

**Securing the Revolutionary State:  
The Development of French Counter-Espionage,  
1791-1794**

By

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## Abstract

The history of counter-espionage during the early years of the French Revolution has been curiously overlooked by scholars and non-fiction writers alike. Until now, no single study has appeared, or indeed been published, charting the course of its development during the period in discussion. This thesis aims to fill this lacuna, not by offering an episodic account of its activities but by examining the precepts, perceptions and procedures that determined its conduct as it relates to *la sûreté de l'état*. Its objective, in other words, is to demonstrate how the pursuit and punishment of spies is not a simple cloak and dagger tale of hidden plots and secret agents but a fundamental question of national security. As this thesis will explain, the role that counter-espionage played is actually of central importance to our understanding of how the revolutionaries defended and securitized their embryonic state at a crucial juncture in its existence. Without the existence of a single state organ responsible for overseeing its operations, or a clandestine agency that conducted secret missions on the ground, this thesis will show that the measures to neutralize threats of espionage were not taken in isolation but formed part of a broader process that is otherwise known as securitization. In other words, it will attempt to demonstrate that, for all the overblown discourse of foreign plots and political conspiracies, counter-espionage played a significant role in not just attempting to neutralize the enemy within but also, in military and counter-insurgency operations. With several state and government institutions involved in its operations, from paramilitary organizations such as the *gendarmerie* and national guard to militant structures such as the *comités de surveillance*, it should be possible to reveal how counter-espionage played an overarching role in thwarting all threats that compromised the security of the revolutionary state.

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*To my mother*

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## Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in the notes:

AM	Archives Municipales, Douai, Metz, Alpes-Maritimes, France
AN	Archives Nationales, Paris
APP	Archives de la Prefecture de Police, Paris
BL	British Library, London
PRO	Public Record Office, the National Archives, London
FO	Foreign Office Papers, the National Archives, London
MAE	Archives des Ministère des Étrangères, Paris

See the sources section in the bibliography for precise details of the archival material.

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## INTRODUCTION

During the revolutionary period, the security of the French state was the prime object of attack from foreign and domestic espionage. Despite the absence of a single, permanent agency officially charged with superintending overall operations, the unprecedented and persistent instability of the interior situation, accentuated by insurrection, defection and foreign invasion led, arguably, to the early modern practice of counter-espionage in France.<sup>1</sup> The emergence of this security dispositive did not occur in isolation, however. Whilst the rampant spy-fever, fuelled by the outbreak of war, appears to have accelerated this development, the measures that the revolutionaries introduced to detect and neutralize spies, though sometimes targeted, nevertheless overlapped with the wider security controls which were imposed to consolidate and protect the revolutionary state against all perceived enemies, whether foreign, domestic or collusion of the two.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the perception that the

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Denécé, 'French Intelligence and Security Services in 2016: A Short History', *Note Historique, Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement*, 47 (2016). The first service in French history officially charged with counter-espionage dates back to the second of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the formation of the *Statistical Section*, a subsection of the *Deuxième Bureau* created in 1873 following the restructure of the military high command (*État-Major Générale*). With the failure of intelligence being identified as one of the principal causes of defeat at the hands of Prussia, the President of the Minister of Councils, Adolphe Thiers signed a decree on 8 June 1871, establishing a permanent foreign intelligence service charged with uncovering enemy designs and operations. Although originally subordinated to the army's EMG, the *Deuxième Bureau* would, in reality, be more closely tied with the War Ministry, assuming a crucial role in the institutionalization, centralization and professionalization of France's intelligence services. Yet, it was actually the *Section de Statistiques et de Reconnaissances Militaires*, together with the gendarmerie, that would from 1886 to 1899 be officially responsible for conducting espionage operations abroad and counter-espionage activities at home before it became a police responsibility with jurisdiction switching to the Ministry of the Interior. However, it was not until the end of World War II, after a series of permutations and increasing delineation of duties, that France's contemporary intelligence services were formally established with The Service for External Documentation and Counter-espionage (*Service de documentation extérieure et de contre-espionnage* – SDECE) and the Directorate for the Surveillance of the Territory (*Direction de la Surveillance du territoire* – DST) both formed in 1946, in charge of foreign intelligence and counter-espionage respectively. In 2008, the DST merged with the DCRG to create the *Direction central du renseignement intérieur* (DCRI). On 30 April 2014, however, responsibility for France's counter-espionage operations was transferred to *La Direction générale de la sécurité intérieure* (or DGSI) where it remains to this day. John L Lewis, *Etude de guerre: Tactique des renseignements* (Paris: L. Baudoïn & Ce, 1881), p.117. John Stead, *Second Bureau* (London: Evans Brothers Ltd, 1959), Jean Paul Mauriat, 'Le Contre-Espionnage, élément de la défense', *Défense Nationale*, (1967), 107. Roger Faligot, Rémy Kauffer, *Histoire mondiale du renseignement, 1870-1939*, 2 vols (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1993), I p.16, Gérard Arboit, *Des Services secrets pour la France: Du Dépôt de la Guerre à la DGSE (1856-2013)* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2014).

European powers were infiltrating the interior to promote violent counter-revolution from outside created the growing need for practices that were not only increasingly transnational but represented a gradual shift in onus and prioritization from information collection and deterrence to active pursuit and punishment. Although incoherent and imperfectly implemented, this emerging dispositive was not only firmly entrenched by the end of the Terror but the measures adopted to counter the threat of espionage were not only broadly effective, at least in certain pockets, but would ultimately prefigure the techniques and norms introduced under the Directory, Consulate and Empire.

## I

Until now, there has not been a single, academic (or popular) study focused squarely on the history of counter-espionage during the early revolutionary years and even, one could equally argue, throughout the Directorial period.<sup>3</sup> This seems quite surprising given the undoubted spy-mania that subsisted throughout the period. The sole secondary sources which devote any sections on the hunt for enemy spies as far as the early revolutionary period is concerned, are the excellent articles written by Monique Mesyayer and the French academic historian, Hugues Marquis, both of whom place their research in the context of the war effort and less on the auxiliary, subversive activities underwriting the counter-revolution.<sup>4</sup> Otherwise, the only other secondary source which claims to treat the subject of counter-espionage at any length, albeit in relation to the punishment of spies, is a minor work published in 1930s, deceptively titled *Le Châtiment des espions et des traîtres sous la*

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<sup>3</sup> The sole exception is a single chapter devoted exclusively to French counter-espionage during the Directorial period by the author for his Masters' dissertation. Carlos Garcia de la Huerta, 'Perceptions of British Espionage under the Directory', Unpublished MA by Research dissertation, (Leeds: University of Leeds, 2012), 16-43.

<sup>4</sup> Monique Mestayer, 'Suspects et espions en 1792- an II à Douai', *Revue du Nord* 71, 282.3 (1989), 885-901., Marquis Hugues, 'Espions et agents secrets pendant la campagne des Flanders (1793-1794)', *Revue du Nord* 75, 299 (1993), 121-32. The exception, of course, is the article written by Thomas Lockett which conceives spies as *mouchards* and not foreign or domestic enemies engaged in intelligence gathering or related subversive activities. Thomas Manley Lockett, 'Hunting for Spies and Whores: A Parisian Riot on the Eve of the French Revolution', *Past & Present*, 156 (1997), 116-143.

*Révolution française*. Just sixty six pages long, and lacking academic rigour, it delivers a mostly pedestrian account of the *Conspiration de l'Étranger* and practically nothing on surveillance and enforcement.<sup>5</sup> These examples aside, the historiography has mostly concentrated on the known espionage activities within France and its contiguous borders and not the revolutionaries' efforts to combat them. This is not to say that these studies- notably by Alfred Cobban, Elizabeth Sparrow and Michael Durey - do not examine some of these counter-measures but that they do not provide a systematic assessment, or contextual framework, to further our understanding of counter-espionage during this period.<sup>6</sup> This thesis thus seeks to redress this imbalance. Its purpose, in other words, is not to diminish the contribution made by the aforementioned scholars, but to complement their work with a parallel study on how and why France's counter-espionage practice developed in the way it did. The picture that emerges will not necessarily be straightforward, especially during the Constitutional Monarchy period. The history of early modern counter-espionage is far more nuanced, characterizing, to some extent, the chaotic nature of revolutionary politics as well as the inherent instability and transitional nature of the revolutionary state itself.

## II

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<sup>5</sup> Jean Bruhat, *Le Châtiment des espions et des traîtres sous la Révolution française* (Paris: Au bureau d'éditions, 1937).

<sup>6</sup> For the most important academic works on foreign espionage in early revolutionary France, see Alfred Cobban, 'British Secret Service in France, 1784-1792', *English Historical Review*, 69.271 (1954), 226-261, Alfred Cobban, 'The Beginning of the Channel Isles Correspondence', 1789-1794, *English Historical Review*, 77.302 (1962), 38-52., Michael Durey, *William Wickham Master Spy: The Secret War Against the French Revolution*, (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009). Hugues Marquis, 'L'Angleterre et les débuts de l'insurrection vendéenne', *Recherches vendéennes* (Centre Vendéen de recherches Historiques), 5 (1998), 115-128, Hugues Marquis, 'L'espionnage Britannique et la Fin de l'Ancien Régime', *HES* (1998), 261-276; Hugues Marquis, *Les Agents de l'Enemi: Les espions à la solde de l'Angleterre dans une France en Révolution* (Paris: Vendémiaire, 2014)., Hugues Marquis, 'Les Services de Renseignement britannique et la Révolution Française', *Revue historique*, 286.2 (1996), 383-400., Elizabeth Sparrow, *Secret Service: British Agents in France, 1792-1815* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), Elizabeth Sparrow, 'Secret Service under Pitt's Administrations, 1792-1806', *History*, 83 (1998), 280-294, Elizabeth Sparrow, 'The Alien Office 1792-1806', *The Historical Journal*, 33.2 (1990), 361-384.

One of the underlying difficulties in examining counter-espionage during this period is that the term itself did not appear in usage.<sup>7</sup> This seems rather incongruous given that *espion*, a French word, dates back to circa 1200.<sup>8</sup> It is perhaps no coincidence that the term first appeared in the *Roberts* Historical dictionary in 1899, one year following its official mention by General Gonse, the deputy head of the *état-major*.<sup>9</sup> During his examination in the case against Colonel Picquart, the former chief of the *Deuxième Bureau* embroiled in the notorious Dreyfus Affair, General Gonse outlined the role of the French intelligence services, otherwise known as *services de renseignements*, as:

1. *La recherche de ce qui se prépare ou de ce qui se passe à l'étranger, dans l'intérêt de la défense nationale;*
2. *Le service de surveillance le long de nos frontières;*
3. *Le service de contre-espionnage en France et à l'étranger.*<sup>10</sup>

Gonse's conception of counter-espionage, as an individual branch of the intelligence services, conformed to the emerging norms and precepts of the time.<sup>11</sup> But to the

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<sup>7</sup> The author has found only one mention in a letter dated 17 mai 1787, written by a Russian observer, that has been reproduced in M de Lescure (ed.), *Correspondance Secrète inédit sur Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, la cour et la ville de 1777 à 1792*, 2 vols (Paris: Henri Plon, 1866), II, p.141. In it, he speaks of the former *Lieutenant Générale de Police*, 'M. le Noir, chargé du comité d'administration, de la direction de l'agiotage et d'un *contre-espionnage* en faveur de M. de Calonne'.

<sup>8</sup> Etymologically, the word *espion* possibly derives from the Germanic *spehon* or Italian *spione* (from *spia*). In French, the first derivation appears to be the found in this quote 'individu qui se mle aux ennemis pour les épier.' Alan Rey, 'Espion', *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (Paris: Le Robert, 1994), p.727.

<sup>9</sup> *Roberts* defines counter-espionage as the 'action d'espionner les espions'. The *Littre* dictionary of 1877 only mentions 'espionnage'. The 1925 edition of *Larousse Universel*, on the other hand, defines the term as a function of the 'police spécialement chargée de la surveillance des espions'; *Interrogatoire dans la procédure contre le colonel Picquart (le 15 juillet 1898)*, cited in Bertrand Warusfel, *Contre Espionnage et protection du secret: Histoire, droit et organisation de la sécurité nationale en France* (Paris: Lavauzelle-Graphic Éditions, 2000), p.15.

<sup>10</sup> Invented in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and appearing only rarely in French texts, the term *renseignement* can be defined in several ways. Not to be mistaken with the *services de renseignements*, the former can be regarded as the collection and analysis of information, whether in secrecy or in open, either to protect the security of the state or to gain an advantage over a hostile party; Paul McMahon, *British Spies and Irish Rebels: British Intelligence and Ireland, 1916–1945* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2008), p.2-3, Hugues Marquis, *Les agents de l'ennemi, op. cit.*, p.6.

<sup>11</sup> Importantly, professionalized intelligence in France was formed not by government decree, as was the case in some other countries, but by a 'convergence' of action, practice, and the law. Deborah Susan Bauer,



revolutionaries, who possessed neither a formal definition nor a doctrine, the question of how they conceived it becomes more nuanced. To be sure, one could argue that while the practice of counter-espionage has undergone successive transformations over time, the nature of it has not changed in any profound sense. And in the classical sense of the term, this is probably true. No matter the period, place or personalities involved, counter-espionage has traditionally revolved around 1) the act of detecting, deceiving and neutralising enemy spies and their networks and 2) the protection of state secrets.<sup>12</sup> Yet, in charting the development of anti-spy activity during the revolutionary period, this thesis will demonstrate that the distinctions between the three branches of intelligence, as conceived by Gonse – espionage, border surveillance and counter-espionage – was hazy at best and that any discussion of the latter activity will invariably require consideration of the former.

One of the reasons for this conceptual ambiguity is that the line between internal and external enemies in French history has not always been so easy to discern.<sup>13</sup> This was undoubtedly the case during the revolutionary period where the enemy was perceived to be not just on the front, or in the person of the foreigner, but anyone engaged in conspiratorial, counter-revolutionary activity, whether from within the interior or from across its borders. In reality, the perception that the counter-revolutionaries were receiving material and pecuniary support from the belligerent powers was not actuated by irrational conspiratorial fear. The historiography on the *contre-révolution* is well documented, if not deserving of further study.<sup>14</sup> The challenge of this thesis, however, is to identify the security measures

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<sup>12</sup> ‘Marianne is Watching: Knowledge, Secrecy, Intelligence and the Origins of the French Surveillance State (1870-1914)’, Unpublished PhD Thesis (University of California, 2013), p.41.

<sup>13</sup> The relationship between the protection of state secrets and counter-espionage is aptly demonstrated in the title of Bertrand Warufsel’s book, *Contre-Espionnage et protection du secret, op. cit.* Or, to paraphrase it differently, the history of the protection of secrets in the defence of the republic is impregnated with the obsessive fear of espionage. Philippe Ferlet, Patrice Sartre, ‘Le secret de défense en France’, *Études*, 412 (2010/2), 165-175.

<sup>14</sup> Douglas Porch, *French Secret Services: A History of French Intelligence from the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War* (Farrar: Straus and Giroux, 2003), p.469. According to Eric Denécé and Gérard Arboit, ‘This fight against the enemy within is one of the salient features of the French cultural [intelligence] model.’ Eric Denécé, Gérard Arboit, ‘Intelligence Studies in France’, *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 23, (2010), 737-747.

<sup>15</sup> The major works on the counter-revolution are: Bernard Demotz, Jean Haudry (eds.), *Révolution, Contre-Révolution: Actes du colloque de Lyon, 1989* (Paris: Ed. du Porte-Glaive, 1990), Alan, Forrest, ‘Regionalism

that were enacted to specifically target foreign and domestic spies within the broader counter-revolutionary struggle. For this, it would be necessary to draw attention to both counter-espionage activities conducted within the interior and the same practiced *à la source* or outside the national territory.<sup>15</sup> Judging by the evidence and vocabulary of the time, this poses no small difficulty, foremost because the revolutionaries do not appear to have consistently drawn a real distinction between espionage and conspirational acts.<sup>16</sup> On 3 *germinal an V* (23 March 1797), for example, Jean-François Reubell, one of the members of the Directory, posed the following rhetorical question to the Council of Five Hundred;

Est-il possible de concevoir l'idée d'un embauchage ou d'un espionnage sans qu'il y ait simultanément conspiration?...N'est ce pas meme parce que le crime d'embauchage est essentiellement amalgame avec celui de conspiration...<sup>17</sup>

Reubell was referring to the recruitment (ie *embauchage*) of *émigré* soldiers by enemy agents. In relation to the counter-revolutionary crime of treason, he was probably right because one of the core activities of espionage is the recruitment and nurturing of traitors.<sup>18</sup>

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and Counter-Revolution in France', in *Rewriting the French Revolution. The Andrew Browning lectures, 1989* (New York: Clarendon Press of Oxford University Press, 1991). Jacques Godechot, *The Counter-revolution: Doctrine and Action, 1789-1804* (London: Routledge & Regan Paul, 1972). François Lebrun, Roger Dupuy (eds.), *Les résistances à la Révolution. Actes du colloque de Rennes, 17-21 septembre 1985* (Paris: Imago, 1987), Gwynne Lewis, *The Second Vendée: The continuity of Counter-revolution in the Département of the Gard, 1789-1815* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), Louis Madelin, *La Contre-Révolution sous la Révolution* (Paris: Plon, 1935), Jean-Clément Martin, *Contre-révolution, Révolution et Nation en France, 1789-1799* (Paris: Seuil, 1998), Jean Sentou (éd.), *Révolution et Contre-Révolution dans la France du Midi (1789-1799)* in *Travaux de recherches historiques publiés dans le cadre du bicentenaire* (Toulouse: Université de Toulouse-le-Mirail, 1991) DMG Sutherland, *Revolution and French Counterrevolution* (London: Fontana Press, 1985), Emmanuel Vingtrinier, *La Contre-Révolution* (Paris: E. Paul frères, 1924-1925).

