organisation Committees in France were operational as early as September 1940, the possibility of creating such institutions in Algeria was not discussed in Vichy until the following year, once François Lehideux had replaced former trade unionist René Belin as Minister for Industrial Production, under whose ministry the Organisation Committees functioned. The situation in France had stabilised by the spring of 1941 and Vichy turned its attention to plans for the industrial development of Algeria. In July 1941, the French government approved a plan for the industrialisation of Algeria put forward by then Governor General of Algeria Maxime Weygand (Lefeuvre 1994). Under his successor, Yves-Charles Châtel, the first 15 Organisation Committees in Algeria were set up in December 1941. As in France, the first Committees created in Algeria focused on heavy industry, overseeing such sectors as metallurgy, extractive industries, and agricultural machinery. In practice, they operated much in the same way as their French counterparts insofar as they were dominated by industrialists and excluded representation of organised labour. Their functions also replicated those of the French Committees, as the new Algerian institutions collected statistics on production,

sub-allocated materials to individual firms, and coordinated production across each industry. One notable difference between the systems in Algeria and the metropole was where the Committees existed within the administration. While in France all Organisation Committees – which numbered well over 300 by 1944 – were under the Ministry for Industrial Production, the Algerian Committees were dispersed under the management of whichever service was most relevant, such as the Directorate for Public Works or for Mining (Cantier 2002: 170-172). As in France, the number of Organisation Committees soon exceeded the initial batch focused on heavy industry; by June 1942 Vichy's then Minister for Industrial Production, Jean Bichelonne, ordered a Committee for Trade to be established in Algeria (Compte rendu de la séance du 18 juin 1942, Office interprofessionnelle de distribution, 68 AJ 1, Archives nationales (AN), Paris). Similarly following the model developed in Vichy France, the Organisation Committees were complemented by a General Supply Service, equivalent to the Central Bureau established in metropolitan France. This Service allocated raw materials to different industries, with the sub-allocation of these resources being the responsibility of the relevant Organisation Committee. By the autumn of 1942, the institutions responsible for the organisation of industry in Algeria closely resembled those that existed on the north shore of the Mediterranean.

The Policies of the French Resistance upon arrival in North Africa

When the Allied forces landed in Algeria on 8 November 1942, they encountered a decidedly pro-Vichy administration that oversaw a thoroughly Vichyste economic system. Initially, the new Allied authorities adopted a cautious policy towards the existing administration. Admiral Darlan, head of the French military forces and former Prime Minister under Pétain in Vichy, was embraced by the Americans as a figure who could ensure an orderly transition of authority in North Africa from Vichy to the Allies. Darlan was undoubtedly a problematic figure, heavily associated with Vichy and its collaboration with Nazi Germany. Nevertheless, he assumed control of Algeria in the name of the '*Maréchal empêché*' – a pretext vociferously denied by Pétain – and worked closely with the Allied forces until his assassination in December 1942. Following Darlan's death, General Henri Giraud was appointed Civilian and Military Commander-in-Chief in North Africa, much to the consternation of his rival General Charles de Gaulle (Duroselle 1982, Crémieux-Brilhac 1996).

During these early months following the Allied landings in Algeria, the Allies adopted a policy of working closely with a number of former Vichy officials to establish a functional administration in North Africa. One telling example is that of Marcel Peyrouton, who as Vichy's Minister for the Interior signed a series of racist laws including the infamous law of 3 October 1940 which removed Jews from a range of positions in the public sector. He was also responsible for repealing the Crémieux decree of 1870, which had granted French citizenship to Algerian Jews (Stora 2006). In the spring of 1941, after being shuffled out of his ministerial position, Peyrouton was named Vichy's ambassador to Argentina. From there, however, he was brought to Algeria at the insistence of the Roosevelt Administration and was appointed Governor General of

Algeria under General Giraud. He spent the first half of 1943 in this position, during which time he steadfastly refused to restore the Crémieux decree on the grounds that it would upset the local Muslim population – a position supported by Giraud (Peyrouton 1950). It was in this context that another former Minister for the Interior under Vichy, Pierre Pucheu, corresponded with General Giraud about the possibility of joining the French Resistance in North Africa as well. Pucheu's offer, made in the days following the Allied landings in November 1942, was accepted by Giraud in February 1943, and Pucheu made his way to North Africa via Spain.

