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**SANDRA POST:
THE SWEET SWING
OF SUCCESS**

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**MEET THE MAN
WHO WANTS TO
BREAK UP FRANCE**

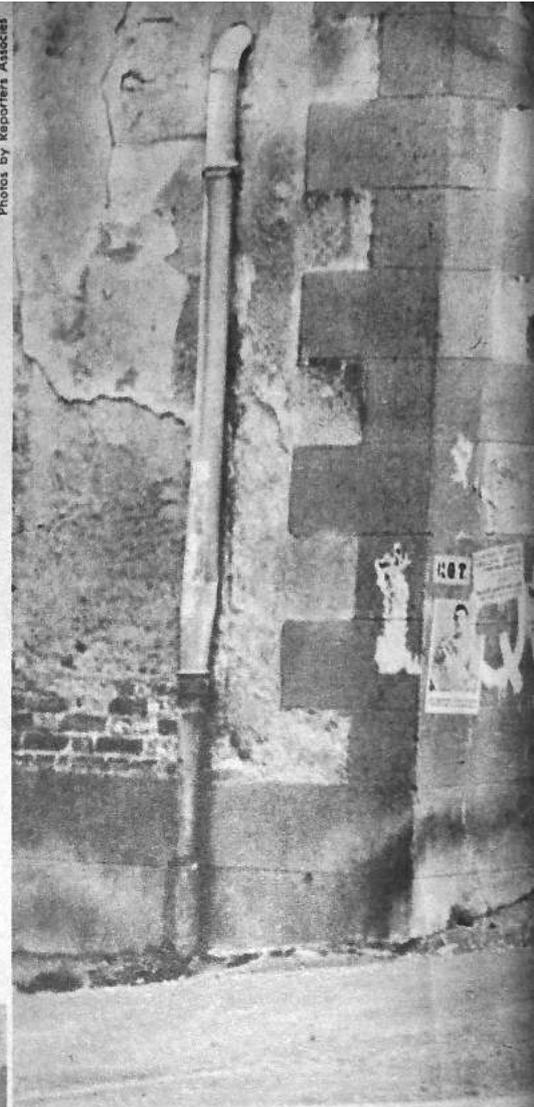
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Vive La Bretagne Libre!



Photos by Reporters Associés

Yann Goulet, impassioned 55-year-old leader of the National Committee for a Free Brittany.



Former president Charles de Gaulle's sensational

Brittany has been oppressed

By Susan Lumsden

ST. MALO, FRANCE.

BRITTANY is that part of France, the westernmost projection, that cartoonists use for de Gaulle's nose when they stylize the map of France to create the former French president's head. With certain artistic justice, that famous nose has been internally tweaked by its Breton inhabitants ever since General de Gaulle paid his memorable visit to Montreal and proclaimed: *Vive le Québec Libre!*

The sensational pronouncement for a free Quebec made during his Expo 67 state visit has boomeranged right back to France's own backyard of Brittany, one of the country's poorest provinces, where many now demand liberty from France. Ten French government buildings and installations have been bombed in recent months. Forty-two arrests have resulted, including that of Canadian René-François Vaillant. During de Gaulle's pre-referendum visit to

Susan Lumsden





pronouncement for a free Quebec, made at the time of his state visit to Expo 67 in Montreal, prompted the separatists of Brittany to adopt this slogan.

by France for centuries but now the poverty-stricken Bretons are fighting back

the Breton cities of Rennes, Brest and Quimper, he was greeted with jeers and signs that taunted: *Québec Libre—Bretagne Libre* and *Nous sommes tous des Québécois!*

De Gaulle's resignation will certainly not mean an end to the separatist movement, because it is not so much the former president, but France, that the Bretons despise. The Breton Nationalist Party was founded in 1911 when de Gaulle had barely put away his toy soldiers. He provided the separatists with a slogan, more than anything else.

"Without realizing it, de Gaulle gave us the chance of a lifetime," says Yann Goulet, the impassioned leader of the National Committee for a Free Brittany who has been self-exiled in Bray, near Dublin in the Republic of Ireland since the end of World War II when he was sentenced to death in absentia for alleged collaboration with the Nazis. He denies the charges vehemently, saying they were a better excuse for getting rid of him as a Breton agitator.

"If the people of Quebec are entitled to freedom because they speak a different language, as de Gaulle said, then so are the Bretons a thousand times more. Is it not right that the French language is taught in Quebec? And that the Code Napoléon is the basis of the law? Well, in Breton schools there are signs saying: *Défense de cracher par la terre et de parler breton* (It is forbidden to spit and speak Breton). Yes, *Vive le Québec Libre* should be engraved in gold on the doorway of the future Breton parliament."

Yann Goulet is 55 years old but his force and venom could transfuse the whole Berkeley campus. A sculptor by profession, he could be anybody's ideal model of a revolutionary. The face, framed in a clipped grey beard, seems carved out of the granite of Brittany. The blue eyes must have floated up from some primeval depths.

"Quebec has never been an independent country. Brittany has, which is even more of a reason for

separation. The original Bretons came to the north-western part of France from Wales and Great Britain in the 5th Century. The kings of Brittany used to be crowned by the Pope's envoy. Brittany remained a nation until 1532 when it was annexed by François I of France. He consolidated annexation by marrying Claude, daughter of the last Duchess of Brittany, Anne. But it was not a marriage of love.

"If I had a knife at your throat and asked you to marry me, would you say 'No'?"

François I was a hard man to put down. Three years after he conquered Brittany, he outfitted one of its finest sailors, Jacques Cartier of St. Malo, for an expedition which launched the colonization of Quebec. The Bretons, with the neighboring Normans, share the honor of being the forefathers of Quebec.