<sup>15</sup> Hugues Moutouh, Jérôme Poirot (eds.), *Dictionnaire du Renseignement* (Paris: Perrin, 2018), p.48.

<sup>16</sup> It was not until April 1886 that France passed a law formally defining the term 'espionnage'. A full discussion of this subject, and the differences between it and the successive laws of 1793, will be found in chapters 1 and 2.

<sup>17</sup> M Peltier (ed.), *Paris Pendant l'Année 1797* (Paris: T Baylis, 1800), XII, p.451. In the *arrêté du 4 ventôse*, 'concernant la manière juger les embauchers', the Directory phrased it similarly, '*Bien sûrement l'espionnage est un acte de conspiration; et il est impossible qu'il se pratique à d'autres fins que de conspirer contre le gouvernement*', Jean-Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Lois, Décrets, Ordonnances, Réglemens, et Avis du Conseil d'État, 24 vols* (Paris: A. Guyot et Scribe, 1825), IX, p.42.

<sup>18</sup> Geoffrey B Demarest, 'Espionage in International Law', *Denver Journal of International Law and Policy*, 24, (1996), 321.

It is tempting to argue that if the revolutionaries did conceive conspiracy to be synonymous with espionage, then the obvious corollary is that they also used similar methods to contain not just spies but all actors engaged in violent conspirational behaviour.<sup>19</sup> In reality, this was not necessarily true, as this thesis will set out to demonstrate. The revolutionaries' treatment of the émigrés- certainly the most intransigent of all the counter-revolutionary groups- was not always consistent with the punishment of suspected spies. Yet, notwithstanding these exceptions and conceptual nuances, this thesis will chart the development of counter-espionage, at least within the context of the counter-revolution and the associated obsession with conspiracies, as an evolving 'function' of French *renseignement*, which, whilst employing new methods and resources, nevertheless possesses historical precedent dating as far back as the *ancien régime*.<sup>20</sup> Olivier Forcade puts it thus:

Avant d'être une affaire d'État, le renseignement est en premier lieu une affaire de l'État. L'espionnage et le contre-espionnage plongent en effet leurs racines dans une double histoire du secret dans l'État et de l'État. Celle-ci débute sous l'Ancien Régime et sous la Révolution française.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Howard Brown distinguishes between two grades of counter-revolution. As he wrote, 'The most serious crimes of opposition fit easily under the heading violent *counter-revolution*. These are high crimes against the state such as treason and *espionage*, as well as efforts to overturn the constitution, and using force against the legislature, electoral assemblies, or official bodies such as courts or municipal councils.' Non-violent counter-revolution, on the other hand, 'reflects the Republic's 'lois de circonstances' against harboring refractory priests, refusing to taking a clerical oath, contravening political exile, making counter-revolutionary statements in public, and vandalizing republican symbols like liberty trees'. Howard G Brown, *Ending the French Revolution: Violence, Justice and Repression from the Terror to Napoleon* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), p.366.

<sup>20</sup> Soullez explains this 'function' as follows: 'Le renseignement a donc plusieurs fonctions: le contre-espionnage chez l'adversaire pour connaître les capacités et les intentions de celui-ci, le renseignement intérieur alimentant le contre-espionnage défensif et préventif pour assurer la sécurité et la protection de l'État et du pays, et le renseignement intérieur et extérieur alimentant le contre-espionnage répressif pour mettre hors d'état de nuire les agents ennemis et leurs soutiens.' Christophe Soullez, *Le Renseignement: Histoire, Méthodes, et Organisation des Services Secrets* (Paris: Groupe Eyrolles, 2017), p.9.

<sup>21</sup> Olivier Forcade, 'Considération sur le renseignement, la défense nationale et l'État secret en France aux XIX<sup>e</sup> et XX<sup>e</sup> siècles', *Revue historique des armées*, 247 (2007), 1.

Forcade is among the few scholars who are turning the study of renseignement into a serious area of academic inquiry. Along with Gérard Arboit and Eric Denécé, he has also published articles on the growing historiography on *renseignement*, a field which, since the end of 1990s, has led to the convening of symposiums, the publication of multiple monographs and from the turn of the new century, the foundation of the *Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement* (Cf2R).<sup>22</sup> Yet, unlike Forcade or Sébastien Laurent, who has written extensively on the relationship between renseignement and the growth of state power, the vast majority of researchers have focused on the individual branches with 20th century military and diplomatic espionage attracting the widest academic and popular interest.<sup>23</sup> By contrast, scholarly studies on counter-espionage - as an individual topic - are far less preponderant with the very few conducted in the field taking the period circa 1870-1871, as their starting point, namely from the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War and the formation of the *Deuxième Bureau*.<sup>24</sup> In other words, these few individuals have focused their work on the institutionalization of counter-espionage as a professionalized branch of France's intelligence services and have otherwise committed a few paragraphs at most to its historical roots.<sup>25</sup> In fact, the only serious publications that devote sections specifically to the French

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<sup>22</sup> Olivier Forcade, 'Objets, approches et problématiques d'une histoire française du renseignement: Un champ historiographique en construction', *Histoire, économie & société*, 2 (2012) 99-110., Olivier Forcade, 'Histoire militaire et renseignement: état des recherches', in Pierre Lacoste (ed.), *Le Renseignement à la française* (Paris: Économica, 1998), pp.49-78, Eric Denécé, Gérard Arboit, 'Intelligence Studies in France', *op.cit.*, Peter Jackson, 'Intelligence and the State: An emerging French school of intelligence studies', *Intelligence and National Security*, 21:6 (2006) 1061-1065.

<sup>23</sup> The most important works of these two experts are Olivier Forcade, Sébastien Laurent, *Secrets d'État. Pouvoirs et renseignement dans le monde contemporain* (Paris: A. Colin, 2005), Sébastien Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre: État, renseignement et surveillance en France* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), Sébastien Laurent, 'Pour une autre histoire de l'État. Le secret, l'information politique et le renseignement', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 83 (2004), 173-184., Sébastien Laurent, 'La naissance du renseignement étatique en France au XIXe siècle, entre bureaucratie et politique', *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle*, 35 (2007), 109-124, Alain Dewerpe, *Espion: Une anthropologie historique du secret d'État* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994).

<sup>24</sup> See Eric Denécé, *Renseignement et Contre-Espionnage: Actions clandestines, technologies, services secrets* (Paris: Hachette Pratique, 2008); Bertrand Warusfel, *Contre Espionnage et protection du secret, op. cit.*, Bertrand Warusfel, 'Histoire de l'organisation du contre-espionnage française entre 1871 et 1945', *Cahiers du Centre d'Histoire de la défense*, 1 (1996), 13-40. Laurent Lopez, 'Quand nous serons à mille, nous ferons une croix', *Contre-espionnage, un nouveau terrain de coopération entre gendarmes et policiers à la fin du XIXe siècle (1870-1914)*, *Histoire, économie & société*, 4. (2013), Émilie Berthillot, 'Renseignement et contre-espionnage entre Dublin, Londres et Edimbourg de 1845 à 1945', Unpublished PhD Thesis, (Université Toulouse le Mirail - Toulouse II, 2014).

<sup>25</sup> Since the Middle Ages, for example, England was known to have spied on France's military and naval dispositions in Normandy, using her bases in Calais and Berwick upon Tweed as a springboard for operations.

practice of preemption and deterrence during the *ancien régime*, albeit from the reign of Louis XIV, are by the historians Lucien Bély and his former student, Stéphane Genêt.<sup>26</sup>

### III

In tracing these roots, Bély's books make for interesting reading. Although approached from the perspective of diplomatic and military espionage, his work has nevertheless shown how, during fifty years of almost uninterrupted warfare, the pressures on Louis XIV's kingdom had created the conditions necessary for the development of counter-espionage activities. Recalling the collective climate of suspicion that marked the Terror, any individual who manifested atypical, non-conformist behavior, or whose appearance was judged unconventional, was perceived to be a potential subversive. And just with the revolutionary period, spies were thought to be everywhere and possibly anyone. They could be masquerading as a priest, a soldier or a noble.<sup>27</sup> If they frequented dangerous places, travelled abroad, corresponded regularly, were unemployed, had doubtful financial resources, performed alchemy and magic, or circulated information emanating from an enemy country, no matter how innocuous, they were determined to be a potential spy or

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Yet, almost nothing is known about the French's effort to neutralize these networks. Arthuson does, however, provide one example of disinformation whereby the French responded by flooding the English postal system with fake letters to confound the military authorities. Ian Arthuson, 'Espionage and Intelligence from the Wars of the Roses to the Reformation', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, XXXV (1991), 134-154. Alternatively, far more research has been conducted on the French practice of espionage itself during that period. See, for example, André Leguai, 'Espions et propagandistes de Louis XI arrêtés à Dijon', *Annales de Bourgogne*, (1952), 50-55. R. A. Griffiths, 'Un espion breton à Londres, 1425-1429', *Annales de Bretagne* (1979), 399-403, Ivan Gobry, *Louis XI: La force et la ruse* (Paris: Éditions Tallandier, 2001). For an earlier history of *renseignement*, see Eric Denécé, Patrice Brun, (eds.), *Renseignement et Espionnage pendant l'Antiquité et le Moyen-Âge* (Paris: Ellipses, 2019). Equally, other than the employment of unofficial informers and the temporary deployment of *intendants*, we possess little knowledge of the surveillance structures that were put in place during the reign of Louis XIII, a period when French *renseignement* was supposed to have undergone substantial expansion. For piecemeal information see Denis Avenel (ed.), *Les Lettres, instructions diplomatiques et papiers d'État du Cardinal de Richelieu (1624-1627)* 2 vols (Paris: Imprimerie impériale), 1856. Sébastien Laurent, *Politiques du Renseignement, op. cit.*, pp.43, 45, 50 and J Caillet, *De l'Administration en France sous le ministère du cardinal de Richelieu* (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, Fils et Cie, 1857).

<sup>26</sup> The major works of these historians are Lucien Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Fayard, 1990); Lucien Bély, *Les Secrets de Louis XIV: Mystères d'état et Pouvoir absolu* (Paris: Éditions Tallandier, 2013). Stéphane Genêt, *Les espions des Lumières: Actions secrètes et espionnage militaire sous Louis XV* (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p.238, Lucien Bély, *Espions et Ambassadeurs, op. cit.*, p.65.

agitator. Bély notes how even people, whose handwriting was ‘bizarre’ or exhibited a ‘fort esprit’ were cast in similarly doubtful light and investigated.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, a defeatist comment or imprudent remark, could result in denunciation and subsequent imprisonment for espionage. In 1701, for example, the former *Gendarme de la Garde du Roi* named Galembert ou Celleneuve, was ‘soupçonné d’intelligence avec les ennemis de l’État et de filouter au jeu’, after having spoken derisively of the Prince de Conti in front of the French ambassador of Poland.<sup>29</sup> This climate of suspicion, which gradually permeated the kingdom, was further exacerbated by the existence of religious opponents within, whether protestants or Jansenists, colluding with enemies without.<sup>30</sup> Not only individuals but groups were turned into objects of distrust and denunciation. Naturally, the perennial foreigner, with their strange accents and manners, were rendered suspect. Letters sent to and from abroad and/or written in a foreign language were routinely intercepted, opened, deciphered (when necessary), recopied and resealed before being forwarded to the recipient. To be sure, monarchs had long appreciated the importance of cryptanalysis, employing mathematicians to decode secret messages sent by their adversaries, especially during wartime, but it was not until Louis XIV that the interception and decryption of suspect correspondence was first bureaucratized with the creation of the famous *cabinet noir*.<sup>31</sup> Firmly established by Louis XIV’s Minister of War, the Marquis de Louvois - but with origins possibly tracing back to Cardinal Richelieu- it had two core purposes: to discover ties between France’s foreign and domestic enemies and to protect the inviolability of the court’s own confidential diplomatic

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<sup>28</sup> According to the *Lieutenant générale de police* he was a ‘veritable espion et qu’il en a ‘tous les talents’. Lucien Bély, *Les Secrets de Louis XIV*, p.600.

<sup>29</sup> Denounced ‘comme soupçonné d’être un espion’, it was only in 1714, at the conclusion of peace, that he was finally released. *ibid*, p.612, *Espions et Ambassadeurs, op. cit.*, p.73.

<sup>30</sup> Dale K Van Kley, *Les origines religieuses de la Révolution française* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2006). On suspicion of Protestants and Jansenists as ‘outside’ the Catholic State see, Marisa Linton, ‘Dissent and Toleration’, in William Doyle (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Ancien Régime* (Oxford: OUP, 2011), 337-53.

<sup>31</sup> For a comprehensive, if imperfect, study of this instrument of state, see Eugène Vaillé, *Cabinet Noir* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950).

and military missives.<sup>32</sup> Surviving until the Third Republic, and perhaps beyond, the *Cabinet Noir* (or *Bureau Dedans*) thus exercises a significant influence on the history of French counter-espionage, constituting perhaps the first, permanent institution engaged in routing out spies.<sup>33</sup>

Bély's contribution to the historiography is also notable, not least in demonstrating the role of the *lieutenant général de police* in the 'travail de contre-espionnage', as he expressed it.<sup>34</sup> Whilst this institution has been the subject of many studies, his work is among the very few that discusses at length the police's hunt for enemy spies as opposed to the traditional focus on the employment of *mouchards*.<sup>35</sup> Yet, significantly for this discussion, Bély has made clear that counter-espionage was not the sole preserve of the police, which is often erroneously claimed, but that responsibility for the security of the overall kingdom during Louis XIV's reign was actually diffused through a highly decentralized patchwork of ministerial jurisdictions with the *Secrétaire d'État de la Maison du Roi* exercising, in the

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<sup>32</sup> Jacques Aubert, Michel Eude, Claude Goyard, (eds.), *L'état et sa police en France (1789-1914)* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1979), p.46, Eric Denécé, 'The Intelligence Services' Historical and Cultural Context, *op. cit.*, p.135.

<sup>33</sup> On occasion, the monitoring of letters sent to and from abroad did lead to the successful dismantlement of a spy network. During the War of the League of Augsburg (1688–1697), for example, postal officials intercepted all known correspondence sent to and from Holland belonging to Etienne Caillaud, the head of a spy ring financed by England, enabling his correspondents to either be arrested or their movements monitored within France. Lucien Bély, *Les Secrets de Louis XIV*, *op. cit.*, p.237.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, p.598, Jacques Michel, *Du Paris de Louis XV à la marine de Louis XVI: l'oeuvre de Monsieur de Sartine*, 2 vols (Paris: Éditions de l'Erudit, 1983), I, p.38. *Le Bureau de la Sûreté* centralized 'toutes les questions de sûreté publique immédiate et 'comporte une ébauche du service que l'on appelle aujourd'hui le contre-espionnage.'

