



French Resistance Historical Simulation Background Guide

Date: June 1943 – Creation of the Conseil National de la Résistance (CNR)

Committee Type: Clandestine Meeting of Resistance Fighters and Activists

Committee Overview

By mid-1943, France is a nation in chains. The Nazi occupation dominates the north, while the Vichy regime collaborates in the south. Yet beneath this shadow, a vast and fractured underground movement has begun to unify—the **French Resistance**.

This committee simulates the clandestine leadership of the French Resistance, convened shortly after the creation of the **Conseil National de la Résistance (CNR)** in June 1943. Representatives from various resistance networks—Gaullists, Communists, socialists, and apolitical patriots—gather to coordinate sabotage, intelligence, propaganda, and preparation for Allied invasion.

Factional tensions, limited resources, and German counter-intelligence threaten their unity. Delegates must collaborate to resist occupation, punish collaborators, and prepare for liberation.

Major Issues to Address

1. Coordination and Centralization of Resistance Movements

- How can diverse and often rival networks (Gaullists, Communists, Catholics, etc.) coordinate their actions?

- Should the CNR remain politically neutral or support Free France under Charles de Gaulle?

2. Sabotage Strategy and Guerrilla Tactics

- What should the priorities be: railroads, communication, fuel depots, or German troop movements?
- How should urban vs. rural resistance cells operate?

3. Dealing with the Vichy Regime and Collaborators

- Should collaborators face justice now or after liberation?
- What role (if any) should be played by sympathetic individuals within Vichy?

4. Intelligence and Coordination with the Allies

- How should the Resistance communicate with the British SOE, the Americans, and Free France?
- How can intelligence be verified and securely transmitted?

5. Post-Liberation Governance

- What vision does the Resistance have for France after Nazi expulsion?
- Should France restore the Republic, support De Gaulle, or form a new constitution?

Character Roster: French Resistance Leaders

1. Jean Moulin

Unifying figure and representative of Charles de Gaulle's Free France.

- Sent from London to coordinate the Resistance.
- Key organizer of the CNR.
- Charismatic, brave, and committed to a unified anti-fascist front.

2. Lucie Aubrac

Teacher and fierce Résistante, co-founder of Libération-Sud.

- Carried out daring rescues and sabotage.
- Advocates for moral clarity and action over ideology.

- Strong proponent of involving women in direct action.

3. **Raymond Aubrac**

Engineer and underground commander of Libération-Sud.

- Skilled at planning attacks and hiding fugitives.
- Works closely with Lucie in coordinating Lyon-based operations.

4. **Marie-Madeleine Fourcade**

Leader of the Alliance intelligence network.

- One of the few female leaders of a major network.
- Coordinated intelligence to British SOE with remarkable precision.
- Operated under code name “Hedgehog.”

5. **Pierre Brossolette**

Journalist and intellectual, ally of Jean Moulin.

- Advocates for strong civilian leadership and Gaullist unity.
- Played key role in connecting networks across northern France.

6. **Henri Frenay**

Founder of Combat, one of the largest resistance movements.

- Initially distrusted De Gaulle but came to support Free France.
- Advocates for coordination with Allies, careful sabotage strategy.

7. **Daniel Cordier**

Young secretary to Jean Moulin and courier between Resistance groups.

- Former monarchist turned staunch anti-Nazi operative.
- Involved in documentation, codes, and courier missions.

8. **Andrée de Jongh**

Belgian organizer of the Comet Line escape network.

- Helped downed Allied airmen escape through France to Spain.
- Operates quietly across borders with extreme courage.

9. **Missak Manouchian**

Leader of the FTP-MOI (Communist immigrant fighters).

- Armenian genocide survivor, poet, and fierce antifascist.
- Organized sabotage cells composed of immigrants and exiles.

10. **Berty Albrecht**

Feminist and co-founder of Combat with Frenay.

- Defiant in face of capture, advocate for women's leadership.
- Committed suicide rather than betray comrades under torture.

11. **René Char**

Poet and commander in the Maquis of Provence under the alias "Captain Alexandre."