"Bretons are Celts, a race quite different from the French. We speak a language that is close to Gaelic although it is forbidden in schools and on radio and

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Vive La Bretagne Libre!

Continued from preceding page



TV. We're like the Welsh and Irish with a different way of thinking," Goulet told me in Bray. He is now an Irish citizen and member of the Bray town council. His son Hervé studied Irish law. Dublin, the seat of the Celtic league, also accommodates the Breton News Bulletin which provides intramural inspiration for Celtic countries. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau emblazoned a recent issue with his maxim: "A democracy is to be judged by the way it treats its minorities."

For Yann Goulet, the French government is to be judged for its policy of "cultural genocide" for the two-and-a-half-million Breton minority. By ignoring Breton interests for centuries, France has so impoverished Brittany that many young men have to emigrate for work, he says. A church survey in the Quimperlé region showed that of the 250 couples married between 1961 and 1965, 196 had emigrated. Most go to Paris where average salaries are about 40 percent higher than Brittany, where 40 percent of the salaries are less than 600 francs (\$120) per month.

De Gaulle's cherished Common Market with its continental emphasis has syphoned much sustaining shipping away from the old Brittany ports. It has also robbed Breton farmers and fishermen, the majority of the population, of many of their French market. New industrial incentives have been offered, mainly in the central Rennes area, but they haven't perfumed the fact that only seven percent of the taxes taken out of Brittany ever find their way back in local improvements.

What about the many Bretons who died for France during the wars? "It wasn't patriotism," he said. "They were slaughtered in the front lines. A quarter of a million in the last war. Did you know that in the Franco-Prussian War [1870] at the Battle of Le Mans, the dead Breton soldiers in the front lines were found to have had toy guns? And no shoes.

"The Bretons are the Jews of France," Yann Goulet stated.

Well, why have the vast majority of Bretons voted for de Gaulle so consistently in the past? Brittany is known to be the most conservative, catholic region of France. Goulet had an answer. "It's the Breton inferiority complex. They've been told so long that they are stupid and backward that many actually believed de Gaulle was better. But give a Breton a few drinks and he'll let you know how much he hates the French."

Sealed off for centuries in the dank mists of the sea, the Bretons have naturally developed some distinctive characteristics. They flow with the tide and blow with the wind in a way no Biarritz weekender ever dared. Just last fall the interior forest of Brocéliande was enchanted with 200 grown druids in white robes, dancing, chanting and waving mistletoe as the sun reached its zenith. The Breton revolt, say some, is a fear of the world of the future. When astronauts are spinning around the moon of a Sunday afternoon, many Bretons are clinging to what they know, the land and the sea.

"When I first came to Paris to study at the Ecole

des Beaux Arts, I couldn't understand why I was different," Goulet reminisced. "All the things that had been precious to me—honesty, sincerity, the family—were laughed at by the Parisian students. I might as well have been in a Chinese country. Then I realized I was different, a Celt, of a different race. So in 1936 I joined the Breton Nationalist Party [founded in 1911]. I was 22 years old.

"There were some bombings. I wasn't responsible. But I was dragged handcuffed from a class between two gendarmes, and jailed. From that day, I became an extremist."

Directly or indirectly—he can't reveal too much—Goulet's extremism has exploded government offices, police headquarters, tax offices and electric pylons of the "occupying power". Perhaps the most spectacular hit to date was the levelling of 10 government trucks in one shot at Saint-Brieuc. Tons of high-powered explosives were recently unearthed by French authorities in Breton forest caches. *Les plasticages*, or plastic bombings, have been the most popular way of attacking the French, says Goulet, a one-time French army commando.

"I would destroy every last remnant of government, but I don't want people killed. That would be the last resort. I'm really a pacifist, but I've been driven to extremes.

"Here, look at these scars," demanded Goulet, projecting that formidable face. "Put your hand there, beside my eye. That was given to me during a beating in a French jail. French jails are worse than any Nazi prison," he says, and he's been in both.

Out there on the limb with Goulet are members of seven other Breton nationalist groups who find inner direction from the *Comité de la Bretagne Libre*. It is the most militant *Front de Libération de la Bretagne*, the FLB, whose signature marks *les plasticages* and the most scenic spots in the Paris subway. Non-committee groups have, however, had their shots at *la grande république*. At least 12 are known, but Goulet because of his Irish immunity is the most talkative.

A paramilitary organization, the FLB's basic unit is *le strollad*, staffed with two or three men directed by a corporal. The intermediate section is *le bagad*, directed by a sergeant. The largest unit, *le kevrenn*, is topped by an officer. The extensiveness of the organization was only recently revealed during the interrogation of 42 arrested militants. At least eight *kevrenns* exist with at least one in the Paris area where water supplies have been bombed. Like the notorious Klu Klux Klan of the southern United States, the group's meetings are hazed in mystic rites and symbolic costume, the red and black *ca-goules*, or hoods.

Goulet admits he has learned from the Fenians, that wild and ancient order of Irish terrorists who along with the liberation of Ireland, have in their book of historical accomplishments the confederation of Canada.

It was the hearty Irish who helped the Goulet family and other condemned Bretons escape from France after the war. And now, the amateur politi-



At secret training classes, the Breton commandos

cians in the bars and byways of Bray say that, well, they're not sure mind you, but Goulet and his men could be getting in the odd sabotage seminar with the Irish Republican Army (IRA). When asked, Goulet said: "Those are the questions I cannot answer."

He did admit to having many supporters in Canada, including the *Union des Bretons du Canada*. The Canadian embassy in Paris has been approached for sympathy and support, but has diplomatically refused lest they be accused of meddling in another country's internal politics.