<sup>35</sup> Gilles Malandain, 'Les mouches de la police et le vol des mots', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 42.3 (1995), 376-404, Marc Chassaing devotes a chapter of his book on domestic spies, Marc Chassaing, *La Lieutenance Générale de Police à Paris* (Paris: 1906), Jean Chagniot, 'La Lieutenance générale de police de Paris à la fin de l'Ancien Régime' in Yves Durand (ed.), *Les Institutions parisiennes à la fin de l'Ancien Régime et sous la Révolution française*, Actes du Colloque de l'Hotel, (Paris, s.d. 1989). Otherwise, to understand how the police operated in 18th century, see Nicholas Delamare, *Traité de la police*, 4 vols (Paris: 1705-1738), Robert Darnton, 'The Memoirs of Lenoir, Lieutenant de Police, 1774-1785', *English Historical Review*, LXXXV (1970), 532-559, Maxime De Sars, *Lenoir: lieutenant de police, 1737-1807* (Paris: Hachette, 1948), Vincent Milliot, *Un Policier des Lumières*, suivi de. Mémoires de J.C.P. Lenoir ancien lieutenant général de police de Paris, écrits en pays étrangers dans les années 1790 et suivantes (Paris: Champ Vallon, 2011), Antoine Sartine, 'Rapports du lieutenant général de police Sartine', *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire de Paris*, v (1879). For a modern account of the French police, see Alan Williams, *The Police of Paris, 1718-1789* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), Steven L Kaplan, 'Note sur les commissaires de police de Paris au XVIIIe siècle,' *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 28 (1981), 669-86, Paolo Napoli, *Naissance de la police moderne. Pouvoir, normes, société* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003).

absence of a coordinating body, the leading role.<sup>36</sup> For this section of his research, Bély has drawn extensively from the printed *Archives de la Bastille*, as compiled by François Ravaisson, which alone, remain a rich source of information for any future researcher interested in counter-espionage during the *ancien régime*.<sup>37</sup>

Bély's work has been developed further by *Genêt* who devotes the final third part of his book on the French response 'face aux espions ennemis', as it is titled.<sup>38</sup> More than one hundred and forty pages long, and dividing his chapters thematically between 'la réalité d'une menace', 'les motifs de suspicion' and the methods to 'détourner les espions ennemis', this section of *Genêt's* work constitutes, as far as this author could identify, the most comprehensive study of counter-espionage during the *ancien régime*. Also drawing considerably from the *Archives de la Bastille*, and containing a number of detailed (but perhaps overlong) case studies, *Genêt* traces the process of neutralizing an enemy spy, whether they were 'foreign' or treasonous subjects of the king, from the initial denunciation (normally from an anonymous source) through to the investigation, interrogation, incarceration and ultimate judgement, arguing that it tended to follow a succession of stages.<sup>39</sup> Expounding at length on the methods to ensnare a spy, from the installation of fictive postal boxes and other 'écrans de fumée' to the adoption of specific interrogation techniques to extract a confession, *Genêt's* also raises several interesting points about

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<sup>36</sup> For further information on the emergence of ministerial departments and their role in information gathering, see also, Jacob Soll, *The Information Master. Jean-Baptiste Colbert's Secret State intelligence System* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009). In relation to the police's inflated role, de Polnay claims that it 'controlled all spying and counter-espionage' in the Republic's attempt to 'frustrate English plots and intrigues, royalist plots and machinations'. Peter de Polnay, *Napoleon Police* (London: W.H.Allen, 1970), p.7. Other secondary works that overestimate the role of the police, especially under Joseph Fouché's superintendence, include Ernest Daudet, *La Police et Les Chouans sous le consulat et l'empire 1800-1815* (Paris, E Plon, Nourrit et cie, 1895). Ernest D'Hauterive, *Napoleon et sa Police* (Paris, Flammarion, 1944).

<sup>37</sup> François Ravaisson-Mollien (ed.), *Archives de la Bastille d'après des documents inédits. Règne de Louis XV, recueillis et publ. par François Ravaisson* (Paris: A Durand et Pedonne-Lauriel, 1891).

<sup>38</sup> Stéphane Genêt, *Les espions des Lumières op.cit.*

<sup>39</sup> Briefly put, these stages were as follows: i) The investigation was usually prompted by an anonymous denunciation, ii) The suspect was thereupon placed under surveillance and a record of their visits kept. iii) All correspondence to and from the suspect was intercepted, iv) To contain the threat, the suspect was imprisoned and interrogated (often in the Bastille) for a month, the object of which was to either trick them into a confession or 'turn' them into a double agent. v) After a month's detention, the suspect was released or, on the rare occasion, brought to trial and, if found guilty, executed as a spy.



‘preventative imprisonment’, localization and jurisdiction, all of which will contribute, at various points, to the contextual framework of this discussion.<sup>40</sup>

Unfortunately, from the period covering the fall of the Bastille to the inception of the Constitutional Monarchy, no comparable insight is available. The closest studies, at least as far as counter-revolutionary plots are concerned, naturally centre on the role of the National Assembly’s *Comité des Recherches*, and its municipal counter-part in Paris, most notably the doctoral thesis by Maia Kirby or the more incisive publications by the American historians, Barry Shapiro and Kaitlyn Carter.<sup>41</sup> Whilst these studies contain theoretical discussions on the comités’ relation to conspirational fears, procedural secrecy and the criminal justice system respectively, any researcher interested in delving into the mechanics of the comité’s intelligence gathering operations- whether in terms of the surveillance of suspects, the employment of agents, the transmission of denunciations, the seizure of correspondance etc are *better* served by consulting the records of the National Assembly’s *comité* themselves, as compiled and classified by the former archivist, Pierre Caillet.<sup>42</sup> Conveniently, Caillet has transcribed and annotated a large number of the letters, many of which have been cited *in extenso* by Kirby to substantiate sections of her thesis.<sup>43</sup> Yet curiously, in charting the *comité*’s mission to defend the Revolution against threats to its existence, neither he, nor the aforementioned historians, make any specific reference to the hunt for enemy spies, foreign or domestic, an observation that can be similarly applied to the historiography on political policing before 1792, in particularly the early research

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<sup>40</sup> Stéphane Genêt, *Les espions des Lumières op.cit.* pp.303, 395 & 410.

<sup>41</sup> Maia Kirby, ‘The Democratic Sphere Communications with the French National Assembly’s Committee of Research, 1789-1791’, Unpublished PhD Thesis (Queen Mary, University of London, 2017), Kaitlyn Carter, ‘The Comités des Recherches: Procedural Secrecy and the Origins of Revolutionary Surveillance’, *French History*, 32.1 (2018), 45-65. Barry Shapiro, ‘Revolutionary justice in 1789–1790: “The Comité des Recherches, the Châtelet, and the Fayetteist coalition”’, *French Historical Studies.*, 17 (1992), 656–69.

<sup>42</sup> Pierre Caillet, *Les Français en 1789, d’après les papiers du Comité des recherches de l’assemblée constituante (1789-1791)* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1991) and Pierre Caillet, *Inventaire analytique de la sous-série D XXIX bis* (Paris: Archives Nationales, 1993).

<sup>43</sup> Maia Kirby, ‘The Democratic Sphere’, *op.cit.*, pp.26, 31, 44-60 etc

conducted by David Andress.<sup>44</sup> Whether the reason is that the connection between counter-revolutionary activities and espionage is implicitly understood in their work is arguable, either way any discussion on ‘spies’ invariably centre on the inherited, but discredited, practice of employing *mouchards*. Indeed, it is probably no coincidence that, in the first three years of the Revolution, the sole instruction that was made to suppress ‘espionage’ was directed against them, as found in the *papiers du district de Saint-Roch* titled ‘État des mesures proposées pour garantir la sûreté publique, comprenant notamment la suppression de l’espionnage et l’expulsion des inspecteurs de police.’<sup>45</sup> In approaching this study, the search for *mouchards*, informers or even the spies employed by the rivalrous Girondin and Jacobin factions in their political struggle will play no part.<sup>46</sup> Instead, referring back, this thesis will limit itself to examining the revolutionaries’ efforts to neutralise the threat of espionage as it relates solely to the counter-revolution.<sup>47</sup>

#### IV

The question as to whether France was made a hard target for espionage is fraught with difficulty. According to Christopher Andrew, the inherent problem with evaluating counter-espionage is that its success is ultimately not based on demonstrable facts but rather on what is not produced. As he argues, ‘It is apparently a paradox, but it is none the less true, and a most important truth, that the efficiency of a counter espionage service is not to be measured

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<sup>44</sup> For the nuanced view of the Paris police on general political discontent, the counter-revolution and other politically motivated crimes see David Andress, ‘Order and Democracy in Paris from the Oath of the Clergy to the Tricolour Terror, January-August 1791’, *PhD thesis*, University of York, (1994), p.15.; D. Andress, ‘Social prejudice and political fears in the policing of Paris, January–June 1791’, *French History*, 9, (1995), 202–26; D. Andress, *Massacre at the Champ de Mars: Popular Dissent and Political Culture in the French Revolution* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000), 84.

<sup>45</sup> Alexandre Tuetey, *Répertoire général des sources manuscrites de l’histoire de Paris pendant la Révolution française* (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1892), II, p.91 (Bulletin 859). *Minute, Bibliothèque Nationale, Mss.*, nouv. acq. fr. 2670, fol. 11 (*Papiers de la Section de la Butte des Moulins*).

<sup>46</sup> The sole exception will be a brief discussion on the revolutionaries’ failed attempt to arrest the Baron de Batz in chapter 3.

<sup>47</sup> See p.7.

chiefly by the number of spies caught by it.<sup>48</sup> By this, Andrew was referring to the deterrent effect of capital punishment, the imposition of stricter border and port controls, vetted access to government buildings etc, all measures that, combined together, contribute to ‘good protective security’.<sup>49</sup> Of course, even if the success of counter-espionage was quantifiable, it is simply impossible to determine the ratio between the number of spies caught and the number operating from within or without, not least because complete, centralised registers of their arrests and executions do not exist at this stage of the Revolution.<sup>50</sup> Whilst this thesis will provide a full interpretation of one surviving register, which can be found in appendix V, it will not trouble itself with compiling rough statistical analyses of arrests, releases or executions. Instead, this thesis will focus on the measures themselves- whether in terms of detection, prevention, investigation and punishment meanwhile asking itself the related questions:

1. To what extent were these measures introduced in response to spy activity?
2. Were they targetted or did they overlap with the state’s broader structures of surveillance and control?
3. How did the revolutionaries perceive the efficacy of these measures and what steps were taken to strengthen or replace them?
4. How far was the perception of enemy espionage crucial for the development of France’s overall national security system?

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<sup>48</sup> Christopher Andrew, *Defend the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 2009), p.931.

<sup>49</sup> See the following article on MI5’s website written by Andrew, <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/mi5-in-world-war-i>

<sup>50</sup> For the inherent problems on producing statistics, see Richard Louie, ‘The Incidence of the Terror: A Critique of a Statistical Interpretation’, *French Historical Studies*, 3. 3 (1964) 379-389, Gilbert Shapiro, John Markoff, ‘The Incidence of the Terror: Some lessons for Quantitative History’, *Journal of Social History*, 9 (1975), 193-218.

To answer these questions, this thesis will rely primarily on original archival research. Not surprisingly, given the fact that this work is concerned with matters of French security, it will draw from series AA of the *Archives du Prefecture de Police*, notably the *procès-verbaux des commissaires de police des sections*, not to mention the immense F7 (and AFIV) series at the *Archives Nationales* where a large subset of the *Comité de Sûreté Générale's* records are found.<sup>51</sup> At the same time, attesting to the divers institutions involved in counter-espionage operations during this period, this thesis will benefit from the archives at the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères*, especially the subset *Mémoires et Documents and Correspondance Politique*, as well as the copious bulletins compiled by Alphonse Aulard and Pierre Caron, particularly relating to the often neglected role of the army in all branches of renseignement.<sup>52</sup> Just as important, this thesis will rely heavily on both the print and digital collections of local municipal archives, such as those of the *Alpes-Maritimes, La Vendée, Metz* and *du Haut-Rhin* where records on the surveillance of frontiers, interception of correspondence, arrests and interrogations of suspects are mostly kept. In terms of secondary sources, most of the works consulted have invariably been of tangential interest only. The notable exceptions are the aforementioned articles written by Hugues Marquis and Monique Mesteyer, and the various studies on the *Comités de Surveillance* and *Comités de Sûreté Générale* such as by Michel Eude.<sup>53</sup>

In relation to structure, the main body of this thesis is divided into three chapters of roughly equal length with each covering, more or less, a one year period. Whilst a number of themes run throughout its entirety, such as 'securitization', this thesis is nevertheless

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<sup>51</sup> For a full explanation of the history and composition of these respective records see A. Soboul, *Les Papiers des sections de Paris, 1790-An IV - repertoire sommaire* (Paris: M. Lavergne, 1950) and Pierre Caron (ed.), *Le Fonds du Comité de Sûreté Générale (AFII\*, F7, DXLIII)* (Paris: Impr Archives Nationales, 1954)

<sup>52</sup> Françoise Alphonse Aulard (ed), *Recueil des Actes du Comité de Salut Public avec la correspondance officielle des représentants en mission et le registre du conseil exécutif provisoire*, 28 vols, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1889-1951), Pierre Caron, (ed.), *Paris Pendant le Terreur. Rapports des Agents secrets du Ministre de l'Interieur*, 7 vols (Paris: 1910-1964).

<sup>53</sup> Michel Eude, 'Le Comité de Sûreté Générale en 1793-1794' in *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 261 (1985), 295-306, Michel Eude, 'Le Comité de Surveillance de l'Assemblée législative (1791-1792)', *AHRF, Société des Etudes robespierristes*, (1964), 129-148.

framed chronologically to demonstrate how counter-espionage evolved according to the exigencies of the moment. The first chapter, which spans the constitutional monarchy, establishes much of the conceptual framework for this study. It will begin with a discussion of the 1791 Penal Code and how the concept of *la sûreté de l'état* (or national security) was enshrined in its provisions (as indeed it equally was in the Constitution itself). It will also discuss the Penal Code's failure to address the semantic confusion between subversion and espionage, followed by an exposition on how the revolutionaries perceived the support that the *émigrés*, and their domestic agents, constituted for the counter-revolution. The chapter will then look at the revolutionaries' response, both in immediate terms and within the overall framework of the state's existing methods of surveillance and control. It will also identify the underlying factors that characterized localized counter-espionage operations, both before and after the outbreak of hostilities, as well as the preventative measures that were adopted to protect state secrets from infiltration and subversion. It will conclude by attempting to explain the reasons why no discernible national security policy emerged during this formative period and how calls were raised to address parts of this problem.

Having established much of the thesis' conceptual framework, chapter two will adopt a more narrative approach. Covering the period from the fall of the monarchy to the beginning of the Terror, it will begin with identifying some of the strict measures that the revolutionaries imposed to restore order, especially in Paris, and how they coincided within the broader process of restructuring and expanding the state's security apparatus. Invariably, given its responsibility for security, an examination of the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* will ensue, especially in terms of its interaction with the divers municipalities, paramilitary bodies, *comités de surveillance*, revolutionary tribunals etc, all of which performed an essential role in the conduct of local counter-espionage operations. Equally significant, this chapter will show how the perception of espionage activity, especially practiced by foreigners, led, for the first time in French history, to the enactment of legislation designed

specifically to punish spies. By its termination, the reader will be able to discern a shift in the revolutionaries' approach to confronting the twin dangers of espionage and subversion from a primarily defensive footing to a more offensive one.

Developing the theme of securitization, the third and final chapter will examine the period of the Jacobin Terror from September 1793 to July 1794. One of the most important functions of the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* was to apply the *Loi des Suspects*. This chapter will look at how rampant xenophobia, tied to the nationalisation of the war, drove Jacobin attempts to root out and punish foreign spies. Examining not only the evolving structures of surveillance and control, including the transnational measures to suppress counter-revolutionary abroad, it will also examine some of the protective security measures that the revolutionaries put in place to try and make France a hard target for espionage. Equally important, it will discuss how counter-espionage was tied not just to the regular war effort, with the army assuming a central role in trapping spies, but also to counter-insurgency operations, especially in *La Vendée* and other hotspots. Despite the institutional confusion and jurisdictional rivalry that subsisted throughout, it should be possible to show the extent to which counter-espionage had become a component of French national security.

## CHAPTER 1

### Dangerous Times: September 1791- September 1792

By the time of its dissolution on 30 September 1791, the Constituent Assembly had established national security to be the prime aim, and special preserve, of the new revolutionary state.<sup>54</sup> Under Title IV of the Constitution of 1791, the concept of *sûreté de l'état* was for the first time enshrined in French law, supplanting, although not entirely annulling, the principle of royal inviolability.<sup>55</sup> Yet, just as the Revolution wrought great social and political changes, so too did it engender increasingly complex and unprecedented security challenges. Over time, the struggle for sovereign power would prove far more intractable than the framers of the constitution were able to settle. For one, the constituents' efforts to consolidate the revolutionary state did not thwart the *émigrés*' implacable determination to dismantle it. As this chapter will demonstrate, the relationship between state security and the counter-revolution was characterized by three key factors. First, the realization that the counter-revolutionary movement was not just a nuisance issue but an escalating threat to the existence of the embryonic, revolutionary state. Secondly, the widespread perception that hostile foreign policy efforts were inherently linked to domestic,

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<sup>54</sup> On how security came under the exclusive responsibility of the revolutionary state, see Thierry Balzacq, 'Qu'est-ce que la sécurité nationale?', *Revue internationale et stratégique*, 52 (2003), 33-50 (p.36), Alain Noyer, *La Sûreté de l'État: 1789-1965* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1966), Emma Rothschild, 'What is Security?', *Daedalus*, 124.3 (1995), 53-98 (p.61) and Bertrand Warufsel, 'Les Notions de Défense et de Sécurité en Droit français', *Revue Droit & Défense*, 94.4 (1994), 11-20.; Whilst these historians alternatively employ 'sûreté' and 'sécurité' to denote the same notion of 'security', as it is understood in English, others claim that a narrow distinction can be made in the French language with the latter indicating the feeling of being in a state of security whereas the former denoting the actual state itself. For a full explanation of this nuance, see Jean Delumeau, 'Le sentiment de sécurité dans l'histoire', *Cahiers de la Sécurité intérieure, Documentation Française* (Paris: IHESI, 1990), pp.19-26; Catherine Denys, *Police et sécurité au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, dans les villes de la frontière franco-belge* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002), 14-17.