Over the course of the first half of 1943, however, this tendency to collaborate with former Vichy ministers receded markedly. De Gaulle, whose famous radio address of 18 June 1940 predated the creation of the Vichy regime, unsurprisingly took a hard line against cooperating with Vichy figures. His increased influence within the French administration in liberated North Africa accounts in part for this change in policy. Having waged several battles against pro-Vichy colonial administrations as leader of the Free French (overwhelmingly supported by Allied troops and materiel), de Gaulle was loath to welcome individuals from Pétain's inner circle within the Resistance (Thomas 1998). Moreover, in competing with the reactionary Giraud, de Gaulle opted to embrace republican values more explicitly, calling for a thorough purging (*épuration*) of those who had collaborated with the Vichy regime (Berstein 2001). While Giraud had initially been inclined to maintain much of Vichy's *Révolution nationale*, from March 1943 he began adopting anti-Vichy rhetoric, notably in a speech largely written for him by his advisor, Jean Monnet (Monnet 1976: 271). By May 1943, when Pierre Pucheu finally arrived in North Africa, the position of the French authorities in Algeria had shifted so

significantly that rather than being welcomed and given a plum job – as his predecessor as Minister of the Interior Peyrouton had been – he was instead placed under arrest for treason. The following month, the different branches of the Free French organisation, led by de Gaulle and Giraud, respectively, merged to create the French Committee of National Liberation, which acted as a functional government-in-waiting ahead of the liberation of metropolitan France and which was soon dominated by the politically savvy de Gaulle.

It was in this context in the spring of 1943 that the Free French authorities in Algeria took their first measures regarding the New Industrial Order constructed by the Vichy regime. Although they remained rivals and disagreed on a wide range of issues, both de Gaulle and Giraud targeted the Organisation Committees in the spring of 1943. For De Gaulle's *Comité national français*, the first goal that united all members of the Resistance was 'the complete abolition of all Vichy legislation', including the law of 16 August 1940 establishing the Organisation Committees ('Note du Comité National Français', 22 April 1943, CFLN 297, Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères (MAE), La Courneuve). General Giraud was of a similar mind and as Civilian and Military Commander-in-Chief in North Africa, he was in a position to take action on the matter. On 15 May 1943, Giraud issued a decree putting into practice the then ubiquitously held goal of repealing Vichy legislation in North Africa. His decree explicitly abolished Vichy's 'laws and decrees concerning professional organisation', notably the Organisation Committees and its concomitant General Supply Service which had been established in Algeria from December 1941 ('Ordonnance du 15 mai 1943 portant abrogation des lois et décrets concernant l'organisation professionnelle',

published in the *Journal officiel*, 16 May 1943, AME 34 6, Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe (FJME), Lausanne). That same day he also decreed the 'abolition of the law of 4 October 1941 concerning the social organisation of professions', which repealed Vichy's corporatist Labour Charter ('Ordonnance du 15 mai 1943 portant abrogation de la loi du 4 octobre 1941 relative à l'organisation sociale des professions', published in the *Journal officiel*, 16 May 1943, AME 34 6, FJME). Importantly, the decree allowed for a transitional period of three months before the institutions created by Vichy would be abolished; Giraud believed that this time would be sufficient 'to set up a liberal system that takes account of the pressing necessities of the moment'. Giraud justified the decision by attacking the 1940 law that had established the Committees, arguing that the law had introduced 'into French legislation a theory that is foreign to it: that of the Führer in charge, placed at the head of each organisation. We therefore had to abolish these laws' ('La révision des lois de Vichy. Le général Giraud abroge les dispositions concernant l'organisation professionnelle', in *La Dépêche Algérienne*, 19 May 1943, AME 34 6, FJME). This sat comfortably alongside de Gaulle's rhetoric attacking Vichy's decrees. During this transitional period from May to August 1943, the anti-Vichy stance regarding economic legislation reached its peak. In June 1943, André Diethelm, then Commissioner for Industrial Production, called for the unqualified dissolution of all Organisation Committees in France along with the Central Bureau, and a draft law he proposed to this effect was accepted by the CFLN on 6 July 1943 (Turpin 2004: 128-129). At the time, the CFLN's policy was to abolish all vestiges of Vichy's New Industrial Order in metropolitan France, just as they were doing in liberated North Africa.