- Led sabotage and guerrilla missions in rural France.
- Emphasizes moral resistance as well as strategic efficiency.

12. **Jacques Chaban-Delmas**

Military liaison for the Resistance and later a key postwar politician.

- Served as secret envoy between Maquis and London.
- Skilled in logistics and long-term political planning.

13. **Georges Bidault**

Successor to Jean Moulin as CNR president.

- Editor of underground newspaper *Combat*.
- Balances Christian democratic ideals with broad resistance goals.

14. **André Malraux**

Author and fighter with the Maquis in southern France.

- Deeply philosophical, yet action-oriented.
- Advocates for liberation of thought as much as land.

15. **Jean-Pierre Lévy**

Founder of Franc-Tireur movement in Lyon.

- Supported integration of smaller resistance cells.
- Key player in unifying propaganda efforts across occupied zones.

16. Philippe Viannay

Co-founder of *Défense de la France* underground newspaper.

- Focused on resistance through clandestine publishing and mass communication.
 - Recruited youth and students into the Resistance.
 - Later helped found *Centre de Formation des Journalistes* post-war.
 - Worked alongside Hélène Viannay in the movement.
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17. Yvonne Rudellat (codename: “Jacqueline”)

French SOE agent and resistance courier.

- One of the first female SOE agents in France.
- Organized sabotage missions and coordinated parachute drops.
- Captured in 1944 and died in Bergen-Belsen, remembered as a quiet hero.

18. Jean de Lattre de Tassigny

French general who joined the Resistance after escaping Vichy imprisonment.

- Coordinated Maquis operations with Free French forces.
- Later commanded French First Army in Liberation of France.
- Symbol of armed military resistance joining internal networks.

19. Maurice Kriegel-Valrimont

Communist Résistant and strategist in the National Military Committee.

- Participated in planning the Paris Uprising of August 1944.
- Advocated for inclusive resistance across political lines.
- Emphasized coordination with FTP and national forces.

20. Simone Segouin (codename: “Nicole”)

Teenage Maquis fighter in the Eure-et-Loir region.

- Carried out armed operations and sabotage missions.
- Symbol of youthful courage and women’s role in armed resistance.
- Photographed liberating Chartres, became iconic in postwar memory.

21. Robert Antelme

Writer and member of *Franco-Tireurs et Partisans*.

- Captured and deported to Dachau; survived and wrote *The Human Race*.
- Represented moral testimony of the Resistance from inside the camps.
- Advocated for memory and human dignity as tools of resistance.

22. Jean-Marie Arthus (codename: “Le Page”)

Leader in the *Armée Secrète* in the Auvergne region.

- Organized armed Maquis operations and supply lines.
- Specialized in local guerrilla warfare and sabotage.
- Supported integration of scattered rural fighters into coordinated command.

23. Élise Rivet (Mother Mary Elizabeth)

Catholic nun and Résistante in Lyon.

- Sheltered Jews and resistance fighters at her convent.
- Joined Combat network and smuggled messages.
- Deported and killed at Ravensbrück, seen as a martyr of the Resistance.

24. Stéphane Hessel

Young diplomat and member of *Bureau Central de Renseignements et d’Action (BCRA)*.

- Parachuted into occupied France to aid coordination with Free France.
- Captured and tortured but escaped deportation.
- Postwar, helped draft Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Committee Objectives

Delegates must:

- Coordinate sabotage efforts and establish clear channels of command.
- Debate moral, ideological, and strategic divisions within the Resistance.
- Build consensus around the future of France: democracy, leadership, and justice.
- Respond to real-time Nazi crackdowns, Gestapo raids, and opportunities from Allied progress.

This is a **crisis committee**, and events will unfold rapidly. You'll face arrests, betrayals, Allied coordination demands, and the looming Normandy invasion. Unity is vital—but so is action.

Guiding Questions for Delegates

1. Can the Resistance operate as a single front, or must factions retain autonomy?
2. How can cells protect themselves from infiltration while coordinating attacks?
3. What does “justice” look like in a clandestine war—should collaborators be tried or eliminated?
4. How should the Resistance support the Allies without becoming their puppet?
5. What kind of France should rise from the ruins?