<sup>55</sup> This notion of national security is inferred in Articles 7 & 13, Title IV of the Constitution. Article 7 reads: 'Toutes les parties de la force publique, employées pour la sûreté de l'état contre les ennemis du dehors, agiront sous les ordres du roi'. Article 13 reads: 'L'armée de terre et de mer, et la troupe destinée à la sûreté intérieure, sont soumises à des lois particulières, soit pour le maintien de la discipline, soit pour la forme des jugements et la nature des peines en matière de délits militaires.' J Desenne (ed.), *Code Général Français* (Paris: Ménard et Desenne, 1818), I, p.38; For comprehensive studies of the said constitution, see Guillaume Glénard, *L'exécutif et la Constitution de 1791* (Paris: PUF, 2015); Michael P Fitzsimmons, *The Remaking of France: The National Assembly and the Constitution of 1791* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994). Roberto Martucci, 'Qu'est-ce que la lèse-nation? À propos du problème de l'infraction politique sous la constituante (1789-1791)', *Déviance et société*. 14.4 (1990), 377-393.

counter-revolutionary movements. Third and finally, the growing readiness to see the counter-revolution as essentially a security problem which would be best resolved with predominantly defensive and deterrence-based counter-measures.<sup>56</sup>

## I

Over the course of its evolution, the French system of counter-espionage has been based upon a legal framework that has, in piecemeal fashion, broadly defined and sanctioned the scope of its operations.<sup>57</sup> Whilst it was not until 1886 that France first possessed a law that expounded at length ‘sur la repression de espionnage’, the enactment of the penal code of 6 October 1791 did accord the revolutionaries substantial latitude to incriminate and punish offenders for crimes that were judged to pose a threat to the security of the newly established, revolutionary state.<sup>58</sup> As Vincent Petit explained, incrimination was deliberately ‘souple et indéfinie, ce qui permet de prévenir les attentats et les complots, de dissuader les ennemis du régime, de comprimer les rumeurs...’.<sup>59</sup> In other words, although intended as a departure from the *ancien régime’s* arbitrary procedures, the language of the text was consciously couched in ambiguous terms. The penal code contains twelve articles that imperfectly distinguish between crimes ‘contre la sûreté extérieure’ and ‘crimes contre la sûreté intérieure de l'état’ with the former (ie the first seven articles) targeting treasonous interaction with a foreign enemy and the latter, conspirational acts, albeit narrowly defined.

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<sup>56</sup> This shift in focus mirrored the debate on the clergy which, according to Mitchell, had shifted from ‘freedom of worship to national security’. C J Mitchell, *The French Legislative Assembly* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), p.53; Jules Mavidal, Émile Laurent (eds.), *Archives Parlementaires de 1787 à 1860: Recueil Complet des Débats et Législatifs des Chambres Françaises* (Paris: Librairie Administrative DePaul Dupont, 1869), XXXIV, p.330a.

<sup>57</sup> Bertrand Warufsel, *Contre-Espionnage et Protection du Secret, op. cit.*, p.14; Sébastien Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre, op. cit.*, p.141.

<sup>58</sup> The entire penal code can be found in volume 31 of *Archives Parlementaires*, pp.326-339. In terms of defining offenses and pre-determining punishments, it marked a clear departure from the arbitrary procedures of the *Ancien Regime*, Pierre Lascoumes, ‘Le verso oublié du « catéchisme révolutionnaire: le code pénal du 6 octobre 1791’’, *Cahiers de recherche sociologique*, 13 (1989), 31-51.

<sup>59</sup> Jean-Christophe Gaven, *Le Crime de lèse-nation: Histoire d'une invention juridique et politique (1789-1791)* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po 2016), p.56. Carla Hesse, ‘La logique culturelle de la loi révolutionnaire’, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 57.4 (2002), 915-933 (p.921).



Historically, high treason – whether by information sharing or otherwise – has long been considered a crime. For centuries, French rulers have acknowledged the importance of guarding state secrets and the need to protect sovereignty of the monarchy by prosecuting anyone contriving to sell, or trade, confidential information. In the 16th century, for example, François I (1494-1547) and Charles IX (1550-1574) both issued a series of royal ordinances which defined intelligence sharing as crimes of treason against the person of the monarch, a crime subsequently deemed by Shakespeare to be ‘worse than murder’.<sup>60</sup>

Of course, treason does not necessarily imply the existence of a conspiracy. Whereas a conspirator is naturally a traitor, the opposite does not automatically hold true. Desertion, crossing enemy lines or professing infidelity to a cause does not signify that an individual is conspiring or secretly commissioning a hostile act. Treason can be an individual act unlike a conspiracy which, with its combined elements of secrecy, collusion and deception, is normally the result of collective action.<sup>61</sup> The drafters of the penal code, deliberately or not, failed to adequately settle the distinction between treason and sedition, assigning the same predetermined sentence of death for both unequal offences.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, by indicting and awarding equal, mandatory penalties for the author and an accomplice of a political crime, - whether against the state, person or property - the penal code did empower the revolutionary authorities to avert a plot as soon as it could be determined that a group of individuals had entered into a treasonous arrangement, even if the design had not been put fully into effect.<sup>63</sup> In other words, just planning or advocating a subversive act, without

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<sup>60</sup> William Shakespeare, *King Lear* (2.4.28). For the royal ordinances, see the *Ordonnance de Villers-Cotterets* decreed by François I on 10 August 1539 and articles VII & IX of the ordinance of Charles IX signed 16 August 1563. Both are discussed in Adolphe Chauveau, Faustin Hélie (eds.), *Théorie du Code Pénal*, 2 vols (Paris: Librairie Alex Gobelet & Videcoq, 1836), II, pp.340-341.

<sup>61</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, ‘Conspiracism, Secrecy and Security in Restoration France: Denouncing the Jesuit Menace’, *Historical Social Research*, 38.1 (2013), 107-128.

<sup>62</sup> The punishment of death for sedition was prescribed in article V, Title I and Section II of the Penal Code.

<sup>63</sup> See Article I, Part II, Title III, *Complices des Crimes*: ‘Or d’avoir sciemment, et dans le dessein du crime, aidé et assisté le coupable ou les coupables, soit dans les faits qui ont préparé ou facilité son exécution, soit dans l’acte même qui l’a consommé, sera puni de même peine prononcé par la loi contre les auteurs dudit crime’.

actually executing it, constituted a political crime.<sup>64</sup> As the German historian, Karl Härter, argues, this criminalization of conspiratorial/dissident groups, through the growing body of penal codes, statutes, edicts and ordinances, reflected a notable shift in the state's security dispositive from punishment and retaliation for its own sake to 'deterrence and prevention'.<sup>65</sup>

Now, it could be argued that whilst the penal code was reasonably well formulated to tackle treason, interpreting its provisions as targeting espionage is to quote Robert Detourbet, 'considerably forcing the meaning of the articles.'<sup>66</sup> Detourbet, a late nineteenth century legal theoretician, was referring to the Penal Code of 1810. However, his interpretation of the text can justifiably be applied to its 1791 progenitor, of which the articles therein were reworded, almost verbatim, by Napoleon's jurists.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, the very vagueness of the terms found in the articles pertaining to crimes against the security of the state prompted legal theorists a century later to subsequently question the applicability of the Penal Code to legitimately combat espionage.<sup>68</sup> For example, Article 76, the article under which Captain Dreyfus was notoriously convicted in 1894, troubled several judicial theorists who criticized its failure to provide a specific definition of what constituted 'machinations' with foreign powers.<sup>69</sup> The problem of interpretation is also compounded by the fact that

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<sup>64</sup> This doctrine of complicity, which Richard M Andrews credits as a 'novelty' in French penology, was not limited to actions but also to 'discursive' acts. Richard Andrews, 'Boundaries of Citizenship: The Penal Regulation of Speech in Revolutionary France', *French Politics and Society*, 7.3 (1989), 90-109 (p.93).; Other more or less public activities such as the manufacturing and distribution of seditious libels and pamphlets, protest gatherings and speeches and even 'treason by word' were penalised as well as political crimes, sedition, and treasonable speech, because, as Härter explains in his article, they could incite and even legitimize 'political violence'. Karl Härter, 'Political crime in early modern Europe: Assassination, legal responses and popular print media', *European Journal of Criminology*, 11.2 (2014), 142 –168 (p.149).

<sup>65</sup> *ibid*, 149.

<sup>66</sup> Robert Detourbet, 'L'espionnage et la trahison: Étude de Droit Français et de Législation Comparée', Published PhD Thesis (Paris: L Larose, 1898), Deborah Susan Bauer, 'Marianne is Watching: Knowledge, Secrecy, Intelligence and the Origins of the French Surveillance State (1870-1914)', *Unpublished PhD Thesis*, University of California, 2013, 275.

<sup>67</sup> For a comparable study of the two penal codes see Anonymous, *Étude de législation pénale comparée: Code français de 1810, avec les motifs, les Discussions au Conseil d'Etat et les dispositions correspondantes des codes de 1791 et de l'an IV* (Paris: Librairie Auguste Durande, 1852).

<sup>68</sup> Victor Colonieu, *L'Espionnage au point de vue du droit international et du droit pénal français* (Paris: A. Rousseau, 1888), p.74.

<sup>69</sup> Deborah Bauer, 'Marianne is watching', *op. cit.*, 298. Article 76 is an exact re-wording of Article I of Section I, Title I of the 1791 Penal Code: 'Quiconque sera convaincu d'avoir pratiqué des machinations, ou entretenu des intelligences avec les puissances étrangères ou avec leurs agents, pour les engager à commettre des hostilités, ou pour leur indiquer les moyens d'entreprendre la guerre contre la France, sera puni de mort, soit que les machinations ou intelligences aient été ou non suivies d'hostilités.'

nowhere in the Penal Code of 1791 can the term ‘espionage’, or a derivation of it, be found. Referring to it five years later, Merlin de Douai, the Directory’s Minister of Justice, claimed that even though the term ‘espionnage’ itself (or espion) does not exist anywhere within the code, it is ‘textuellement compris dans l’art. 4 de la 1<sup>ère</sup> section du tit. 1<sup>er</sup>. De là seconde partie’.<sup>70</sup> Douai’s interpretation of the penal code, as it relates to the state security, requires qualification, however. Strictly speaking, Article IV does not punish espionage but subversion, which is semantically different. The term ‘subversion’ is quite nebulous, tending to broadly describe activities aimed at the attempted weakening or overthrow of an established authority from within. The recruitment of traitors, the incitement of rebellion, the promotion of civil war, the manipulation of electoral procedures etc are all subversive activities that would, to varying degree, ultimately threaten the integrity of the revolutionary state. Espionage, by contrast, is a more tangible concept, classically, although not exclusively, understood as the procurement and transmission to state enemies of *unauthorized* information by clandestine means. In other words, the acquisition and transmission of information is not in itself illegal. It is the nature of the intelligence which determines if its procurement is an act of espionage.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, as the terminology in this chapter indicates- sometimes confusingly so- the revolutionaries did not appear to draw a consistently clear distinction between espionage, subversion and conspiracy at this juncture, perhaps perceiving, but certainly treating, the three to be inherently linked. Thus, whilst the Penal Code of 1791 was well conceived for punishing domestic, anti-subversive activities, it nevertheless offered a quite unsatisfactory legal framework for repressing espionage itself, especially when practiced by foreigners. After all, nowhere in the twelve articles pertaining to state security can reference to overseas actors be found. Moreover, even

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<sup>70</sup> *Arrête du Directoire exécutif, concernant la manière de juger les embauchers, 4 Ventôse an V* cited in J B Duvergier (ed.), *Lois, Décrets, Ordonnances, Réglemens, et Avis du Conseil d’État, 24 vols* (Paris: A. Guyot et Scribe, 1825), IX, p.42. It was only when Napoleon’s jurists drafted the celebrated Penal Code of 1810 that, under article 78, the term *espionnage* was given a formal definition.

<sup>71</sup> This important distinction is made in Stéphan Hellin, ‘Espionnage et contre-espionnage en France au temps de la Saint-Barthélemy: Le rôle de Jérôme Gondi’, *Revue historique*, 646.2, (2008), 279-313 (p.279).

if it was implicitly understood in the text, espionage was not characterized as a political crime. In other words, while the code itself did not distinguish between a state of war or peace, the language contained in the articles suggests that the drafters anticipated future hostilities and intended to punish any Frenchman who could be deemed responsible for their outbreak. If anything, only articles 11 and 13 of the military's justice code of 19 October 1791 contained specific infractions for espionage but, again, they were just applicable to wartime activity and limited to soldiers, officers and other military personnel.<sup>72</sup>

## II

Either way, one person who did profess dissatisfaction with the penal code was the Girondin lawyer, Jacques Pierre Brissot. On 20 October 1791, in his address to the Legislative Assembly on the problems of emigration, Brissot denounced the moderate, if not negligent, policies of the constituents, arguing that the *émigrés* would not be deterred by any of the discriminatory laws, or statutory sentences, so far enacted against them.<sup>73</sup> The problem, he reasoned, was that such legislative measures were essentially unenforceable as the *émigrés*- the Revolution's most intransigent opponents- were mostly assembling beyond the Rhine, and by extension, beyond French jurisdiction.<sup>74</sup> The threat, in other words, was transnational.<sup>75</sup> Instead, Brissot proposed a two-pronged strategy: First, to pursue and punish them abroad and second, to compel, by force if necessary, these same powers to abandon

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<sup>72</sup> Both articles are quoted in full in Bertrand Warufsel, *Contre-Espionnage, op. cit.*, p.144; For more on the 1791 military code, see Charles H Hammond, 'The French Revolution and the Enlightening of Military Justice', *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, 34 (2006), 134-146.

<sup>73</sup> *AP, op. cit.* XXXIV, p.310. The author stands in agreement with Mitchell who argues that the Constituent Assembly ultimately created its own problem with the *émigrés* and refractory clergy and then 'largely ignored them', C Mitchell, *The French Legislative Assembly, op. cit.*, p.43;

<sup>74</sup> During his speech Brissot insisted that the *émigrés* would never accept France's new order: 'Leur coeur est endurci dès leur naissance; ils se croient et se croiront toujours les souverains nés du peuple, et chercheront toujours à le ramener au joug.' *AP, op. cit.* XXXIV, p. 310.

<sup>75</sup> Transnational security has been usefully defined as a 'paradigm for understanding the ways in which governments and non-state actors functioning within and across state borders interact and affect the defense of states and their citizens.' Richard Shultz, Roy Godson and George Quester, (eds.), *Security Studies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Washington DC: Brassey's Inc, 1997), p.81.

them.<sup>76</sup> As he demanded, ‘c'est au-delà du Rhin qu'il faut frapper, et non pas en France.’<sup>77</sup> In hindsight, Brissot was not altogether wrong to complain about the assembly's response to the emigration. For the first two years of the Revolution, the *émigrés* were treated with a degree of leniency by the constituents who were mostly relieved to see them leave France.<sup>78</sup> As Jean Michel Lacombe, the deputy du Tarn, declared, it was better to have ‘declared enemies’ abroad than ‘faithless servants’ in their midst.<sup>79</sup> Equally, despite the avowed purpose of the National Assembly's *Comité des Recherches*, and its municipal counterpart in Paris, to ‘démasquer les trames, complots et conspirations’ agitating the nation, only a relatively small number of individuals were ultimately investigated and prosecuted for the crime of *lèse-nation* during this same period, with scores among them even contesting the authority of the courts to hear their cases. Between July 1789 and the Autumn of 1791, of the hundred and seventy three individuals accused of high crimes, only forty two legal proceedings were initiated by the *Châtelet* and its successor, the provisional *Haute Cour Nationale* established at Orléans.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> The perception that elements emanating from the ‘outside’ (ie society or abroad) posed a transnational threat to domestic security was, of course, not new in eighteenth century French history. As Härter has demonstrated, the spectre of marginal groups such as foreign vagrants and bandits freely traversing continental frontiers ultimately led to the imposition of several domestic security controls such as border patrolling, the formation of paramilitary forces, as well as the conclusion of extradition treaties, notably between France and the Swabian and Franconian Circles of the Holy Roman Empire in 1731 and 1741 respectively. The problem is that the ability to make incursions, or to respect the extradition treaties, largely depended on a measure of neighborly goodwill and cooperation, a relationship that was violently disrupted with the Revolution. Karl Härter, ‘Security and cross-border political crime: The formation of transnational security regimes in 18th and 19th century Europe’, *Historical Social Research*, 38.1, (2013) 96-106.