In practice, however, the dismantling of Vichy's institutions in North Africa did not go as smoothly as Giraud and de Gaulle might have hoped. The 'liberal system that takes account of the pressing necessities of the moment' did not spring forth as soon as the Committees' abolition was declared. Many industrialists preferred the Committees to the previous system, since it gave them greater control over production across their industry and neutered any opposition posed by trade unions, and were consequently not especially eager to dismantle the offices. By August, days away from the expiry of the three-month transitional period inaugurated by the May decree, the CFLN ordered the re-establishment of trade union rights (*liberté syndicale*) in North Africa (Note sur l'Organisation syndicale de la Régence', 4 August 1943, CFLN 875, MAE). This reflects some of the difficulties facing the resuscitation of a functional liberal system in North Africa; the Organisation Committees had replaced trade union confederations and employers' associations, yet Giraud had failed to order their recreation when he called for the Committees' abolition. Only belatedly, after it had become clear that the three-month deadline was not going to be met, did the CFLN allow for the reconstitution of organised labour groups. As the deadline passed in August, most of the Committees continued to exist, since their sudden disappearance would throw that industry's production into chaos. The CFLN grudgingly kicked the dissolution of these Vichy institutions into the long grass. The lesson was not lost on CFLN officials as they looked ahead to replacing Vichy's institutions in metropolitan France. Raymond Offroy, de Gaulle's counsellor on economic affairs, later noted that 'it was easy to abolish [the Committees], but experience in North Africa had shown that one needs to know what will take their place' (Qtd in Kuisel 1981: 182).

By September 1943, some individuals who had observed the difficulties in destroying the Organisation Committees were beginning to agree that the policy of abolishing Vichy's legislation immediately, as Giraud had attempted that spring, was the wrong approach. In a note prepared for Jean Monnet, an associate of his made the case for maintaining the Organisation Committees following the Liberation of France, drawing on the experience of North Africa: 'However desirable the complete abolition of the current measures of economic control [in France] would be from a psychological, and consequently from a political point of view, it is clear that such a solution is certainly inapplicable.' The note continues by outlining why the abolition of the Committees in the short-term would be catastrophic:

On the one hand, the shortage of raw materials will not disappear in a matter of weeks. It will therefore be necessary to let a large part of the mechanisms for rationing food and allocating industrial products subsist. On the other hand, it would be dangerous to want to simultaneously pursue organisational reforms and substitutions of personnel. It seems that the latter is more urgent than the former...

The note concludes that 'we are therefore forced to allocate [raw materials to industry] using the bodies created three years ago: we must inevitably begin with the existing Organisation Committees' ('Note sur la simplification de l'organisation administrative de l'économie', 3 September 1943, AME 33 2 8, FJME). Despite principled objection to the Vichy regime and its entire corpus of legislation, it would seem that pragmatism demanded the very opposite. As the experience of the CFLN in the summer of 1943 had shown, abolishing *dirigiste* institutions in the midst of shortages of raw materials – and when careful coordination was needed in the context of a large-scale military campaign – and instead hoping that liberal institutions would spring forth to take their place was a policy that promised catastrophe.

While Jean Monnet and his collaborators were reaching this conclusion, another individual was making the same case to senior members of the CFLN. Before serving as Minister for the Interior in Vichy, Pierre Pucheu had handled the portfolio for Industrial Production, and as such oversaw the vast apparatus of industrial organisation constructed in the early months of the regime. During his incarceration in North Africa, Pucheu was visited regularly by CFLN officials such as Maurice Couve de Murville, René Mayer, and Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, who discussed various policy issues with him, taking advantage of his intimate knowledge of the state of affairs in France. He urged the members of the CFLN to keep Vichy's economic institutions in place, assuring them that they were 'in no way the expression of a doctrine deliberately created or adopted by the men in Vichy', but rather a 'response to the exigencies of war'. As such, there were no ideological grounds for dismembering the economic bodies created by Vichy. Pucheu described at length the advantages of maintaining Vichy's institutions following the liberation of metropolitan France. He explained that the post-liberation government would 'have access, in the ministries as well as in the Sections [of the Central Bureau] and the Committees, to an operating staff and to senior and middle management, trained through a long and difficult experience [...] many of whom will have developed sound expertise which could be adapted immediately to the new situation'. He continued:

More importantly, rather than beginning from scratch when establishing priorities, operating procedures, and action plans, these new individuals responsible for running the economy will have at their disposal precious documentation. Thanks to the statistical archives of the Sections [of the Central Bureau] and the Committees, they will know immediately, for all branches of industry and commerce, all aspects of pre-war economic activity and also how things have changed under the challenges of the Occupation. With full knowledge of the facts, they will be able to deal with immediate challenges and to seamlessly manage the implementation of their own economic management model in

accordance with the doctrinal pillars they will have developed for the post-transitional period. (Pucheu 1948: 344)

Pucheu thus presented Vichy's industrial organisation as both indispensably useful and devoid of any ideological underpinnings. The allegedly apolitical experts who had overseen the French economy for the previous three years could similarly be counted on to do so for the incoming regime, who would find the Organisation Committees as essential as the Vichy government had. Such an argument demonstrates the emerging ideas of technocracy and the depoliticisation of the economy that had been developing in Vichy and would reach their apogee in the 1950s and 1960s in France and North Africa alike (Dulong 1997, Dard 2000). Furthermore, Pucheu would have made these arguments at the very time when the CFLN was witnessing the difficulties of trying to abolish the Organisation Committees root and branch in North Africa. In this context, Pucheu's assurances of the pragmatic utility of Vichy's institutions – not to mention their supposed ideological neutrality – were given to members of the CFLN precisely as they groped towards an industrial policy for liberated France.

By September, Monnet himself had been fully converted to the cause of maintaining Vichy's system. He asserted that 'according to all reports from France', including Pucheu's, 'a significant part of the [Vichy] administration has been courageous, competent, and, overall, managed extremely complex and difficult problems very well'.

He added:

I think that we should therefore plan on using the existing administrative apparatus in its entirety. In this case, insofar as it is necessary, we should study how to adapt the organisation of the Committees so that, following the liberation, any new managers can be neatly slotted into the existing administration. We should also consider which individuals currently in key positions should be maintained and which should be replaced and, if possible, by whom.

Monnet went on to justify maintaining Vichy's institutions using a line of argument similarly employed by Pucheu: that Vichy's system of industrial organisation was bereft of ideology. France had found itself faced with a shortage of raw materials, a situation that Monnet insisted had been shared by 'all the countries in the war'. He insisted that in all the countries involved in the Second World War, 'the solution had inevitably been the same: complete control by the State of the economy, of production, and of allocation [and] control of exports and imports'. Given how widespread this economic approach was, Monnet concluded that 'it is not a question of opting for one economic system or another. We must make France flourish with resources inevitably inferior to her needs. No other solution is possible' aside from maintaining Vichy's institutions ('Note sur la première étape de la reconstruction en France', 22 September 1943, AME 33 1, FJME). While Monnet had insisted six months earlier that Giraud declare all Vichy legislation – including its laws on industrial organisation – null and void, by the end of the summer of 1943 he was demanding the maintenance of Vichy's 'existing administrative apparatus in its entirety'. It was a dramatic *volte-face* informed by the failed attempt to abolish the Organisation Committees in North Africa earlier that year.

Whether influenced by Pucheu, by Monnet and his collaborators, or by their own observations of the botched attempt to replace the Organisation Committees in North Africa, by the winter of 1943-44 the majority of the members of the CFLN had agreed that Vichy's industrial institutions should be maintained. The strength of this consensus can be seen by the CFLN's reaction to its strongest dissenter, André Diethelm. Having called for the dissolution of the Organisation Committees in the summer of 1943, Diethelm remained steadfast in his opposition to preserving Vichy's institutions, even

while his colleagues systematically reversed their position. In early February, Diethelm circulated a report making an impassioned case for the abolition of Vichy's economic institutions: 'The unpopularity of these approximately 300 bodies, their never-ending quarrels over allocation [of raw materials, and] the tyranny they exert over the small- and medium-sized enterprises in their industry leave no doubt as to the answer that the Assembly must give to the question of abolishing and liquidating the Committees' ('Note du Commissaire au ravitaillement et à la production', 9 February 1944, F 60 914, AN). The lack of support Diethelm found among his colleagues was striking. The next day, Louis Joxe, who ran the CFLN's General Secretariat, prepared a lengthy critique of Diethelm's position and sent it to de Gaulle ('Note pour le général de Gaulle', 10 February 1944, F 60 914, AN). On 3 March, de Gaulle reshuffled a single individual in the CFLN's Cabinet: Diethelm was removed from Industrial Production and demoted to a sub-ministerial position under de Gaulle's own watch. From that point on, it was understood that the CFLN's industrial policy would be based on keeping in place Vichy's vast network of institutions for organising industrial production.

