

## General de Gaulle's Address (June 22, 1940)

"The French Government, after requesting the armistice, has now full knowledge of the conditions dictated by the enemy.

As a result, the French Army, Naval and Air Forces would be completely discharged, our weapons laid down, the French territory occupied and the French Government under the control of Germany and Italy.

One can say that this armistice would not only result in capitulation but also in slavery.

However, a large number of French people do not accept the capitulation or the enslavement for reasons that are called **honor, common sense and the higher interest of the Nation.**

I am talking about **honor!** Indeed, France is committed to not laying down its weapons unless its allies agree to do so. As long as its allies continue fighting, our government does not have the right to capitulate. The Polish Government, the Norwegian Government, the Belgian Government, the Dutch Government, as well as the Government of Luxemburg, although evicted from their own countries, have understood their duty.

I am appealing to your **common sense!** It is absurd to consider the fight as over. Yes, we have been heavily defeated. A bad military system, the mistakes made in conducting the operations, the government's spirit of abandon have all made us lose the Battle of France. But we still have a large Empire, an intact fleet, a lot of gold. We still have allies with immense resources who dominate the oceans. We still have the gigantic potential of the American industry. The same war conditions which led to our defeat by 5,000 aircraft and 6,000 tanks can, tomorrow, lead to victory with 20,000 tanks and 20,000 aircraft.

I am talking about the **higher interest of our Nation!** Because this war is not a war between France and Germany that can be decided by a battle. It is a world war. Nobody can predict if the countries that have taken a neutral stand, will do so tomorrow, nor can one predict if Germany's allies will remain forever its allies. If the forces of freedom finally prevail over those of slavery, what would be the fate of a France which submitted to the enemy?

Honor, common sense, and the superior interest of the Nation command to all the free French to continue fighting wherever they are and however they can.

I, General de Gaulle, am starting this national task here in England.

I invite all French soldiers of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, I invite the engineers and workers specialized in armament that are on British soil or could go there, to join me.

I invite the leaders, the soldiers, the sailors, the pilots of the French Army, Navy and Air Force, wherever they may be, to get in touch with me.

I invite all the French who want to remain free to listen to me and to follow me.

Long live a free and independent France!