<sup>77</sup> *AP*, *op. cit.* XXXIV, p.311. As Brissot declared, ‘Je vous l'ai déjà fait pressentir, messieurs, toutes vos lois et contre les émigrants, et contre les rebelles, et contre leurs chefs, seront inutiles, si vous n'y joignez pas une mesure essentielle, seule propre à en assurer le succès; et cette mesure concerne la conduite que vous avez à tenir à l'égard des puissances étrangères qui soutiennent et encouragent ces émigrations et cette révolte.’

<sup>78</sup> Godechot goes so far as to state that the first law enacted against the *émigrés* dated 22 December 1790 was ‘extrêmement bénigne’. It demanded their return to France or risk forfeiture of their private incomes and salaries. Jacques Godechot, *La Contre-Révolution, 1789-1804* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), p.154; Shapiro, meanwhile, argues that the early revolutionaries treated their opponents with ‘a degree of restraint and indulgence.’ Barry Shapiro, *Revolutionary justice in 1789–1790* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), p.223.

<sup>79</sup> Quoted in C Mitchell, *The Legislative Assembly*, *op. cit.*, p.45.

<sup>80</sup> Until October 1790, crimes of *lèse-nation* were adjudicated by the *Châtelet de Paris*, the judiciary institution from the *ancien régime*. However, in April 1791, after six months during which the accused were left to languish in prison, the jurisdictional competence was transferred to the *Haute Cour nationale provisoire d'Orléans*. Jean-Christophe Gavet (ed.), ‘Les vigiles de la nation’, *op. cit.*, 267-384. Yet, it cannot be said that the *Haute Cour* dispensed punishment with any great zeal either. Among the individuals whose case was transferred there was Cardinal de Rohan, an arch-conspirator, but even he was only tried and condemned for ‘contumace’, the failure to appear in court.

Brissot's demands for the deployment of preemptive actions were, during the course of the legislative sessions, seconded by Jean Antoine d'Averhoul, the deputy of Ardennes. Expressing concern with the build-up of the *émigré* army, the latter warned the assembly that 'tout délai de notre part entretient l'inquiétude des bons citoyens, refroidit leur zèle, augmente l'espoir des ennemis secrets, occasionne des séditions et prépare à ceux d'outre-Rhin cet instant favorable qu'ils guettent'.<sup>81</sup> Whilst this perceived threat from the émigré army was naturally conceived in military terms, and thus required a military response if necessary, d'Averhoul nevertheless pressed ahead for coercive, diplomatic pressure to be exerted on the Germanic princes to force its disbandment.<sup>82</sup> Although both their views were not universally accepted, even occasioning violent debate within the Assembly, Brissot and d'Averhoul were correct to point out that the strength of the emigration derived from the ostensible support it received from outside. No matter how much confidence they exuded, feigned or otherwise, the *émigrés* themselves never posed a real threat to the Revolution during the autumn and winter of 1791.<sup>83</sup> Despite being augmented by German mercenaries, their army was fragmented, impoverished and incapable of pitching battle alone. Only with the pecuniary and material resources they solicited from their benefactors in Piémont, Worms, Savoy, London etc, not to mention the prospect of a military alliance as vaguely inferred in the Declaration of Pilnitz, was it possible for the emigration to be sustained at all.

In any event, with the officer corps of the royal army in a state of disintegration, and mounting signs of religious and anti-seigneurial opposition within the interior, many of the deputies found persuasive the accusations that the real source of France's instability derived from the complicit support that the *émigrés*, the non-juring priests, and the European powers

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<sup>81</sup> Guillaume N Lallement (ed.), *1791-1792: Choix de Rapports, Opinions et Discours prononcés à la Tribune Nationale* (Paris: A Eymery, 1819), VIII, p.251.

<sup>82</sup> That the threat was conceived in military terms was expressed by Jean-Antoine Lafargue de Grangeneuve, who estimated 'qu'il nous faut une armée de cent cinquante mille hommes pour déjouer leurs desseins'. *ibid*, p.296.

<sup>83</sup> Jean-Clément Martin (ed.), *La Contre-Révolution en Europe: XVIIIe-XIXe siècles. Réalités politiques et sociales, résonances culturelles et idéologiques* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2001), p.126.

constituted for the counterrevolution.<sup>84</sup> Pierre-Victorien Vergniaud, a supporter of the Girondin faction, echoed Brissot's rhetoric, arguing that the mobilization of the *émigrés* across the Rhine, purportedly directed by the French chancellery at Coblenz, was *prima facie* evidence alone of a royalist plan to subvert the revolutionary state. As he rhetorically asked on 25 October 1791:

S'il n'existe plus aucune espèce de danger, d'où viennent ces troubles intérieurs qui déchirent les départements, cet embarras dans les affaires publiques? pourquoi ce cordon d'émigrants qui, s'étendant chaque jour, cerne une partie de nos frontières? Qu'on m'explique ces apparitions alternatives de quelques hommes de Coblenz aux Tuileries, et de quelques hommes des Tuileries à Coblenz.<sup>85</sup>

Whilst the counter-revolution was not guided by a single epicenter, it has been demonstrated how, during the Legislative period, the deputies consistently employed rhetoric which indicated that they now believed, or claimed belief, in the existence of a centrally orchestrated, grand conspiracy.<sup>86</sup> During the National Assembly, conspirational fears appear to be more or less periodic with a number of deputies otherwise skeptical about the existence of purported plots and conspiracies that were being concocted either in the interior or from across its borders.<sup>87</sup> As Tackett argues, it was only after the flight of Varennes, when

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<sup>84</sup> According to one calculation, over 2100 noble officers left France between 15 September 1791 and 1 December 1791 totaling 6000 for the whole year. Peter McPhee, *The French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), p.76.

<sup>85</sup> *AP, op. cit.*, XXXIV, p. 402.

<sup>86</sup> Jacques Godechot, *La Contre-Révolution, op.cit.*, p.149, Timothy Tackett, 'A Conspiracy Obsession in a Time of Revolution: French Elites and the Origins of the Terror', *American Historical Review*, 105 (2000), 691-713 (p.707).; On the Girondins and fear of a conspiracy by the monarchy and the 'Austrian Committee' see the work by Tom Kaiser including: Thomas E. Kaiser, 'Who's Afraid of Marie-Antoinette? Diplomacy, Austrophobia, and the Queen,' *French History*, 14 (2000), 241-271; Thomas E. Kaiser, 'From the Austrian Committee to the Foreign Plot: Marie-Antoinette, Austrophobia and the Terror', *French Historical Studies*, 26.4 (2003), 579-617, Thomas E. Kaiser, 'Entre les mots et les choses: le fantôme du "Comité Autrichien"', in Anne Duprat (ed.), *Révolutions et mythes identitaires: mots, violences, mémoire* (Paris: CHCSC de l'Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, 2009).

<sup>87</sup> As the deputy Jean François Gaultier de Biauzat declared, 'I have never really placed any credence in them, and you have seen that (such beliefs) were totally unfounded.' Quoted in Timothy Tackett, *The Coming of the Terror in the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), p.138. Citing the lack of

captured documents revealed the true extent of the royal government's duplicity that many of them began to take seriously the possibility of an organized conspiracy.<sup>88</sup> One person who did not underestimate the danger of the counter-revolution or the problem of combatting the espionage activity underwriting it, was the journalist, agitator and self-appointed 'surveillant' of the nation's enemies, Jean Louis Carra. On 12 November 1791, three days after the Legislative Assembly promulgated the decree declaring 'les émigrés suspects of conspiracy contre la patrie', he delivered a long discourse during which he posed the following questions:

Première question: Existe-t-il une conspiration contre la liberté, les droits, la constitution et le repos du peuple Français ?

Deuxième question: Quels sont les conspirateurs et au nom de qui prétendent-ils agir?

Troisième question: Quels ont été depuis la révolution quels sont aujourd'hui, et quels seront pour la suite immédiatement les projets et les moyens combinés des conspirateurs du dedans et du dehors?

Quatrième question: Comment réprimer efficacement ces conspirateurs et arrêter la marche de leurs complots combinés avec certaines cours étrangères?

Cinquième et dernière question: Qu'arrivera-t-il si, au lieu d'employer les moyens coercitifs de puissance nationale et souveraine et de droits naturels contre la

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evidence pointing to these purported plots, the deputy Amable-Gilbert Dufraisse-Duchey complained how 'On nous parle sans cesse de *conspiration* sans nous donner la moindre *preuve*'. *AP*, X, *op. cit.*, pp.168-169.

<sup>88</sup> Although subsequently annulled, the law prohibited anyone from emigrating, prescribed a passport to travel abroad and ordered all *émigrés* to return back to France, Jacques Godechot, *La Contre-Révolution*, *op. cit.*, p.154.



conspiration générale, on n'emploie que des palliatifs, des vaines menaces, des demi-moyens, des décrets inexécutés ou interprétatifs au gré de ceux qui seront chargés de leur exécution?<sup>89</sup>

Conforming to the spirit of Title 1 of 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the penal code, the decree against the *émigrés* was designed to be both punitive in nature and preventive in purpose.<sup>90</sup> Yet, with the emigration continuing apace over the following months, it was clear, as Carra predicted, that the November decree would fail to deter the *émigrés* by such draconian measures alone.<sup>91</sup> As his questions imply, the revolutionary state was best preserved not just by the severity of its penal code but by the strictness of the measures to protect it. The problem, however, was not so much in identifying the militants ie the ‘rebelles ouverts’ who were, more often than not, publicly brandishing arms and boasting of their royalist plans. After two years, the revolutionaries (and royalist ministers) had gained a reasonable understanding of the *émigrés*’ activities abroad, mostly gathered from piecemeal intelligence. The inventory of papers deposited by the Constituent Assembly’s *Comité des Recherches* contain a number of reports from the (albeit not always reliable) agents that they dispatched abroad or from the individuals who volunteered to spy on the *émigrés* on the *comité*’s or assembly’s behalf.<sup>92</sup> At the same time, it gleaned much of its knowledge not only from double agents but from the letters which were intercepted from abroad.<sup>93</sup> Between October and November 1790, for

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<sup>89</sup> Jean-Louis Carra, *Discours sur la conspiration d'Outre Rhin et sur les moyens les plus efficaces à employer relativement aux puissances étrangères qui accueillent et soutiennent cette conspiration par J.-L. Carra*. (Paris: Société des Amis de la Constitution, 1791), p.34.

<sup>90</sup> The motion that the decree conformed to ‘titre 1er de la seconde partie’ of the penal code was proposed by the *législateur*, Pierre-Édouard Lémontey. 25 October 1791, *AP*, XXXIV, *op.cit.*, p.714.

<sup>91</sup> Godechot states that the departures from France during these months were ‘massifs’. Just how many Frenchmen emigrated throughout the Revolutionary period is not entirely certain with estimates ranging from 100,000 to 150,000 in total. The official list of *émigrés* commissioned by Napoleon in 1800 cites 145,000, Jacques Godechot, *La Contre-Révolution, op. cit.*, p.151.

<sup>92</sup> See, for example, the folio concerning the ‘dénonciation et délibération du directoire du département au sujet d'une lettre reçue au Mêle-sur-Sarthe et communiquée par lui à l'Assemblée nationale, contenant les détails sur les agissements du comte d'Artois et des émigrés à Ath (Horinant).’ AN D/XXIII/1 dossier 34, pièces 14-19, dated 21 September 1791.

<sup>93</sup> On 23 June 1791 the *Comité des Recherches de la municipalité de Paris* sent a *procès-verbal* from the *section de Bondy* relative to the seizure of a packet, found in a stagecoach, containing eighty four letters destined to

example, the Constituent Assembly's *Comité des Recherches* received a voluminous report from a 'prétendu avocat au Parlement, named Goisset who, along with two spies, passed themselves as counter-revolutionaries in Switzerland and Savoy.<sup>94</sup> The *Comité des Recherches* also curated intelligence from the bundles of letters originating from Jersey and Germany on the propaganda and recruitment attempts made by the Prince de Condé's army, as well as the living conditions of the *émigrés* installed there.<sup>95</sup> Likewise, the archives of the *Comité des Rapports*, though less rich than the *Comité des Recherches*, contain several reports on the *menées* of the *émigrés* and counter revolutionaries at Bâle as well on the frontier of the Rhine.<sup>96</sup> Otherwise, one of the most noteworthy intelligence reports was the Comte de Montmorin's secret *communiqué* of 5 May 1791 on 'des intérêts et dispositions des princes étrangers et de leurs liaisons avec les Français émigrés' found scattered among the papers of the *Comité Diplomatique* and bearing the title '*Mémoire sur la situation, les forces et les projets des princes possessionnés en Alsace, des Français rassemblés le long des frontières helvétiques et germaniques depuis Lausanne jusqu'à Trêves et sur les dispositions de la Franche-Comté de l'Alsace et de la Lorraine.*'<sup>97</sup>

Despite the presence of harmless refugees among the *émigrés*, the revolutionaries nevertheless possessed sufficient, workable intelligence to prepare for a military incursion. The real challenge for them, on the other hand, lay in uncovering and thwarting the designs of the 'rebelles cachés', ie their subaltern agents who, having remained in France, were surreptitiously engaged in the auxiliary operations, whether in terms of suborning and

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different towns throughout the kingdom and abroad, hidden in several issues of the *Journal de Prudhomme*. *ibid*, dossier 382, pièces n°25 et 26.

<sup>94</sup> Emmanuel Vingtrinier, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 52 et 53.

<sup>95</sup> See, for example, the letter dated 18 May 1790 from a 'princesse très bonne patriote' sent to the National Assembly's *Comité des Recherches* by Alexandre-César Perron, a member of the *Comité des Recherches de la municipalité de Paris*, denouncing the intrigues of Louis de Lorraine, Prince de Lambesc at Metz, the activities of émigré troops in the German region of Lorraine, their collusion with the German princes and the 'menées' of the clergy. AN D/XXIXbis/6 dossier 79, pièces n°12 et 13. Otherwise, for folios on the despatch of agents to Switzerland to spy on the sieurs d'Autichamp, de Bonneville, d'Algrain and the vicomte de Mirabeau, see AN DXXIXbis/32 dossier 329, pièces 7-44.

<sup>96</sup> For dossiers on the 'menées' of the *émigrés* and counter-revolutionaries at Bâle and on the Rhine frontier see, for example, AN D/XXIX/12 dossier 96.

<sup>97</sup> AN F7 4396, *Papiers Comité Diplomatique, 1791-1793.*, dossier 41.

recruiting volunteers, spying on defenses, procuring arms and other material or inciting domestic insurrection through propaganda and bribery.<sup>98</sup> As Carra declared during his discourse, even if :

La nation française se trouverait forcée d'entrer elle-même à main armée sur les terres desdits électeurs pour détruire ce repaire de conspirateurs et de traîtres', it would still be confronted with the problem of identifying the 'trop grand nombre' of 'administrateurs dévoués à l'ancien régime... sur lesquels les conspirateurs du dedans et du dehors n'ont cessé de compter, non-seulement pour favoriser une guerre civile et une invasion au moment donné.'<sup>99</sup>

This connection between the buildup of the *émigré* army and the clandestine, auxiliary operations within the interior was most clearly drawn by Jean Antoine d'Averhault who, on 27 November 1791, explained how:

On sait que le nombre de ceux en état de porter les armes peut aller à vingt mille hommes, dont environ quatre à cinq mille officiers et soldats déserteurs ou anciens militaires : le recrutement continu, les achats d'armes, de chevaux, d'équipages, de munitions et de vivres, tout prouve qu'ils... comptent sur les troubles intérieurs qu'ils excitent et entretiennent par toutes sortes de moyens, ainsi que sur les relations secrètes qu'ils peuvent avoir conservées dans quelques-uns des places frontières.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Brissot actually distinguished between three categories of *émigrés*, the princes, the officials and the rank and file, each of which posed their own set of problems. See Étienne Lehodey de Saultchevreuil (ed.), *Journal de l'Assemblée nationale, ou Journal logographique* (Paris: chez Le Hodey, 1791), I, 450-451.

<sup>99</sup> Carra, *Discours, op. cit.*, pp.28-29.