Bretons don't support Quebecers in return, says Goulet, because it's ridiculous to compare the case of Quebec with that of Brittany. "I don't think there is a single Frenchman who is interested in a free Quebec. Besides, we want good relations with the government of Canada."

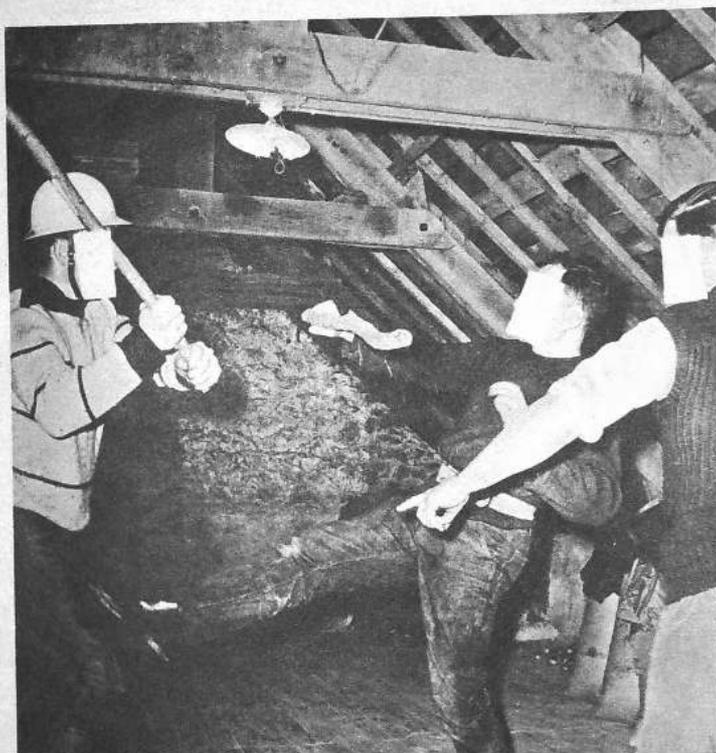
Lined up in the Breton separatist ranks next to the farmers are doctors, one architect, teachers, four



get special instruction in the making and hurling of Molotov cocktails.



French government garage in Saint-Brieuc levelled by extremists' bombs.



Breton terrorists are also well trained in the art of attack and defence.

priests, innkeepers, journalists and infinite combinations of others. The postman in Bray must feel close to the cause, too, as he carries the many letters from volunteers apparently eager to help liberate Brittany. They are still a minority, but so, cautions Goulet, were the Irish nationalists at one time. And Ché Guevara started with only six men.

"As de Gaulle directed *France Libre* from London during the war, I direct *Bretagne Libre* from Dublin."

Goulet has been driven to violence. Still he is not bound by it. If his ideal Brittany could become a reality by peaceful democratic means, so much the better. But it's unlikely. So the violence will continue to bring about an ideal Christian Socialist form of government in Brittany. In his system, there would be no problem of big property owners. If everyone is honest, he says, they can't be rich.

Brittany would be a sort of region-state in a Europe where large and small states play a part, per-

haps like in Ireland where Yann Goulet's social circle now spans rebels and statesmen alike. He's proud to tell you he knows some of the most important people of the Republic of Ireland and many other important ministers and ambassadors who have frequented his studio since he won the Irish National Sculpture competition after the war.

What is the man and what is the land in this powerful mélange of ideas, some fierce, some dream-like? A look at Brittany itself might clarify a few things.

The train moves out from Paris, past charming old walled farming villages dating back to the Middle Ages. A farmer in the field is sowing seeds, throwing them out to the left and then to the right as he walks up and down between the strips. The train stops for a few minutes at Rennes, Brittany's second largest industrial city, but there are still a couple of women boarding the train with live chickens in boxes.