Planning Europe

The clumsy attempt to abolish the Organisation Committees in North Africa prompted a reconsideration of the policy of simply repealing all Vichy legislation. For Monnet, using Vichy's institutions to restore France's economy was not only an economic priority, but indeed a political one. He argued that 'a national recovery,

realised as quickly as possible, is the goal, so that France can play its role in the world, and first and foremost in Europe'. He warned that 'in developing its foreign policy, the CFLN cannot disregard the immediate problems of raw materials of unprecedented scope which will arise with the liberation of metropolitan France'. Ensuring that French industry could run as smoothly as possible following the liberation was a necessary precondition for the restoration of France as an economic power – which was in turn a precondition for its ability to play a decisive role in international affairs, particularly in Europe (Note de reflexion de Jean Monnet, 8 October 1943. AME 33 1, FJME).

The question of the post-war organisation of Europe was a frequent topic of discussion among the members of the CFLN in Algeria and by the summer of 1943 Jean Monnet was already setting out his ideas of a post-war European order. According to Monnet, 'France is the only member of the Allies that is European' – a position that reflects his evolving view of Great Britain's place in the world as a result of the war – and that 'it is therefore only from France that the conception of a new European order can come'. Looking at Nazi Germany's inability to increase production significantly in 1943, Monnet concluded that 'the nations of Europe are too small' and thus 'need much larger markets'. He criticised the national preoccupation with 'so-called key industries' such as coal and steel, suggesting that a European rather than a national organisation of these industries would be best (Note de réflexion de Jean Monnet, 5 August 1943, AME 33 1, FJME) – a theme to which Monnet would return throughout the 1940s and which would ultimately inform his plan to pool the French and German coal and steel industries in the form of the European Coal and Steel Community (Milward 1984, Hitchcock 1998).

Thus it was France's role in organising a post-war European order that preoccupied Monnet and many members of the CFLN in Algiers in the autumn of 1943. In October, Monnet advocated some sort of economic union between France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands (Note de reflexion de Jean Monnet, 8 October 1943, AME 33 1, FJME). At that time he also favoured dividing Germany into a number of smaller states which could then be integrated into this European entity. In a discussion with members of the CFLN one Sunday afternoon in Algiers, de Gaulle voiced his scepticism of the prospect of 'French and Germans being part of a single economic union' after the experience of the war. He did, however, support the idea of an economic union of France and the Low Countries, and 'maybe Italy, Spain, and Switzerland', a suggestion with which René Mayer concurred. It was agreed that any decision on the future of Europe, however, could not be taken 'without being better informed on the conditions and the consequences of such an economic organisation in Europe. Studies of this question could hardly be pursued in Algiers where [the CFLN] lack[ed] documentation and particularly statistics' on French industry ('Conversation du dimanche 17 octobre 1943', 17 October 1943, AME 33 1, FJME). This information would shortly be provided in the form of what Pucheu had called the 'precious documentation' compiled by Vichy's Organisation Committees over the course of the war. When Jean Monnet developed his national plan for the modernisation of French industry in 1946, the Monnet Plan, he relied extensively on the documentation developed by the Organisation Committees since 1940 ('Projet de résolution soumis au Conseil du Plan. Objectifs généraux pour l'activité française', 13 March 1946, AMF 2 3, FJME).

For Monnet, it was vital that ‘European collaboration must not be limited to the establishment of a customs union’. He reasoned that

the removal of customs barriers demands the cooperation of member states in a number of domains: finances, price, industrial production, agriculture... The main objective of this overall project would be the rational allocation of productive activities among the participating states, taking into account natural resources, geographic and demographic conditions... This European collaboration would demand the creation of international institutions responsible for implementing this concerted plan.

(Note de réflexion de Jean Monnet, ‘Quelques éléments pour l’élaboration d’une thèse française de la reconstruction européenne’, 3 August 1943, AME 33 2, FJME)

By August 1943, Monnet was thus describing European-wide institutions that would rationally coordinate industrial production, as well as other economic activity, precisely as Vichy’s Organisation Committees had.