<sup>100</sup> Guillaume N Lallement (ed.), *1791-1792: Choix de Rapports, Opinions et Discours prononcés à la Tribune Nationale* (Paris: A Eymery, 1819), VIII, p.250. A good example of these auxiliary operations at this juncture involved the agents of the Cardinal de Rohan. In December 1791 the *juge de paix* at Strasbourg, the sieur Roederer, issued an arrest warrant for a group of them that included François-Michel de Loyauté, a *chevalier de Louis*, Hyacinthe Joseph de Silly and Louis-Joseph Mayer, *dit* Saint-Louis. According to the *acte d'accusation* dated 16 December 1791, they were accused 'comme prévenus de complots & attentas contre la sûreté de l'état'. Among their activities they were apparently caught fabricating uniforms and preparing to

### III

Yet, despite the mounting evidence, and the calls for greater vigilance, the *Comité de Surveillance* that was subsequently formed on 25 November 1791, almost two months following the suppression of the Constituent Assembly's *Comité des Recherches* was largely ill-equipped to avert the high crimes designated *lèse-nation*.<sup>101</sup> Unlike the *Comités des Recherches*, the committee possessed neither the authority to track or interrogate suspects, make domiciliary visits, or issue arrest warrants. Nor did it dispose of its own *agents d'exécution* or discretionary funds.<sup>102</sup> Instead, following pressure from the *feuillants*, its functions were reduced to receiving, collating and analyzing intelligence, mostly in the form of written denunciations, before sending their reports and recommendations to the assembly.<sup>103</sup> This restriction of the *comité's* remit reflects not just the fundamental mistrust of concentrated power that subsisted throughout the early period of the Revolution but to the manner of which power can also be arrogated, especially when bureaucratic structures and practices are still malleable. As the *feuillants* made clear, the National Assembly's *Comité des Recherches* had repeatedly overstepped its prescribed authority by appropriating investigative and prosecutorial powers for itself.<sup>104</sup> It was for this reason that, to prevent the

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deliver the fortress at Strasbourg to an armed force composed of six hundred *émigrés*. L Prudhomme (ed.), *Révolutions de Paris, dédiée à la Nation* (Paris: 1791), p.550.

<sup>101</sup> In reality, as Martucci makes clear, the Constituents did not provide a legal definition of the crime of *lèse-nation* itself, preferring, instead, to employ the notion of crimes against the security of the state. Roberto Martucci, 'Qu'est-ce que la lèse-nation? À propos du problème de l'infraction politique sous la constituante (1789-1791)', *Déviance et société*, 24.4 (1990), 377-393. Roberto Martucci, 'L'enjeu pénal à l'Assemblée constituante: Un chantier prometteur (1789-1791)', *Dix-huitième Siècle*, 37.1 (2005), 283-303. G. A. Kelly, 'From Lèse-majeste to Lèse-nation: Treason in 18th century France', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 42 (1981), 269-86.

<sup>102</sup> Michel Eude, 'Le Comité de Surveillance de l'Assemblée Législative (1791-1792)', *Annales historiques de la Révolution Française*, 36. 176 (1964), 129–148 (p.130). As Brissot complained to the Legislative Assembly, 'votre comité de surveillance ne peut suppléer à cette impuissance du corps législatif. Il n'a aucun pouvoir ni d'amener, ni d'arrêter, ni d'interroger'. August Amic, Étienne Mouttet, (eds.), *Choix des discours et des rapports les plus remarquables prononcés dans nos Assemblées Parlementaires depuis 1789 jusqu'en 1840* (Paris: Aux Tribune de la Tribune Française, 1840), I, p.595.

<sup>103</sup> *ibid*, p.142. In proposing its creation, Claude Basire stated, 'nous somme environnés de conspirateurs, partout des trames se préparent et sans cesse on vous dénonce des faits particuliers qui se lient à la grande conspiration sur l'existence de laquelle aucun de nous ne peut avoir de doutes. Ces faits sont tous isolés, et s'ils étaient réunis, ils formeraient un corps de délit qui jetteraient enfin un grand jour sur les intentions de nos ennemis....' *AP*, XXXV, *op.cit.*, p.361.

<sup>104</sup> On 9 September 1790, for example, the Conservative deputy, Jean Jacques Duval d'Eprémèsnil publicly

committee from becoming a national instrument for any one political faction, the proposed solution was to limit its functions and rotate its members. Unfortunately, as Michel Eude had discovered, and which this author can more or less verify, most of the papers pertaining to the *Comité de Surveillance* no longer exists and the remaining dossiers are mainly undated and scattered amongst the papers of the various committees of the period.<sup>105</sup> Consequently, the inner workings, ambitions and even the activities of the *comité* remain largely unknown. However, what can be reasonably determined is as follows.

The purpose of the *Comité de Surveillance* was not just to gather intelligence on counter-revolutionary activity in France but to collect information on all forms of domestic opposition, potential, conflated or otherwise. As one of its foremost members, Claude Basire, made clear, it should be ‘chargé de recueillir toutes les pièces qui ont rapport aux faits qui pourraient troubler la sécurité publique’.<sup>106</sup> In other words, whilst the *comité* was formed in response to claims that state employees were being incited to emigrate, it was ultimately charged with reporting on civil disturbance in all its ‘myriad forms’, whether in terms of counter-revolution, radical agitation, or popular resistance.<sup>107</sup> To discharge this function, the *comité* solicited- like the *Comité de Recherches* before it- the cooperation of the various state and governmental institutions both within the capital, where it sat, and throughout the country. In Paris, for example, the principal sources of intelligence were the *commissaires de police* elected in each section and the city mayor, Jérôme Pétion de Villeneuve.<sup>108</sup> On 27

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demanded that the committee account for itself. As he rhetorically asked, ‘Oserais-je demander au comité quel est le but de son institution? Sans doute il agit en vertu d’un pouvoir: quel est-il? Trouve-t-il ce pouvoir dans un de vos décrets?’, *AP*, XVIII, *op. cit.*, pp.667-668.

<sup>105</sup> Michel Eude, ‘Le Comité de Surveillance’, *op. cit.*, p.130. There are no dossiers in series D (*Comité d’Assemblées*) at the *Archives Nationales*, nor do the *registres* of the *procès-verbaux* in either original or digitized format exist. On the other hand, folio F7 81, titled ‘1791 et Années Suivantes. Déclarations et dénonciations faites au Comité de Surveillance’ do contain a few dossiers of limited interest.

<sup>106</sup> Quoted in Michel Eude, ‘Le Comité de Surveillance’, *op. cit.*, p.134. Eude does not cite the original source nor was the author able to trace this quote in the debates printed in the *Archives Parlementaires*. A section of the debates regarding the Comité’s formation can, however, be found in Étienne Lehodey de Saultchevreuil (ed.), *Journal de l’Assemblée nationale, ou Journal logographique* (Paris: Chez Baudouin, 1791), IV, p.248.

<sup>107</sup> Howard G Brown, *Ending the French Revolution: Violence, Justice, and Repression from the Terror to Napoleon* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), p.1.

<sup>108</sup> On 29 December 1791, for example, the *commissaire de police de la section de l’Arsenal*, M Virvau, wrote to the president of the *Comité de Surveillance* informing him of a ‘complot’ which was supposedly brewing in his arrondissement. In his letter, to which was appended the reports of the police agent, M Bachelu, Virvau

April 1792, Pétion sent the *Comité de Surveillance* a copy of a letter accusing M. de Lambelle, the *Chevalier de Saint-Louis* of maintaining ‘intelligences secrètes avec le comte d'Artois’ adding that ‘il doit rejoindre sous peu afin de prendre, de concert avec le Département de Police, les mesures nécessaires pour découvrir et suivre le fil de cette intrigue.’<sup>109</sup> As mayor, Pétion was officially responsible for maintaining order within the capital by, as he acknowledges, investigating and suppressing counter-revolutionary activity. In other words, it was the mayor’s office that, during this critical phase of the French Revolution, was in charge of counter-espionage operations in Paris, essentially filling the vacuum created by the suppression of the *Lieutenance de Police* in 1789. Indeed, until the end of the constitutional period, Pétion would continually reassure his superior, Terrier de Monciel, the *Ministre de l'Intérieur*, ‘qu’il ne cesse de prendre des mesures pour le maintien de l'ordre et pour déjouer les manoeuvres des conspirateurs’, measures that were also executed in conjunction with paid companies of National Guardsmen and financed through the allocation of discretionary funds.<sup>110</sup> As one deputy claimed, Pétion thus possessed ‘ tous les moyens nécessaires pour ‘y maintenir l’ordre et la sûreté, pour éclater la conduite des gens suspects.’<sup>111</sup>

Beyond the capital, the *Comité de Surveillance* depended on the intelligence reports of its *envois extraordinaires* such as Charles Barbaroux, the deputy for the department of the Bouches-du-Rhône or M Rutteau who was deployed to the northern frontier in 1792 in

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declared that the conspirators were meeting every day at the residence of M. de Vienne, an architect and former inspector of public works and possessing ‘des espions très adroits pour ne pas se laisser surprendre’. Alexandre Tuetey (ed.), *Répertoire général des sources manuscrites de l'histoire de Paris pendant la Révolution française: Assemblée législative, 11 vols* (Paris Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1902), VI, p.25.

<sup>109</sup> Alexandre Tuetey (ed.), *Répertoire général, op. cit.*, VI, p.27. Bulletin 207.

<sup>110</sup> *ibid*, IV, p. ‘Lettre de M. Pétion, Maire de Paris, à M. Terrier de Monciel, Ministre de l'Intérieur, 22 juin 1792 (4 h. 3/4 du matin)’ Original signé, AN F7 3688 (doss ?); For evidence of these funds, see the note in the archives of the *Comité des Recherches*, ‘États des dépenses secrètes du maire de Paris et du commandant général de la garde nationale pour la surveillance tant des individus suspectés de tramer des complots contre-révolutionnaires’, que des falsificateurs de billets de la Caisse d'Escompte et des étrangers soupçonnés de répandre de l'argent, ainsi que de certains émissaires pour des voyages à Londres et à Cologne. 1789-1790.’ *ibid*, X,p.319. bulletin 2933, AN DXXIX/34 dossier 357, pièce 1.

<sup>111</sup> Étienne Lehodey de Saultchevreuil, (ed.), *Journal de l'Assemblée nationale, ou Journal logographique*, XVIII, p.198.

the capacity of ‘secrétaire-commis du Comité de surveillance de l'Assemblée nationale.’<sup>112</sup> Rutteau, a former regimental officer, had acted unofficially as a double agent for the *Comité des Recherches* and was involved in a sting operation which led to the arrest of two suspected royalist agents, *les sieurs* Lacombe et Thévenot, both of whom were accused of attempting to suborn national guardsmen for the Prince de Condé.<sup>113</sup> Otherwise, like its nominal predecessor, the *Comité de Surveillance* relied heavily on the strict vigilance of the *corps municipaux, tribunaux de districts, administrations départementales*, and of course, the proliferation of patriotic societies and clubs, all of which transmitted their reports either directly or indirectly via the mayor or *administrateurs du Département de Police*.<sup>114</sup>

Significantly, in the very few cases during the constitutional period where proceedings for the crime of espionage had actually been raised, the *comité* played no contributory role at all in either the investigative or judicial stages. Attesting to its limited role, the *comité* was only made aware of these individual cases either indirectly via the *directoire du département* or, in one known instance, by the Assembly itself.<sup>115</sup> Although it

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<sup>112</sup> For Barbaroux’s exchanges with the *Comité de Surveillance* see Alfred Chabaud (ed.), *Correspondance et Mémoires de Barbaroux: Édition critique augmentée de lettres inédites* (Paris: Société de l'histoire de la Révolution française: F. Rieder, 1923) , *Les Attentats des administrateurs de la ville d'Arles, du Directoire du département des Bouches-du-Rhône et des commissaires civils, constatés d'après les pièces déposées au Comité de surveillance, par M. Barbaroux, Député extraordinaire de la Commune de Marseille* (Paris: Imprimerie. de la Société typographique, 1792); A batch of Rutteau’s reports, dated variously 6 and 13 August 1792, can be found in the archives of the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Mémoires et documents*. France, vol. 648, fols 61, 80-81 and 87-90.

<sup>113</sup> For an extended account of the arrests see *Rapport par M. de Sillery sur une information contre le sieur Thévenot et les sieur et dame de Lacombe, lors de la séance du 28 mai 1791*. AP, XXVI, pp.584-589.

<sup>114</sup> See, for example, ‘Lettre du Département de Police au président du Comité de surveillance de l'Assemblée, envoyant copie de 2 lettres, la première, des officiers municipaux de La Fère, qui annonçait le départ pour Paris d'un grand nombre d'officiers d'artillerie de cette place, la seconde, de la Société des Amis de la Constitution de Bordeaux, qui signalait à M. Pétion le voyage à Paris de quantité de nobles et d'abbés sous l'uniforme de garde national, animés des intentions les plus suspectes, attendu que le relevé des passeports pour Paris, du 16 avril au 1er mai, contenait les noms de 66 personnes, dont 22 indiquées comme bonnes à surveiller... 13 mai 1792.’ Reproduced in Tuetey (ed.), *Répertoire*, VI, *op. cit.*, p.27. Tuetey only provides the incomplete reference, AN D III 235. *Lettres des administrateurs au Département de Police au Comité de surveillance de l'Assemblée, lui envoyant des extraits de plusieurs lettres et notes, adressées, tant au maire de Paris qu'au Département de Police, par des municipalités ou citoyens de divers départements, touchant des individus suspects se rendant à Paris et qu'il est bon de surveiller*. 6-18 June 1792. Originaux et extraits signés (19 p.), AN/F7/4590.

<sup>115</sup> During the *séance* of 29 April 1792, the Assembly received a report from the *Directoire du Rhin* containing the records of a trial instigated by the Tribunal of the District de Belfort ‘contre un particulier prévenu d'espionnage’. Anonymous, *Procès-verbal des séances de l'Assemblée nationale législative* (Paris: L’Imprimerie Nationale, 1792) XIV, pp.47-48. Equally, on 24 July 1792, the Assembly sent the *Comité de Surveillance* the documents pertaining to a procedure instigated by the *Juge de Paix* at Lille against ‘cinq particuliers prévenus d'espionnage.’ AP, XLVII, *op. cit.*, p.116.

is impossible to determine just how many reports were transmitted to, and filtered by, the *Comité de Surveillance*, it is reasonable to assume that they were not inconsiderable. In May 1792, for example, Claude Basire announced how ‘le Comité de Surveillance a reçu cent-cinquante lettres, qui lui ont été adressées par les officiers municipaux des diverses municipalités de l’empire’ declaring alone that the refractory priests ‘se rendent actuellement en foule à Paris.’<sup>116</sup> Indeed, such was the perceived effect of the *comité’s* omnipresence that it was accused of having established ‘un vaste système d’espionnage dans toutes les parties du royaume’.<sup>117</sup> Leaving aside the validity of this supposition, that such a ‘système’ succeeded in being ‘vaste’ in scope, Ternaux unintentionally raises a key point which requires qualification. Although an important mission, state organized espionage is essentially a limited, focused activity both in peace and wartime that principally targets foreign powers as well as their accredited embassies, institutions and installations, civil and military. Above all, it is an activity which is performed clandestinely. Yet, in so far as it was directed at the kingdom of France, this ‘système’ did not conform to this traditional model of *renseignement*. It would be more accurate to say, on the other hand, that the revolutionaries sought to conduct surveillance *en masse*, both covertly and overtly, with the purpose of monitoring as many people in France as possible. This is not to say that their surveillance was not occasionally targeted- which this thesis will continue to demonstrate throughout- but that this surveillance inescapably overlapped with its broader, indiscriminate practice of policing public opinion and behavior in general.<sup>118</sup>

#### IV

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<sup>116</sup> Étienne Lehoudey de Saultchevreuil (ed.), *Journal de l’Assemblée nationale, ou Journal logographique, XVIII*, p.201

<sup>117</sup> Mortimer Ternaux, *Histoire de la Terreur, 1792-1794: d’Après des Documents Authentiques et Inédits par Mortimer-Ternaux*, 2 vols (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1863), I, p.40.

<sup>118</sup> This friction between targeted and mass surveillance rouses controversy today following the disclosures of the former NSA contractor, Edward Snowden, to the Guardian Newspaper in June 2013. Sometimes misunderstood, Snowden did not speak out against the surveillance activities targeting unfriendly, foreign governments, or terrorist suspects and networks, but denounced the indiscriminate ‘bulk collection’ programs practiced by the NSA and Great Britain’s communications agency, GCHQ.



Semantics aside, the difficulty of identifying the enemy within helps explain why the revolutionaries continued the *ancien régime's* practice of attempting to surveil the general population.<sup>119</sup> As anyone could potentially be a counter-revolutionary, it followed that everyone should be observed. The problem, so the revolutionaries conceived, was that masked patriots seldom leave evidence of their real intentions and that, without the existence of forensic evidence, or the structural capabilities to perform mass surveillance itself, the easiest, although obviously not the sole method of revealing the real face of a conspirator was for everyone to watch and denounce each-other.<sup>120</sup> As Tackett explains:

The pervasiveness of fear and rumour, undergirded with the emerging accusatory culture of denunciations, had the potential for creating a kind of “everyday terror” where everyone spied on everyone else: a vicious circle of grassroots suspicion that, in some respects, preceded and prefigured the institutional Terror of 1793–1794.<sup>121</sup>

In propagating this cycle of suspicion, the *comité's* efforts do not appear to be negligible. Despite possessing no immediate power to erect or dismantle the structures of control and surveillance, the *comité* made good use of the popular pressure for *dévoilement* by encouraging the vigilant self-policing of communities and the proliferation of written

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<sup>119</sup> Susan Maslan argues that, at the start of the Revolution, surveillance was initially conducted by France's citizens to oversee their government and not, as Michel Foucault supposed, a ‘mechanism of state power’. It was only during the legislative and especially the radical phase of the Jacobin period that the government employed surveillance to control the people. Kaitlyn Carter, meanwhile, maintains that the people's surveillance over the kingdom was ‘immediately’ applied to community policing and thus ‘proved foundational to incipient government surveillance’. Susan Maslan, *Revolutionary Acts, Theatre, Democracy and the French Revolution* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2005), pp.127–8 & 169; Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p. 13. Kaitlyn Marie Carter, ‘The *Comité des Recherches*’, *op. cit.*, pp. 45–65 (p.48).