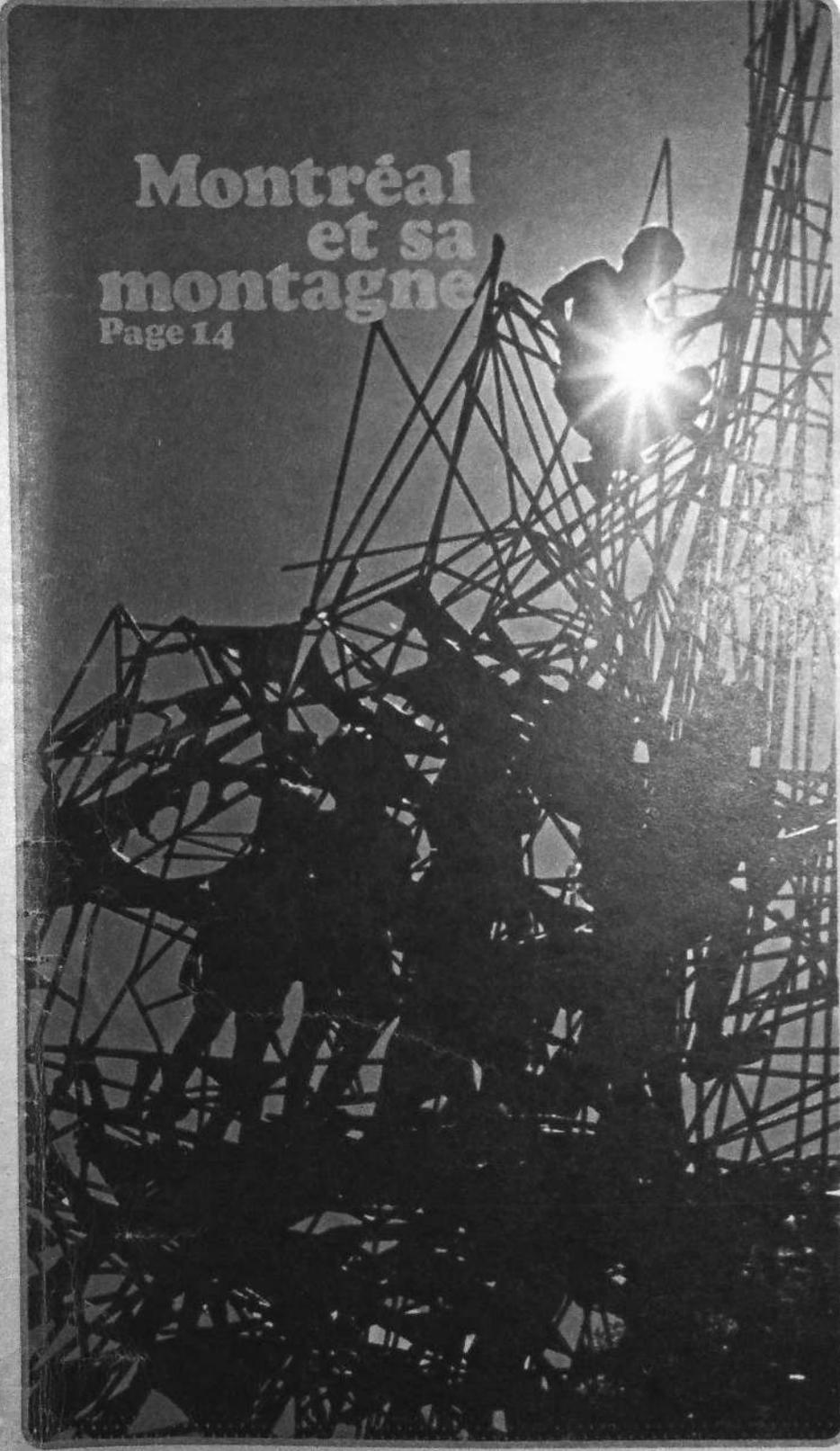
Two hundred and thirty miles from Paris, the train slows down for St. Malo. And yes, it's a bit like Quebec City. The old town of 12,000 inhabitants has been restored after the partial wartime demolition. True to the ages, it's built high on blocks of grey granite sharply capped with copper roofs arching defiantly over the sea.

The native Malouins, as they're called, are quite aware of their great discoverer Jacques Cartier. But mind you, he's just one in a great number of discoverers, pirates and poetic adventurers who have struck out from St. Malo.

Does it follow that this independent tradition supports Breton separatism and Yann Goulet? As young Breton, Daniel Rocher, a PhD student at the Sorbonne in Paris says: "Separatism is a question of basic patriotism, which is deeper than any of the other French problems of high taxes, antiquated education, workers' injustices and the weak franc. Yet it's reinforced by all of them." ◀

perspectives-dimanche

Dimanche *Matin*



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et sa
montagne**
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et
ses Girls**
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LES CARICATURISTES ont parfois stylisé la tête du général de Gaulle en hexagone représentant la carte géographique de la France. La Bretagne y jouant le rôle du nez, des malins diront que le Grand Charles a dû se moucher à plusieurs reprises... surtout après qu'il eut crié son célèbre "Vive le Québec libre!"

Plus que jamais, en effet, les Bretons réclament leur autonomie. Des attentats à la bombe ont eu lieu dans dix édifices gouvernementaux de Bretagne ces derniers mois. Si le successeur du général ressuscite ses projets de décentralisation administrative et si, en particulier, il détache de cette ancienne province — divisée depuis 1789 en cinq départements — la Loire-Atlantique dont le chef-lieu est Nantes, capitale industrielle de la Bretagne, on peut prévoir que les attentats se multiplieront. Déjà 42 terroristes ont été arrêtés, dont René-François Vaillant, Breton maintenant installé au Canada.

QUAND, CET HIVER, de Gaulle a visité la région, il a pu apercevoir des affiches qui proclamaient: "Québec libre — Bretagne libre" et "Nous sommes tous des Québécois!"

"Par son exclamation lancée du balcon de l'hôtel de ville de Montréal et sans se rendre compte de la portée de son geste, le général a donné à notre cause un appui inespéré", dit Yann Goulet, chef du Comité pour la Bretagne libre.

Goulet s'est exilé à Bray, en Irlande, après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, afin d'échapper au tribunal qui l'avait condamné à mort par contumace pour collaboration avec les nazis. Cette condamnation, quant à lui, n'est qu'un prétexte, et il soutient que Paris a simplement voulu faire disparaître ainsi l'agitateur autonomiste qu'il est.

Agé maintenant de 55 ans et sculpteur de profession, Goulet est le type parfait du révolutionnaire. Des yeux d'un bleu profond comme celui de la mer bretonne éclairent un visage qu'on dirait buriné dans le granit de son pays.

"Si les Québécois ont droit à leur indépendance parce qu'ils ne parlent pas la même langue que le reste du Canada, dit Yann, les Bretons aussi mais avec mille fois plus de raison. Le français n'est-il

pas enseigné au Québec et le code civil ne s'inspire-t-il pas du code Napoléon? Dans les écoles de Bretagne des affiches défendent "de cracher par terre et de parler breton"!

"Le Québec n'a jamais été un Etat indépendant. La Bretagne l'a déjà été, par contre, ce qui justifie encore mieux ses aspirations séparatistes. Notre peuple est formé de Celtes (ou Gaéliques) qui ont fui la Grande-Bretagne et le pays de Galles au IV^e siècle. Il a eu longtemps des rois à lui, et c'est un légat du pape qui les couronnait. La Bretagne, même vassale, a gardé ses lois à elle jusqu'en 1532, année où François Ier l'a annexée à la France. Il a consolidé cette annexion en épousant Claude, fille d'Anne, dernière duchesse de Bretagne. Mais ce fut un mariage politique, non un mariage d'amour."

