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SECURITY INFORMATION

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Date of document: 25 Jan 44
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Excerpt of pertinent information:

" Not only, beginning yesterday, are the French to be submitted to a reign of intensive terror under Joseph DARNAND, Secretary for the Maintenance of Order, but their nerves are to be racked by Phillippe HENRIOT, Secretary for Information and Propaganda. Both were appointed at the turn of the year under German pressure. Their object is the same - to prevent aid being given the United Nations in the impending decisive phase of the war. But whereas DARNAND favors brute force, HENRIOT acts by subtle means.

" Private advices make their positions clear. DARNAND, pagan soldier of fortune will instil corporal fear while HENRIOT, the professedly Christian orator, will sap morale. Both are using Petain's personality as a cloak.

" The implication is obvious: partisans should be 'neutralized!!' The way thus paved by Vichy's Goebbles, DARNAND, Vichy's Himmler can get to work. Certainly he does not lack means. Capital among them are the summary courts recently set up under a decree signed by Laval. ...

" Details now available show that they are to be mere instruments in DARNAND's hands. Not only is he empowered to create as many as he pleases, under his mere signature but he also appoints the judges - three in each case - and determines the procedure to be followed. 'Normal procedure' explains Vichy bluntly, 'would paralyse repression'. All existing laws are suspended and the summary courts 'if satisfied of guilt' may forthwith send the accused before a firing squad. 'In brief every life in France today is at DARNAND's mercy. "

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