<sup>120</sup> Timothy Tackett, *The Coming of the Terror*, *op.cit.*, pp.130–131, Colin Lucas, ‘Theory and practice of denunciation’, *op. cit.*, p.776.

<sup>121</sup> Timothy Tackett, *The Coming of the Terror*, *op. cit.*, p.135.

denunciations on a local level.<sup>122</sup> To this end, it relied on both the code of criminal procedure and the 1791 penal code which made denunciations a civic requirement. As article 1, Title VI, part I of the latter prescribes:

Tout homme qui aura été témoin d'un attentat, soit contre la liberté et la vie d'un autre homme, soit contre la sûreté publique ou individuelle, sera tenu d'en donner aussitôt avis à l'officier de police du lieu du délit.<sup>123</sup>

To be sure, it is impossible to know whether this law had actually compelled people to denounce or betray a conspiracy, or whether they would have done so in any event. Since the fall of the Bastille, the revolutionaries had repeatedly instructed the French population that denunciation was a virtuous act and to preserve one's silence, despite knowledge of a political crime, was to render them complicit too. In this, the revolutionary *dénonciateur citoyen*, as characterized by Jean Paul Marat, was distinguished from the denigrated 'mouchard' of the *ancien régime*.<sup>124</sup> Jean Dusaulx, in his *Dix Commandements des Français*, instructed his readers to 'surveille les ennemis de la liberté, ne crains pas de dénoncer leurs conspirations, ton silence te rendrait aussi coupable qu'eux.'<sup>125</sup> Other *hommes de lettres* had also offered techniques in identifying so-called 'charlatans du patriotisme'. The pamphleteer

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<sup>122</sup> On 28 July 1792, for example, the departmental authorities on the Lower Rhine sent a circular inviting its citizens to transmit to the local *Comité secret du Directoire* all information 'à faire échouer les conspirations contre la liberté'. *Archives départementales du Bas Rhin, sous-série 1L 143 N°89*.

<sup>123</sup> JB Duvergier, *op. cit.*, (ed.), III, pp.331-348, The law of 16 and 29 September 1791 'sur la police de sûreté, la justice criminelle et l'instauration des jurés', *op. cit.*, Part I, Title VI, Article 1.; The Constituent Assembly's code of criminal procedure recognized two types of denunciations, the first essentially a personal grievance against a third party and second, the civic denunciation of which we are concerned. Robert Allen, *Les tribunaux criminels sous la Révolution et l'Empire: 1792-1811* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2005), p.24.

<sup>124</sup> Of course, the perceived unreliability of informers dates back to antiquity. In his contemporaneous history of the Roman Empire, Cassio Dio wrote, 'Spies and eavesdroppers are said to collect such fabrications, sometimes out of personal dislike, sometimes out of resentment, or because they have been bribed by their victims' enemies, or been refused money by the victims themselves.....' Livia Drusilla to her husband, the Emperor Augustus, Cassio Dio, *The Roman History: The Reign of Augustus* (London: Penguin Books, 1987), p.209. Equally, the British polemicist, John Thelwall argued at the time that a spy's salary was contingent on keeping their employers in 'good humour'. John Thelwall, *On the Moral Tendency of a System of Spies and Informers, and the Conduct to be Observed by the Friends of Liberty During the Continuance of such a System* (London: John Thelwall, 1794), p.33. Whilst the terms appears to have been used interchangeably during the 1790s, one can distinguish between a spy and an informer, the former being someone who is usually paid to procure information whilst the latter volunteers it. Emsley, Clive, 'The Home Office and its Sources of Information and Investigation, 1791-1801', *The English Historical Review*, 94 (1979), 532-561 (p.545).

<sup>125</sup> Anonymous, *Étrennes Patriotiques ou Manuel du Citoyen* (Paris: Imprimerie de Provost, 1792), p.300.

and future deputy of Puy-de-Dôme, Jacques-Antoine Dulaure, distinguished them from loyal patriots, not by any conventional, suspicious disposition, but by their ‘pétulance marquée, par des exagérations affectées, par une audace à offrir sans cesse des mesures qui peuvent compromettre la liberté publique, par des déclamations, des clameurs, des élans continuels’.<sup>126</sup> On the other hand, the Jacobin Leader, Georges Couthon, famously declared that:

Dans les révolutions tous les bons citoyens doivent être physionomistes; tous ceux qui ont aujourd'hui la mine patibulaire, les yeux hagards, un costume évidemment déguisé, sont de mauvais citoyens que tout vrai républicain a le droit d'arrêter sur le champ.<sup>127</sup>

He was essentially elaborating on the 18<sup>th</sup> century theory propounded by Johann Casper Lavater whose treatise ‘L'art de connaître les hommes d'après les traits de leur physionomie’ became police practice under the *ancien régime*.<sup>128</sup> As the title of his study indicates, he claimed that the real personality- and thus latent motives- of an individual can be deciphered not only by the way a person dressed, spoke and comported themselves but by their facial features too.<sup>129</sup> It would appear that such primers were genuinely welcomed by members of the public who concurred with the political authorities that denunciations were necessary for the greater good.<sup>130</sup> Gensonné nevertheless pointed out that the declarations sent to the *comité* did not constitute ‘preuves légales’ and therefore could not be legitimately used to

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<sup>126</sup> Quoted in Timothy Tackett, *The Coming of the Terror*, *op. cit.*, p.133.

<sup>127</sup> A Ray (ed.), *Réimpression de l'ancien Moniteur: L'Assemblée Législative* (Paris: Henri Plon, 1862), XIX, p.707.

<sup>128</sup> Johann-Caspar Lavater, *La physiognomonie ou l'art de connaître les hommes d'après les traits de leur physionomie, L'Âge d'homme* (Paris: Librairie Française et Étrangère, 1841).

<sup>129</sup> For further reading on clothing as both a ‘code de communication’ and indicator of latent thoughts, see Nicole Pellegrin, *Les Vêtements de la liberté: abécédaire des pratiques vestimentaires françaises de 1780 à 1800* (Aix-en-Provence: Alinéa, 1989), pp.131-2.

<sup>130</sup> Virginie Martin, ‘La Révolution française ou « l'ère du soupçon ». Diplomatie et dénonciation’, *Hypothèses*, 12.1, (2009), 131-140 (p.134), Antoine de Baecque, ‘La dénonciation publique dans la presse et le pamphlet’, *The Press in French Revolution* (Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation, 1991), 261-279 (p.271).

level an *acte d'accusation* against a suspected conspirator.<sup>131</sup> Citing the *loi de Septembre*, he made clear that a denunciation was essentially the ‘premier indice’, or clue, that marked the point of origin for police and judicial enquiries but that it could, in no case, serve as proof or substitution of proof, not least because the author chose to remain anonymous.<sup>132</sup> In this, he drew the legal distinction between denunciations and depositions which, by contrast, carried the weight of law and could be obtained, if necessary, by a bench warrant.<sup>133</sup> In other words, to keep a suspect in custody, the judicial authorities required incriminating evidence, such as correspondence written in cipher or suspicious signs of criminal intent, otherwise they would have to abandon prosecution.<sup>134</sup> This requirement was made plain by the municipal authorities at Metz, who during the séance of 10 May 1792, observed how they had arrested ‘facilement les gens, accusés de complot contre la sûreté de l'État’ but that they were released ‘aussi facilement parce que les preuves manquent pour un emprisonnement prolongé’.<sup>135</sup> In any event, recognizing their importance in unmasking plots etc, the *comité* continued the practice of welcoming and spreading denunciations, including in the popular press, such as Jean Marat’s *L’Ami du Peuple* or Carra’s *Annales Patriotiques*, not least because of its perceived deterrent effect.<sup>136</sup> His was just one of many radical publications which specialized in relaying denunciations, and levelling its own accusations, against

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<sup>131</sup> A Ray (ed.), *Réimpression de l’Ancien Moniteur op. cit.*, XII, p.420.

<sup>132</sup> It is, of course, impossible to attribute motives to many of these denunciations. According to Claude Fauchet, the constitutional bishop of Calvados, many of the letters sent to the *Comité de Surveillance* were supposedly inspired by royalists close to the king who needed to conceal their identity or otherwise risked forfeiture of their lives. *Réimpression de l’Ancien Moniteur, op. cit.*, pp.418-419. Indeed, the doubtful nature of these denunciations was made clear to the *Comité de Surveillance* by M. Cochet, the deputy of the *département du Nord*, who declared that he had received one concerning the ‘menées contrerévolutionnaires, mais sur des indices trop vagues pour permettre d’y donner suite’. 25 May 1792. AN AA 49, n° 1409 reproduced in A Tuetey (ed.), VI, *op. cit.*, p.29.; Significantly, Genêt made a similar observation about denunciations representing the first ‘indice’ under the ancien régime, arguing that investigations into suspected espionage activity were generally made ‘*a posteriori*’, namely after an individual had been denounced to the authorities (ie the local *intendants* or *gouverneurs*) usually by an anonymous member of the public. Stéphane Genêt, *Les Espions des Lumières, op. cit.*, p.

<sup>133</sup> Virginie Martin, ‘La Révolution française ou « l’ère du soupçon », *op. cit.*, 133.

<sup>134</sup> An example of ‘intent’ can be found in the declaration of a saddler to the *section du Luxembourg* in June 1791. In his statement, he informed the *commissaire de police* of a purchase-order which he had received from an aristocrat, the *Marquis de Crenay*, to build secret compartments in his *chaise de poste*, a suspicious request that prompted an official investigation. AN D XXIXb 36, doss 370.

<sup>135</sup> *Archives Municipales de Metz, série D, n° 1 D 7. Délibérations du 10 mai 1792.*

<sup>136</sup> Émilie Brémond-Poulle, *La Dénonciation chez Marat, 1789-1791* (Révolution Française. Net Éditions, 2006).

perceived plots, injustices and other political improprieties. Despite the fact that many, if not most, denunciations carried more noise than *éclat*, and that many were dismissed as the mere fancies of a suspect or overzealous functionary, men of ‘bonne foi’ (or good faith), both literate and credulous, were not only expected to believe in the existence of these conspiracies, as well as the complicity of royalist officials, but also to fear the repercussions of being an accomplice themselves.<sup>137</sup>

## V

The importance of the patriotic press in denouncing and deterring counter-revolutionary activities, irrespective of the danger they posed, is well exemplified in the history of the Breton Association.<sup>138</sup> Traditionally, the failure of this famous conspiracy has been explained by the perfidious actions of two double agents, Pierre Bénigne Lalignant Morillon and Dr Valentin-Marie-Magloire Chévetel, an old family friend of the Marquis de la Rouërie.<sup>139</sup> In February 1793, after having been informed of the association’s secret blueprints, the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* vested the two men with plenary powers to arrest

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<sup>137</sup> Charles Walton reveals how the *Comité de Surveillance* used Carra’s *Annales Patriotiques* to level accusations against royalist ministers as a ruse to unmask true counter-revolutionaries. Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution: The Culture of Calumny and the Problem of Free Speech* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.185. For relevant studies on the political function of denunciations, see Colin Lucas, ‘The Theory and Practice of Denunciation in the French Revolution’, *The Journal of Modern History*, 68.4 (1996), 768-785. Gilles Malandain, *L'introuvable complot: Attentat, enquête et rumeur dans la France de la Restauration* (France: Éditions de l'école des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2011). Lucien Jaume, *Le Discours jacobin et la Démocratie* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), pp.192-215, Antoine de Baecque, *Le Corps de l'Histoire: Métaphores et politique (1770-1800)* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1993), pp. 257-302; and J Guilhaumou, ‘Fragments of a Discourse on Denunciation (1789-94),’ in *The Terror*, ed. K. M. Baker (Oxford: 1994), 139-55.

<sup>138</sup> The effect of calumny on public imagination is underlined in the opening words of the manifesto which La Rouërie penned in refutation of these accusations. Published on 11 June 1792, and extending 22 pages, it begins ‘Vrais citoyens bretons, calomnié depuis quelque temps sur mes intentions...’; *The full text is found in Yves du Menga, La Conjuration Bretonne de 1791: Histoire de l'Origine de la Chouannerie* (Paris: Éditions du Thabor, 1979), p.146. Similarly, during the *ancien régime*, the press reported on the arrest of spies to demonstrate the monarchy’s vigilance. In May 1760, *Le Mercure de France* reported that ‘(o)n a pris un Espion qui avait dessein de brûler nos magasins’, quoted in Genêt, *Les Espions des Lumières, op. cit.*, p.322.

<sup>139</sup> Claude Basire, *Rapport sur la conjuration de Bretagne, fait au nom du Comité de sûreté- générale* (Paris: De l’Imprimerie Nationale, 1793); Gustave Bord, ‘Notice sur la conspiration de la Royrie’, *Revue de la Révolution*, (1886), pp.21-28. Goodwin supposes that Chévetel’s betrayal had been the ‘worst of all’, p.344. Chévetel himself has been the subject of a short, fanciful publication. Paul Romé, *La Conjuration Bretonne de 1792. La Rouerie Héros Malheureux. Chevetel, ami calomnié* (chez l’auteur, 1987).

La Rouërie and his chief co-conspirators.<sup>140</sup> By the first week of March 1793, they had succeeded in apprehending twenty-six of La Rouërie's chief associates, twelve of whom were executed the following month for conspiring 'contre la sûreté générale'. La Rouërie was already dead, having succumbed to both nervous and physical exhaustion. Yet, as DMG Sutherland demonstrates, the Breton Association had suffered a series of crippling blows even before the deposition of the Bourbon monarchy and the establishment of the *Comité de Sûreté Générale*.<sup>141</sup> Although the planting of double agents is a key practice in counter-espionage operations, the roles of Lalignant-Morillon and Chévetel have nevertheless been largely exaggerated. Indeed, in his report, Basire went so far as to credit Lalignant-Morillon with being 'l'un des hommes dont les travaux, comme militaire & comme observateur citoyen, ont le plus concouru à déjouer les manœuvres de l'aristocratie dans le cours de la Révolution.'<sup>142</sup> The reality was that the dismantlement of the Breton Association was precipitated by the local authorities which, as the trail of reports indicate, began investigating La Rouërie before notifying the Legislative Assembly of their activities.<sup>143</sup>

On 10 May 1792, an anonymous article appeared in the *Journal de Rennes* accusing Armand Tuffin, the Marquis de La Rouërie of sheltering refractory priests in his château as well as of having participated in the insurrection at Caen six months earlier. Although the provenance of this denunciation has never been uncovered, at least with any certitude, the most likely explanation is that La Rouërie was exposed by one of the groups or individuals whom the Breton Association had tried to suborn and recruit from the populace.<sup>144</sup> In May

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<sup>140</sup> Morillon's reports to the *Comité de sûreté générale* can be found AN/F7/4590 (Plaq. 7).

<sup>141</sup> Donald Sutherland, 'L'Association Bretonne: La Conspiration du Marquis de La Rouerie', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*. 96.4 (1989), pp. 433-455 (p.43).

<sup>142</sup> Claude Basire, *Rapport sur la Conjuración de Bretagne*, *op. cit.*, p.12.

<sup>143</sup> The exchange of letters between the various contiguous communes, cantons (Saint-James and Pontorson), districts (Dol and d'Avranche) municipalities and departments (Ille et Vilaine and de la Manche) in Brittany are reproduced in Charles-Louis Chassin, *La Préparation de la guerre de Vendée, 1789-1793*, 3 vols (J Floch, 1973), II, pp.508-511 and Paul-Gustave Delarue (ed.), *Une Famille Bretonne du XII au XIX siècle: Charles-Armand Tuffin, Mis de la Rouërie, chef de la conjuration bretonne, généalogie, notes, documents et papiers inédits* (Paris: 1899) pp.97-105.