Deux ans plus tard, François Ier envoyait un marin breton, Jacques Cartier, de Saint-Malo, explorer les côtes du Canada. Un certain nombre de Bretons ont compté parmi les pionniers de la Nouvelle-France et les ancêtres des Québécois.

"Par leur origine celte, les Bretons sont d'une autre race que les Français, reprend Goulet. Notre langue est voisine du gaélique parlé en Irlande et au pays de Galles, et notre caractère s'apparente à celui des Irlandais et des Gallois, même si nos façons de penser diffèrent."

Yann Goulet s'est fait naturaliser Irlandais et est même devenu l'un des échevins de Bray. Son fils, Hervé, a fait ses études de droit à Dublin, capitale de l'Irlande. C'est à Dublin que se trouve le siège de la Ligue celtique et qu'est publié le *Bulletin de nouvelles bretonnes*, lu par les partisans du maintien des idiomes et coutumes celtiques. Un récent numéro du Bulletin a même placé en exergue cette citation du Premier ministre canadien Pierre Elliott Trudeau: "On juge une démocratie à la façon dont elle traite ses minorités."

S'inspirant de cette phrase, Goulet accuse le gouvernement français de génocide culturel à l'égard de la minorité bretonne de 2 500 000 âmes. "Paris, dit-il, a si bien laissé s'appauvrir la Bretagne que la plupart des jeunes Bretons doivent chercher du travail hors de leur région. Un relevé fait par le curé de

Quimperlé, au Finistère, montre que, de 250 couples qui s'y sont épousés entre 1961 et 1965, pas moins de 196 ont émigré. Quarante p.c. de la main-d'oeuvre bretonne gagne moins de \$120 par mois. C'est pourquoi les jeunes se dirigent vers Paris, où les salaires surpassent en moyenne de 40 p.c. ceux qu'on reçoit en Bretagne.

"Le Marché commun, en regroupant à l'échelle continentale le transport des marchandises, a détourné une forte partie du tonnage maritime des ports bretons. Fermiers et pêcheurs — les deux principaux métiers en Bretagne — ont perdu plusieurs de leurs marchés. On a bien tenté d'implanter des entreprises nouvelles, mais ces essais sont encore timides, et seulement 7 p.c. des impôts perçus dans la région retournent à celle-ci sous formes de travaux publics ou de subsides.

"De Gaulle parlait de mettre en orbite un satellite franco-québécois de communications, dit Goulet. A côté de cela, songez que la signalisation automatique au téléphone n'existe pas encore en Bretagne, et vous vous demanderez ensuite pourquoi nous voulons nous séparer de la France!

"Que dire des nombreux soldats bretons sacrifiés dans les boucheries des premières lignes durant les deux guerres mondiales? 250 000 dans la seconde! Durant la guerre de 1870, en relevant les corps des fantassins bretons tombés à la bataille du Mans, on s'est aperçu que plusieurs manquaient de chaussures!"

Pourquoi donc alors la quasi-totalité des Bretons ont-ils voté pour de Gaulle?

"La Bretagne a toujours été la région la plus conservatrice et la plus catholique de France, répond Goulet. La faute en est aussi à notre complexe d'infériorité. On nous a répété si longtemps et si obstinément que nous étions ignorants et obtus que nous avons fini par le croire et par trouver que les autres nous sont supérieurs."

Leur éloignement de la capitale, le climat brumeux qui enveloppe presque constamment la péninsule ont accentué la différence de caractère entre Bretons et Français d'autres régions. Le mysticisme des premiers s'est exacerbé, de même que leur humeur sombre, leur peur



**YANN GOULET
MILITE
DEPUIS 33 ANS
POUR LA**



"BRETAGNE LIBRE"

Qui ignore
qu'un
briquet
Ronson
Varaflame
Comet SL
ne coûte
que
\$7.95



Est-ce un Ronson butane ou non? Bien sûr. Mais nous ne pouvons blâmer personne de vouloir examiner le nouveau briquet Ronson Varaflame Comet SL de plus près. Car après tout, il est difficile de croire pouvoir acheter un briquet tempête au butane à \$7.95 qui est léger, dont l'allumage est automatique et la flamme réglable, et dont le couvercle pivotant est conçu pour emmagasiner des pierres de recharge... et surtout que ce soit un briquet Ronson. Mais ce briquet existe vraiment... c'est le briquet Ronson Varaflame Comet SL. Offert en rouge, noir ou blanc, il convient très bien aux dames aussi. Il y a aussi le Ronson Comet, offert en gris, noir ou blanc, qui s'allume dans le vent—l'idéal pour les fumeurs de pipe. Ne vous laissez pas tromper par le prix peu élevé...

car même à \$7.95, le briquet Ronson Varaflame Comet est un briquet Ronson.



Il se remplit en quelques secondes et brûle pendant des mois.

RONSON
c'est le flambeau de la flamme

FRONT DE LIBERATION DE LA BRETAGNE
YANN GOULET



Ci-dessus, des séparatistes bretons s'entraînant secrètement à la guérilla; ci-dessous, les résultats d'un attentat à la bombe du F.L.B. dans un garage de l'Etat à Saint-Brieuc, Côtes-du-Nord; plus bas, le slogan séparatiste sur un mur de Rennes.



de l'inconnu, leur refus des nouveautés imposées par Paris.