It must be remembered that these discussions of the post-war organisation in Europe were highly subjective. As the participants themselves realised at the time, the implementation of such plans depended on a set of favourable economic and political circumstances in an unknowable future. Similar and usually woolly plans for some sort of European entity in an eventual post-war period were discussed in many quarters during the war, but few if any can be considered a veritable foundation for the post-war integration that occurred in Western Europe from the 1950s (Lipgens 1985, Bruneteau 2006, Heyde 2010). But what is important to note in these discussions within the CFLN in Algiers is the strategic thinking behind any kind of European cooperation. They agreed that any post-war initiative for closer integration among European states would need to come from France, and for this France would need to restore its credibility and influence as a world power. This political power, however, was dependent on France’s

revival as an economic power, which could best be achieved by keeping Vichy's vast administrative system in place rather than trying to dismantle it immediately on ideological grounds. The disappointing attempt to do so in Algeria in the summer of 1943 prompted the CFLN to embrace the policy it would maintain until well after the liberation: to keep Vichy's industrial organisation in place as the most efficient way of reviving French economic and hence political power.

For the members of the CFLN, a similarly indispensable condition of France regaining its international position was the maintenance of its empire. The credibility and prestige of the Free French had been greatly enhanced by military victories – heavily supported by the Allies – in French colonies still administered by Vichy. In seeking to reassert its traditional position as a great power after the war, particularly against the emergence of the American and Soviet superpowers, France would inevitably look to its empire. De Gaulle's Brazzaville declaration in January 1944 and the creation of the French Union two years later reaffirmed the centrality of the empire in the goal of restoring French *grandeur*. Yet just as European cooperation was meant to shore up France's international position, it was understood that this cooperation could also be extended to the African continent. According to this Eurafrikan idea, developed during the interwar period, 'European integration would come about only through the coordinated exploitation of Africa, and Africa could be efficiently exploited only if European states cooperated and combined their economic and political capacities' (Hansen and Jonsson 2014). Monnet's observation in August 1943 that 'the nations of Europe are too small' and 'need much larger markets' implied not only cooperation between France and its immediate neighbours within Europe, but also the development of

Africa, with Algeria being the lynchpin of this vision. This Eurafrican ambition was held not only by Monnet, but also by de Gaulle, René Mayer, Robert Schuman, and myriad other individuals who went on to play crucial roles in the development of post-war European integration (Montarsolo 2010). Following the Schuman Declaration in 1950, Monnet and Mayer (the latter being the deputy for Constantine at the time) suggested to Schuman that Africa could be offered ‘as a dowry to Europe [...] to seduce the Germans’ (qtd in Hansen and Jonsson 2014: 123). Gérard Bossuat, meanwhile, has demonstrated the centrality of Eurafrica to the negotiations for the Treaty of Rome in 1957 (Bossuat 2003). Far from simply being the location where French decision-makers happened to discuss post-war plans for France and for Europe, North Africa informed their thinking and continued to do so well after the end of the war.

Following the liberation of France, the economic institutions created by Vichy in the summer of 1940 were indeed maintained and used precisely as Pucheu and Monnet had advocated in Algiers in 1943. Within a year of the establishment of the GPRF in Paris, however, criticism of these Vichy-era institutions began to grow. In an attempt to improve their image, then Minister for Industrial Production (and later resident minister of Algeria) Robert Lacoste rechristened the Organisation Committees ‘Professional Offices’, but this ploy fooled nobody, not least because members of the new Offices continued to refer to the institutions as ‘Organisation Committees’ (‘Note. Objet: réforme des CO’, 16 February 1945, Ministry for Industrial Production, F 12 10025, AN). Within the French Government the usefulness of Vichy’s institutions was widely acknowledged, and Lacoste’s ministry confirmed that ‘regardless of political developments in the months ahead, it will always be necessary to maintain bodies equivalent to [the Organisation

Committees] in order to execute their functions' ('Note pour M. le Secrétaire Général à la Production', undated note, but between March and October 1945, F 12 10063, AN).