"Quand je suis allé m'inscrire à l'École des Beaux-Arts, dit Goulet, je me suis senti différent de mes camarades parisiens. Toutes les valeurs morales auxquelles j'étais attaché—honnêteté, sincérité, respect de la famille—provoquaient leurs rires. Je n'aurais pas été plus dépaysé en Chine. Puis j'ai compris peu à peu qu'étant Celte j'appartenais à une autre race qu'eux. C'est pourquoi, en 1936, à 22 ans, je me suis joint aux rangs du Parti nationaliste breton, fondé en 1911. Notre parti a commis, à l'époque, quelques attentats. Je n'en étais pas personnellement responsable, mais deux gendarmes sont venus m'arrêter en pleine classe, aux Beaux-Arts, et m'ont amené en prison. De ce jour je suis devenu extrémiste.

"Je suis prêt à détruire le dernier vestige matériel de la domination de Paris sur nous, mais je ne voudrais causer la mort de personne. Je suis au fond un pacifiste mais non un lâche. Voyez cette profonde cicatrice près de mon oeil. Je l'ai subie aux mains d'un flic dans une prison française. Je puis assurer que la vie y est encore plus dure que dans une geôle nazie car j'ai connu les deux."

Réfugiés en Irlande avec Goulet, on trouve des membres de sept autres

groupements nationalistes, qui acceptent ses directives. Le plus violent est le Front de libération de la Bretagne, dont le sigle — F.L.B. — signe la plupart des explosions au plastic survenues en Bretagne et à Paris même. Tous ces groupes agissent dans l'ombre. Goulet lui-même ne se montre plus prolixe que grâce à son immunité de citoyen irlandais.

Il reconnaît s'être inspiré du Sinn Fein, ce mouvement qui, au siècle dernier, a fait campagne jusqu'en Amérique pour la libération de l'Irlande et dont les menaces d'agression contre le Canada en partant du sol américain ont pesé sur la décision des colonies britanniques du continent de s'unir pour former la Confédération. Le seul meurtre politique jamais commis au Canada, celui de Thomas d'Arcy McGee, l'un des Pères de la Confédération, a été attribué aux "Féniens", qui lui reprochaient d'avoir renoncé à ses convictions de patriote irlandais et de s'être fait le serviteur des Anglais.

Ce sont des Irlandais qui ont aidé Goulet et d'autres séparatistes bretons à fuir la France. A Bray, on soupçonne Goulet et ses partisans d'avoir des conciliabules secrets avec l'Armée républicaine irlandaise, qui a poursuivi au XXe siècle le travail fait par les Féniens au précédent et qui est main-

tenant officiellement interdite là-bas.

Goulet affirme compter de nombreux sympathisants ici, dont l'Union des Bretons du Canada. Ses émissaires ont même approché — mais vainement — l'ambassade canadienne de Paris. "Bien que séparatistes nous-mêmes, nous n'appuyons pas les séparatistes québécois, dit Yann, car les situations de nos deux peuples minoritaires n'ont rien de comparable, en réalité. Nous tenons à maintenir de bons rapports avec le gouvernement canadien. D'ailleurs, pas un seul Français n'est sincèrement intéressé à l'indépendance du Québec."

Le mouvement groupe des membres de professions libérales — médecins, architectes, instituteurs, journalistes et même quatre prêtres — aussi bien que des gens des métiers les plus humbles. Leur nombre est réduit, mais Goulet ne s'en inquiète guère. Le Sinn Fein aussi, fait-il remarquer, ne rassemblait d'abord qu'une poignée d'hommes. Castro a entrepris la révolution à Cuba avec une quinzaine de partisans. "De Gaulle lui-même a dirigé de Londres la France libre durant la guerre. Moi, je dirige de Dublin la Bretagne libre."

Le chef séparatiste breton ne se fait pas d'illusions sur la promesse d'autonomie des régions formulée par de Gaulle dans le fatidique référendum

du 27 avril et que son successeur répètera peut-être à son tour. Il se dit prêt à coopérer mais se méfie des fausses concessions. Il est donc probable que les attentats du F.L.B. et des mouvements alliés se poursuivront afin de pouvoir doter la Bretagne du régime socialiste-chrétien qui lui convient, de l'avis de Goulet. Ce régime verrait, entre autres réformes, à abolir la grande propriété terrienne. "On ne peut être à la fois riche et honnête", dit-il.

Quel appui Goulet trouve-t-il dans l'élite bretonne?

Les Bretons aspirent à plus d'autonomie pour leur région. Particulièrement la jeune élite. Daniel Rocher, qui prépare une thèse de doctorat en philosophie à la Sorbonne (Paris), en est un exemple typique. Il est originaire de Saint-Malo, le vieux port breton dont les remparts évoquent ceux de la ville de Québec et qui est fier d'avoir donné le jour à Jacques Cartier mais qui n'oublie toutefois aucun des autres marins nés au même endroit.

"Notre autonomisme, dit Rocher, nous préoccupe plus foncièrement que les problèmes communs à toute la France: impôts trop lourds, monnaie faible, régime d'instruction publique vétuste et injustices sociales aiguës. Mais tous ces problèmes ajoutent au mécontentement général." ●

Pourquoi pas?

Pourquoi ne ferais-je pas de l'équitation... ou de l'alpinisme... ou encore du tennis? Pourquoi n'irais-je pas au ballet ou au concert? C'est ma vie, tout ça!



Et savez-vous ce qui me la rend plus facile, cette vie? Les tampons Tampax. Ça vous étonne? Il n'y a pas de quoi. Les tampons Tampax représentent la protection hygiénique interne vraiment moderne. Ainsi, que je sois à cheval ou aux concerts symphoniques, je me sens toujours à l'aise. Je peux aussi facilement en emporter une provision de rechange, car les tampons Tampax tiennent dans mon sac à main comme dans ma poche. Et il ne peut y avoir d'odeur gênante. Ça vous étonne toujours? Alors, un conseil: hâtez-vous d'en faire l'essai vous-même! Pourquoi pas?



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8 juin 1969 - 25



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Section Three

Tight security

De Gaulle visits restless Bretons

By BERNARD KAPLAN
The Star's Paris Bureau

PARIS — President de Gaulle began a three-day tour today of troubled Brittany, a province that considers itself ethnically apart and economically oppressed, to offer it regional liberties.

It is de Gaulle's first grass roots tour since last May's upheaval here. It comes in the wake of a severe police crackdown on the terrorist Breton National Liberation Front which, in the past few weeks, has led to nearly 50 arrests. Security arrangements for the visit are more rigorous than at any time since the Algerian war.

Only one public speech is to be made by de Gaulle while in Brittany. That will be at Quimper on Sunday. Quimper is considered one of the hotbeds of Breton nationalism and the police claim to have broken up a large cell of the Liberation Front there.

But, if all goes well on the visit and de Gaulle believes his reception by the Bretons has been enthusiastic, it is expected he will use the Quimper speech to announce the date of a national referendum for approval of his new program to de-centralize the overly centralized French administrative system, introducing a degree of regional autonomy, especially over economic matters.

De Gaulle tested

Brittany is regarded as a singular test, both for the French president personally and for his program. This is de Gaulle's first visit to Brittany in eight years. It is a lapse which tends to indicate how far this region of 3,500,000 people has been from the main preoccupations of France's rulers until recently. But Brittany's discontent and sense of alienation long antedates the unrest which has swept the country-at-large during the past year.

While the terrorists of the liberation front are generally believed to possess the support of only a small minority of Bretons, nationalist sentiment — which favors cultural and even political autonomy, though seldom total independence — is on the rise through such organizations as the Movement for the Organization of Brittany and the Breton Democratic Union. Yet, a strong Gaullist current also survives. In last June's general elections, the Breton depart-

ments elected 24 Gaullist deputies out of 32.

The de Gaulle regime has been reasonably attentive to Brittany's economic problems, although without producing striking results. It has been almost totally unyielding on the cultural front, maintaining a rigid French-ifying campaign among people who are increasingly conscious of their distinct, non-French heritage and wish to preserve it. There has been particular resentment that de Gaulle, while deter-

mined to promote Quebec's cultural identity, has been blind to a similar problem much closer to Paris.

According to Yann Goulet, the exiled leader of the National Committee for a Free Brittany, "the words de Gaulle spoke in Quebec deserve to be engraved in gold on the front of the future parliament of Brittany."

De Gaulle's regional program has been hotly contested, both by those who say it is a charade which will leave all the real powers of the central govern-

ment intact and by those, mostly within the Gaullist party, who argue it may dangerously weaken the state. De Gaulle has ignored warnings from his advisers that a referendum on the subject may lead to a fresh political crisis. The most frequent guess is that the referendum will be held in late March.

Bretons are critical of the plan because, while it would create a Breton region, this would include only four of the five present departments considered part of historic Brittany.



Trudeau interested

Breton separatists mean business

By BERNARD KAPLAN

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PARIS — "The war for Brittany has just started, thanks to the heavy-handedness of the French Government."

The speaker was Ar Louarn, one of the father figures of the Breton nationalist movement. His words were in reply to the question of whether the recent round-up of 25 alleged terrorists, belonging to the Breton Liberation Front, had decapitated "activist" operations. To reporters who have heard similar utterances signal the start of "wars of national liberation" on three or four continents during the past two decades, they sounded positively eerie.

No one seriously thinks Brittany is about to burst into civil war. But, paradoxically enough, nothing has provided so much evidence of the spread of the separatist movement as the first major police success in cracking it open. Judging by the quality of those arrested and their geographic distribution, Breton separatism is more earnest and better organized than anyone had imagined up to now.

One sympathizer to whom I spoke predicted that the arrests would help the extremists rather than hurt them. "They intend to make their trial a political manifestation," he explained. "For the first time, the Breton independence movement has an opportunity to capture the world's attention."

Expert retained

To this end, all of the defendants have retained the services of Jacques Lemaitre, a lawyer who achieved a considerable impact here last year defending Guadeloupe nationalists on trial for sedition. It is clear they hope to make their case, to be tried before the special Court for the Security of the State, a milestone.

The most striking aspect of the affair is that four of those arrested are Catholic priests. This is particularly so since the Breton Liberation Front has openly proclaimed its readiness to use violence, although eschewing the threat to human life. It is alleged to be responsible for 32 *plasticages*, none of which killed or injured anyone. The arrests also produced a haul of more than two thousand pounds of high explosive, stolen from military depots and engineering firms.

The clergy holds onto its influence among Brittany's three million people. It is the most Catholic portion of France. "Many people will be deeply impressed that four well-respected priests were ready to concede the use of bombs as the lesser evil," my informant said.

But the incarcerated include men from all walks of life, mostly young, but some in their 30s and 40s. Among them are a doctor, a factory hand, an air force sergeant and architect Pierre Lemoine who is also a city councillor of Quimper, Brittany's third largest city. René-Francois Vaillant, a travel agent dubbed "the Canadian" because he once lived there and claims Canadian citizenship, is regarded as the biggest fish taken by the police dragnet. He is described as the chief of the Liberation Front for southern Brittany.

The official contention for a long time was that the Front was phantom organization, involving literally no more than a handful of crackpots. This no longer holds water. That France's skilled and extensive security police hunted the terrorists for more than two years and finally unmasked them only by a fluke seems proof of remarkable organizing talents.

dozen groups, several of which overlap in membership. Nobody knows, for example, the precise connection between Goulet's group and the front. On several occasions, he has acted as the latter's spokesman to the outside world. After the arrests, however, he made statements that have been interpreted as disavowing the front, not for its terrorist tactics but presumably because its members were caught.