By 1946, however, the opprobrium of maintaining institutions that had been so explicitly associated with the Vichy regime and with economic collaboration threatened the existence of the Committees. In January 1946, Jean Monnet created so-called 'Modernisation Commissions', which he described as the 'keystones' of the new General Commissariat for the Plan that drew up and implemented the Monnet Plan. These new Commissions replicated the functions of Vichy's Organisation Committees, and Monnet recruited many of the individuals who had run the wartime Committees to join his new Commissions; Eugène Roy, the President of the Modernisation Commission for Steel, for example, had served as Vice-President of that industry's Organisation Committee for the duration of the war. Less than a week after the first Commissions had been created in 1946, Monnet started lobbying ministers and members of the National Assembly to abolish the Organisation Committees and to have their responsibilities 'transfer[red...] to bodies that are genuinely professional and democratic', namely Monnet's own Modernisation Commissions ('Simplification de la réglementation économique', 24 January 1946, AMF 1 6, FJME). This strategy proved successful; by April of that year the National Assembly approved the dissolution of the Committees, while their functions, much of their staff, and their 'precious documentation' remained with Monnet's Commissions. Recalling Offroy's observations that 'it was easy to abolish [the Committees], but experience in North Africa had shown that one needs to know what will take their place' (Qtd in Kuisel 1981: 182), it would seem that this lesson was not lost on Monnet. Crucially, he ensured that the Commissions meant to succeed the Organisation

Committees were firmly in place before he began demanding the dissolution of the Vichy-era bodies he had defended since 1943 (Brunet 2017). While the abolition of the Organisation Committees in North Africa had been chaotic, the seamless transition from Committees to Commissions under Monnet's watch suggest that he had learned from the North African experience.

While the institutional architecture of the Monnet Plan drew on Vichy's Organisation Committees, it also provided the blueprint for another set of institutions proposed by Monnet: the ECSC. Robert Marjolin, Monnet's deputy, recalled that 'the functional model of the Monnet Plan was transposed to the European level' with the creation of the ECSC (Marjolin 1986). Indeed, the initial architecture of the ECSC was proposed by Monnet and his colleagues, although this evolved significantly over the course of the negotiations. More specifically, shortly after Robert Schuman proposed the pooling of French and German coal and steel industries in May 1950, Monnet outlined plans for the creation of two Modernisation Commissions – for coal and steel, respectively – at the European level. These Commissions, based on the existing ones created in 1946 as part of the Monnet Plan, would 'undertake the necessary studies for the entirety of the industries for which the High Authority is responsible [and] liaise with the existing bodies for technical research in the participating countries' (Note sur les missions de la Haute Autorité, 7 June 1950, 81 AJ 152, AN). Ultimately, the proposed Committees evolved into the Directorates for Coal and for Steel, important if decidedly low-profile components of the ECSC. Interestingly, these institutions traced their origins back not only to the Monnet Plan but to the Vichy-era Organisation Committees which were maintained in post-war France as a result of the CFLN's experience in North Africa.

Conclusion

Over the summer of 1943, the CFLN reversed its policy on the fate of Vichy's economic institutions responsible for the coordination of economic production. While maintaining the rhetoric that all Vichy legislation was 'null and void', it was clear that this would not apply equally to all of Vichy's laws. The turning point for the CFLN was the attempt to abolish the Organisation Committees in Algeria. In this case, declaring their abolition and the spontaneous restoration of a functional liberal system within three months proved to be utterly unrealistic. Ironically, at precisely the time when the CFLN became increasingly republican and publicly pledged to repeal the entirety of Vichy's legislation, it became ever-more supportive of maintaining the entirety of Vichy's industrial administration in place.

This paradoxical position can be explained by the CFLN's preoccupation with France's international position following the war. As discussions of France's post-war role in Europe highlighted, it was imperative that French industrial output recover as quickly as possible following the liberation, a goal that was better served by statist, *dirigiste* institutions to coordinate production and allocate raw materials than by a return to the liberal model that had existed under the Third Republic. By the spring of 1944, members of the CFLN understood that 'France's economy will remain managed (*dirigée*) for quite some time', as even doctrinaire liberals within the Resistance 'conceded regretfully that such economic management would be necessary' ('Rôle de la

Commission économique’, 7 April 1944, CFLN 686, MAE). Given its economic and political priorities, the membership of the CFLN in Algiers was convinced that even though the Organisation Committees were ‘anti-democratic [and] the creations most characteristic of the Vichy administration’, it would be a grave error to ‘destroy them on principle’ (‘Rapport Leprince’, 26 January 1944, CFLN 686, MAE). This reversal of policy can only be fully understood by considering the experience of abolishing the Organisation Committees in North Africa in 1943. The survival of Vichy’s Organisation Committees, their absorption into the Monnet Plan, and their serving as a model for components of the ECSC presents a striking case of institutional continuity across regime change and the launch of the European project.

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