Supporters of the "Movement for the Organization of Brittany" insist that Goulet himself possesses nothing more than a skeletal band of followers, if that. The "M.O.B.," whose emphasis is on autonomy rather than full independence, maintains a kind of semi-legal existence. It claims membership in the thousands and its greatest strength among the younger people of the towns, in contrast to early nationalist movements which tended to be rooted in the unfruitful countryside.

To some extent, the M.O.B. is the legatee of the old Breton Nationalist Party to which both Goulet and "cultural nationalists" like Louarn belonged. It is wary, however, of being closely associated in the public mind with the oldtime nationalists, many of whom collaborated with the Nazis and, in some instances, joined the brutal Vichy *milice*. Goulet was among them and fled France in 1946 to avoid prosecution. But Louarn, who has known him well for more than thirty years, avers that his wartime record has been deliberately painted much blacker than it was.

The Liberation Front, on the other hand, is the successor of the "Gwenn Ha Du", a terrorist group which operated with minor impact between 1932 and the outbreak of the war. Its old leader, Celestin Laine, also lives in exile in Ireland, although "retired from politics."

Rising hopes

Whatever the strength of the various nationalist groups, the Breton sense of identity — and the desire to be differentiated from France — has undoubtedly grown by leaps and bounds during the past couple of years. The irony is that this has occurred at a moment when Brittany's economy has been making faster strides than it has in centuries. But, this, of course, fits De Tocqueville's dictum that revolutions are the product not of dire misery but of rising expectations.

Two events are the immediate causes of Breton nationalism's new propulsion: The Common Market and de Gaulle's dramatic espousal of French Canadian nationalism.

While industry has come to the area and agriculture has, to some degree, been rationalized, Brittany has hardly moved forward in a manner comparable to the more prosperous north and east of France. The rise of the Common Market has accentuated the Bretons' feeling of remoteness and isolation. More than ever, as one "activist" told me, "We feel ourselves to be in a forgotten corner of the world."

De Gaulle is to tour Brittany at the end of the month to tell them they are not forgotten and to preach the benefits of his new program of "regionalization." Security precautions for this visit will be extraordinarily strict. But Goulet and other nationalist spokesmen have declared there will be a "truce" for the duration of the presidential tour. Any incidents occurring then will be the work of provocateurs, Goulet has said.

Regional program

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The police got their break when
neighbors summoned them to the
house of Jacques Nidellec, a 39-year-old
employee of the French national railway,
in Nantes. Nidellec was in the midst of
a rip-roaring quarrel with his wife.
When the police came to the door, she
spilled the beans on him as a front
member.

Under interrogation, several of the
accused, but most notably Vaillant, are
said to have talked readily. The picture
they give is of an organization operat-
ing throughout Brittany, with branches
in the Paris region (several of the
bombings, especially aimed at water
supplies, have occurred near the capi-
tal). It is divided into "kevrenns" of
cells.

Members don red and black *cagoules*
(hoods) for their meetings, offering an
image of a group drawing its organiza-
tional inspiration partially from the old,
pre-war rightwing bands in France (or
even, perhaps, from the Ku Klux Klan)
and partially from the Communists. At
least, eight "kevrenns" existed before
the wave of arrests. How many remain
is unknown — at any rate, to the
French authorities.

Mauger is chief

Police in Lorient where Vaillant was
captured have quoted him as revealing
that the sectional chiefs of the move-
ment meet regularly under the leader-
ship of a certain "Mauger", the front's
self-styled "minister of war." Mauger's
identity is a mystery. He is apparently
a young man in his early 30s. His exist-
ence fits in with persistent reports that
the real head of Breton separatism isn't
Yann Goulet, the secretary-general of
the National Committee for Free Brit-
tany, who operates from exile in Bray,
Ireland, but a much younger figure who
has remained in France.

A prime difficulty in dissecting Bre-
ton nationalism is the matter of assess-
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Regional program

The nationalists are unimpressed by
the degree to which Brittany is likely to
benefit from regionalism. Goulet de-
scribed it as "an intermediary step, at
best." The regional program holds no
promise of recognizing Brittany as a
single entity. Its emphasis on economic
problems means little is likely to be
done to solve the special cultural agony
of a region where at least half the in-
habitants still speak a language that is
barely recognized either in the schools
or by state-subsidized cultural activi-
ties. French radio broadcasts only 45
minutes in Breton weekly; there are no
regular TV emissions in the language.

The Bretons find this in glaring con-
trast with the very different policy fol-
lowed by the B.B.C. toward their breth-
ren in Wales. In all respects, they are
increasingly conscious of the growth of
nationalism among their fellow Celts of
Wales and Scotland and the extent to
which the British government has ac-
cepted this. "There is a Scottish nation-
alist in the British House of Commons,"
a Breton nationalist pointed out. "No
French government would allow that to
happen. The election would be an-
nulled."

The mayor of Guingamp, one of the
centres of the Liberation Front's opera-
tions, has said that the "crisis in Brit-
tany is a double problem, spiritual as
well as material. The century of the
rocket is also that of the deepening of
regional roots — too few people in Paris
have as yet recognized this."

For many Bretons, de Gaulle's cry
of "Vive le Quebec libre!" pointed up
this particular blindness of the "occu-
pying power" better than anything else.
According to Louarn, "Brittany which
had a thousand years of independent
history has a better right to be called a
nation than Quebec which has never
had any."

He, and others, think the time has
come to make this understood.