<sup>144</sup> La Rouërie has been the subject of several publications. The most noteworthy are Alphonse de Beauchamp, *Histoire de la Guerre de Vendée*, 3 vols (Paris: 1807), L. Dubreuil, *Histoire des insurrections de l'Ouest* (Paris: 1926-30); Thomas Lemas, *Un District Breton pendant les Guerres de l'Ouest et de la Chouannerie, 1793-1800* (Paris: 1894); J C Ménès, *La Coalition du Marquis de La Rouërie* (Lille: Atelier National de Reproduction des

1792, about the time that the article appeared, the association's *comité* at La Roche-Bernard and Guérande, two communes on the Breton coast, began to recruit local peasants, promising them money on behalf of the émigré princes. But, as was so often the case during these dangerous times 'un secret pareil ne pouvait pas être gardé très longtemps' and within days, the authorities launched an official inquiry.<sup>145</sup> The subsequent events are worth examining as they shed light on how the suppression of espionage was conducted during this period. As this thesis will continually demonstrate, these operations largely depended on regional circumstance. So, whereas in one locality these activities might relate to infiltrating clandestine cells, in another it could be linked to the surveillance of foreign enemy suspects, notably in the ports and fortress towns. Depending as they did on local conditions, the prosecution of these measures was thus a matter for the corresponding authorities.<sup>146</sup> In the Jura, for example, the contiguity with the Swiss frontiers naturally increased the presence and passage of the *émigrés* and their agents. Therefore, the policing of the borders as well as the monitoring of their movements and correspondence were, despite local sympathies, one such security concern.<sup>147</sup>

In Paris, on the other hand, the very presence of a number of government institutions, such as the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères*, meant that the protection of state secrets, or the suborning of officials from infiltration, posed a different but not isolated challenge.

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Thèse, 2006). R Enard, 'Le Complot de La Rouerie et ses incidences judiciaires en Ille-et-Vilaine, 1792', *Actes de Soixante Seizième Congrès des Sociétés Savantes*, (Rennes: 1951), 78-93. Eugène Herpin, 'Jean-Georges Du Buat et la Conspiration de La Rouerie', *Annales de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Arrondissement de Saint- Malo*, (1923-24), 113-52.; A. Goodwin, 'Counter-revolution in Brittany: The Royalist Conspiracy of the Marquis de La Rouerie, 1791-93', *Bulletin of the John Ryland's Ubrary*, XXXDC (1957), 326-35.

<sup>145</sup> Donald Sutherland, 'L'Association Bretonne', *op.cit.*, p.442. Centuries earlier, Thomas More also declared that the maintenance of secrecy was virtually impossible. 'No longer does fear hiss whispered secrets in one's ear for no-one has secrets either to keep or to whisper.' Coronation Ode of King Henry VIII, 1509.

<sup>146</sup> As Genêt's research has demonstrated, counter-espionage operations were also decentralized during the *ancien régime*. Depending on the circumstance and locality, suspected spies were interrogated by an army officer, if they were apprehended unexpectedly at a military camp, a diplomat, if the spy was suspected to be an emissary of a foreign court or alternatively, by the *maréchaussée* if they were arrested outside of the large towns. Equally, depending on the jurisdiction, the innocence or guilt of a suspect was ultimately determined by the *Ministre de la Guerre* or the *Ministre des Affaires Étrangères*. Stéphane Genêt, *Les Espions des Lumières*, *op. cit.*, pp.395-410.

<sup>147</sup> For a useful study on Jura during this period see Désiré Monnier, 'Annales contemporaines. Simples notes de ce qui s'est passé relativement à la Révolution dans le Jura de 1787 à 1796', *Annuaire du département du Jura, 1846-1857*, 3 vols (Jura: Lons le Saunier, 1821).

Controlling the movement of foreigners, intercepting suspect correspondence, disrupting lines of communications in and out of the capital etc also presented a related security concern. In other words, counter-espionage was not necessarily limited to a single operation but could be performed simultaneously with other, sometimes interrelated, sometimes unrelated, security operations. Whilst the revolutionaries attempted to impose some measure of central control and oversight, as the following chapter will discuss, the obvious tempo-spatial obstacles nevertheless rendered it logical that the investigative and enforcement duties were performed ‘on the ground’.<sup>148</sup> Indeed, with the division of France into eighty-three departments, the revolutionaries not only supposed that the bureaucracy could be rationalized but that it would also facilitate localized surveillance. As Ozouf argued, the departmentalization was recommended by different writers and administrators who argued that the creation of smaller, autonomous units would enable local officials to better monitor and police the inhabitants in their jurisdiction (as well as receive denunciations quickly).<sup>149</sup> It was for this reason that one of the key objectives of the National Assembly in 1789 was to construct a police edifice that was closely wedded to the communities with responsibility for the maintenance of order conferred to the new municipalities.<sup>150</sup>

The investigation and subsequent pursuit of La Rouërie and his co-conspirators reveal three key aspects about counter-espionage at this juncture. First, the individuals primarily responsible for these activities were not professional intelligence agents, at least as we conceive them nowadays, but functionaries- in this instance the *juges de paix*- who

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<sup>148</sup> Similarly, more than a century later, Major-General Sir Vernon Kell, the founder of Great Britain’s MI5, explained how counter-espionage operations were purposely decentralized for similar reasons and constraints. See the appendix in Chris Northcott, *MI5 at War 1909-1918: How MI5 Foiled the Spies of the Kaiser in the First World War* (East Sussex: Tattered Flag Press, 2015), pp.248-9.

<sup>149</sup> Marie-Vic Ozouf-Marignier, *La Formation des Départements: La représentation du territoire français à la fin du 18ème siècle* (Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1989), p.19. The new pyramid of local powers (departments, districts, municipalities), which re-organised the territory and administration of France, was established by the decrees of 14 and 22 December 1789 and ratified by the Constitution of 1791.

<sup>150</sup> The other reason, of course, was the fundamental distrust of royal power as codified in the *loi municipale* of 14 December 1789. For the debate on the nature and municipal prerogative of the police see Jean-Marc Berlière, ‘Les pouvoirs de police: Attributs du pouvoir municipal ou de l’État?’ *Criminocorpus* [online], Histoire de la Police, (2009).



were probably not schooled in cloak and dagger tradecraft. In other words, there is no evidence- at least which this author has found- to suggest that they were trained in the use of traditional espionage and counterespionage techniques, not least because this branch of *renseignements* as an institutionalized profession did not exist until the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, not only in France but across the continent. On 19 July 1791, two days after the ‘massacre’ perpetrated on the Champ de Mars, the Constituent Assembly endowed these local magistrates with the *police de sûreté* effectively rendering them ‘agents of political repression’.<sup>151</sup> With the ‘Code of Municipal and Correctional police’ they were now vested with investigative and prosecutorial powers to combat high crimes of the state including provocation to insurrections or ‘tumults and illegal gatherings.’ Assuming a quasi-police function, these *juges de paix* were therewith authorised to issue warrants, conduct searches of premises, seize evidence and interrogate both suspects and witnesses.<sup>152</sup> In other words, they were expected to discharge the functions that were traditionally the remit of the *commissaires de police*, themselves now reduced to passive auxiliaries.<sup>153</sup> Of course, this is not to suggest that the *juges de paix* were necessarily incompetent, or even unsuited to their hybrid role.<sup>154</sup> In fact, the official investigation into the Breton Association that was initially prompted by the anonymous denunciation in the gazette suggests a degree of competency that could only have been acquired and inherited over time.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Richard M Andrews, ‘The Justices of the Peace of Revolutionary Paris, September 1792-November 1794 (Frimaire Year III)’, *Past and Present*, 52 (1971), 56-105.

<sup>152</sup> Julie Patricia Johnson, ‘The law must never be a game for fair and upright men in a Republic’: Revolutionary justice in Lyon 1792–3’, *French History*, 32:2 (2018), 182–202 (p.188).

<sup>153</sup> The law of 19-21 July was further extended and codified with the law of 29 September 1791. For the text of this law, see Anonymous, *Lois, et Actes du gouvernement ... Août 1789 [à 18 Prairial an II]: Août à* (Paris: De l’Imprimerie Impériale, 1806), IV, p.288.

<sup>154</sup> Deborah Bauer, ‘Marianne is Watching’, *op. cit.*, p.4. An example of this hybrid role can be found on the arrest warrant of Marquis de Roüerie. As it read, ‘Jean-Laurent Lemonnier, homme de loi, juge de paix et officier de police et de *sûreté* de la ville et paroisse de Dol.’ Cited in Georges Lenôtre, *Le marquis de La Rouërie et la conjuration bretonne, 1790-1793* (Paris: Perrin, 1923), p.124.

<sup>155</sup> In their study of the police practices of the *ancien régime*, for example, Vincent Milliot and Vincent Denis have, on the other hand, identified a ‘spécialisation’ or ‘gradation’ of competences of certain police agents, ‘sinon la création d’une branche spécialisée’, each time the surveillance of a suspect group was triggered. Vincent Denis, Vincent, Milliot, ‘Police et identification dans la France des Lumières’, *Genèses*, 54, (2004), 4-27, p.14; Vincent Milliot, ‘Migrants et ‘étrangers’ sous l’œil de la police: la surveillance des lieux d’accueil parisiens au Siècle des Lumières’, in *Police et Migrants: France 1667-1939* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2001), pp.315-331. One example is the creation of the *sixième bureau* in 1748. Under the dual

The second observation to make about counter-espionage operations is that they invariably required a measure of cooperation not just in terms of intelligence sharing between the rivalrous municipal corps and departmental administrations but also in terms of tactical coordination between the *commissaires de police* and the paramilitary forces, the National Guard and Gendarmerie.<sup>156</sup> On the initial raid of La Rouërie's château, for example, the *juge de paix* of Dol was accompanied by the *commissaires* de la Bigue and Fougères and supported by detachments of the army and National Guard from Rennes, together with brigades of the gendarmerie, totaling more than a thousand men. Under the *loi municipale* of 14 December 1789, the municipalities had the power to call upon these armed formations to support the *commissaires de police* elected under their authority, a prerogative that did not go unchallenged.<sup>157</sup> As studies show, the relations between the national guardsmen and the municipalities were often strained with the former often refusing to submit to the authority of the latter, a jurisdictional rivalry that also subsisted between the *gendarmerie* and the *commissaires de police*.<sup>158</sup> Another complaint made by the national guardsmen was

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orders of the *Lieutenant général de police* and *Secrétaire d'Etat des Affaires étrangères*, the *bureau* was specifically tasked with the surveillance of foreigners and, in conjunction, places of accommodation such as the *hôtels auberges* and *chambre d'hôtels*. For archival sources, see AN/F7/10028: *Papiers de l'inspecteur Buchot, chargé de la partie des étrangers* (1758). AN F7 10249: *Surveillances des étrangers domiciliés à Paris* (1749-1752). F7 10283-10293: *Rapports envoyés au Lieutenant général de police par ses officiers et agents* (1725, 1729-1748, 1750, 1753-1754, 1761 1767).

<sup>156</sup> Despite their rivalries, the exchange of intelligence between the various departments and municipalities suggests, according to Cobban, 'a larger measure of coordination than is usually credited to the first revolutionary government'. Alfred Cobban, 'Local Government during the French Revolution', *The English Historical Review*, Volume LVIII, Issue CCXXIX, (1943), 13–31 (p.23). Benoît Gauthier, 'Les relations entre le pouvoir central et les administrations locales sous la monarchie constitutionnelle (1790-1792)', in Michel Pertué (éd.) *L'administration territoriale sous la Révolution française. Réflexions, vues nouvelles et pistes de recherche*, actes d'une journée d'études tenue à Bourges (1999), *Cahiers du laboratoire collectivités locales*, n° 3, (Orléans: Presses Universitaires d'Orléans, 2003), pp. 291-304, Patrick Schultz, 'La décentralisation dans le Nord: des Girondins aux Jacobins (1789-1793)', *Études rurales*, 101-102, (1986), 35-59.

<sup>157</sup> The *loi municipale* of 1789, of course, subordinated the *commissaires de police* and *maréchaussée* to the security interests of the municipalities, not the *National Gendarmerie*, from which it later morphed into in February 1791. For studies on these para-military bodies see, Florence Devenne, 'La Garde Nationale; création et évolution (1789-août 1792)', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 283, (1990), 49-66 (p.50); 'Décret relatif à l'organisation de la Gendarmerie nationale' in Duvergier, *Collection complète des loi, op. cit.*, IV, p. 52.; Roger Dupuy, *La garde nationale et les débuts de la Révolution en Ille-et-Vilaine (1789-mars 1793)* (Rennes: Institut armoricain de recherches historiques, 1972) p. 106., Geroges Garrot, *Une institution de la Nation, La Garde Nationale (1789-1871)* (Paris: 1978), p. 5; René Tournes, *La Garde nationale dans le département de la Meurthe pendant la Révolution (1789-1802)* (Angers: Société Française d'Imprimerie et de Publicité, 1920), p. 24.

<sup>158</sup> John Merriman, *Police Stories: Building the French State, 1815-1851* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), p.3.; According to Charles Walton, 'The multiplicity of policing institutions in the early years of the Revolution, together with

that the municipalities, to which they were subordinated, were ‘too moderate’ in suppressing counter-revolutionary activity, an accusation that they made on a national level too. In Provence, for example, a detachment of National Guardsmen complained ‘de la lenteur de l’Assemblée nationale et de toutes les administrations de n’avoir pas agi contre les conspirateurs avec des forces et des sévérités...’<sup>159</sup> Jurisdictional jostling aside, the deployment of these armed formations show how counter-espionage operations often assumed a quasi-military character, especially where there was a threat of insurrection. Of course, we need to be cautious here. A number of incidents can be found where, during the summer and autumn of 1792 (and indeed earlier) the hunt for refractory priests and aristocrats provoked the self-mobilisation of the *gendarmerie* and radical units of the National Guard. In July 1792, for example, more than twenty national guardsmen of Langogne invested the village of Pradelles in the Haute Loire, laying waste a family of Benedictines reputedly hostile to the Revolution as well as several members of the municipality that they accused of having participated in the troubles of Jalès.<sup>160</sup> Similarly, one month later, national guardsmen pillaged several homes in Génolhac on the pretext that they belonged to royalist agents.<sup>161</sup> However, a key difference is this. These were essentially punitive expeditions organised by radicalised volunteers, often originating from different parishes but belonging to popular societies and clubs, who attacked these properties on the

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the lack of legal guidelines, generated confusion and a good many disputes.’ Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion*, *op. cit.*, p.33.

<sup>159</sup> *Lettre de Perrot, Procureur syndic du district d’Alès (6 avril 1792)* cited in Valérie Sottocasa, ‘Au bord de la guerre civile (1792-1793)’, *Mémoires affrontées: Protestants et catholiques face à la Révolution dans les montagnes du Languedoc* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2004), p.128. Indeed, other instances exist of renegade patriots professing dissatisfaction at the local authorities’ laxity or tardiness to apply the strict laws against the nobility. At Pompidou, for example, the communal authorities received the following letter dated 23 April 1792, ‘Avis à messieurs le Maire et les officiers municipaux que s’ils ne font pas abattre les tours de leur communauté en bas des flancs et les tours carrées nous y viendrons mettre le feu et nous commencerons par la sienne. Exécutez l’arrêt, car si vous ne le faites pas vous êtes perdus. Aristocrates, prenez garde à vous.’ AN F7 3681/13.

<sup>160</sup> AN/F7/3681 fol 14; François de Jouvenel, ‘Les camps de Jales (1790-1792): épisodes contre-révolutionnaires ?’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 337, (2004), 1-20.

<sup>161</sup> AN/F7/3652 fol 1 (*Police générale, troubles, excès et insurrections entre 1790 et 1791; Camp de Jalès, 1792; guerre des tours, troubles divers, 1790-an II.*; Valérie Sottocasa, ‘Au bord de la guerre civile (1792-1793)’, *Mémoires affrontées: Protestants et catholiques face à la Révolution dans les montagnes du Languedoc* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2004), p.88.

(sometimes spurious) grounds that they harboured counter-revolutionaries.<sup>162</sup> They were, in other words, a manifestation of anarchic violence, mostly unsanctioned and without central oversight, unlike the case of the raid on La Rouërie's *château*, an official investigation instigated by the *juge de paix*.<sup>163</sup>

The third observation about counter-espionage is that its success often owed as much to the zeal and competence of the revolutionary authorities as to the imprudence and indiscretion of the conspirators. One of the reasons that the *Breton Association* ultimately failed was that it proved incapable of recruiting enough members to its cause. In fact, the attempts to suborn line regiments, National Guardsmen and departmental administrators etc only led to the arrest and subsequent dispersal of other members of the local cells. On 1 August 1792, for example, one of the members of the association's regional committee in Rennes, Charles Elliot, was arrested at Lorient whilst attempting to recruit a lieutenant-colonel of the *artillerie des colonies*. The interrogation and ensuing investigation led to the arrests of other committee members, the majority of whom quickly revealed what they knew about the association and its conspiratorial plans.<sup>164</sup> Whether these failed attempts at subornment and infiltration can be attributed to the revolutionary fervour of the targeted individuals or to their fear of repercussion- or a combination of the two- cannot be determined with any certitude. However, what can be reasonably argued is that the 'wider the conspiracy, the greater the certainty of detection'.<sup>165</sup> In his exposition on the United Irishmen, William Fitzpatrick made plain the 'impossibility of treasonable associations being secure' from the double agent, or false friend, as invariably, there would always be found someone who was disposed to 'purchase their safety or make a profit for

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<sup>162</sup> For case studies on local, autonomous actions against refractory priests in Aix, as one example, see Christiane Derobert-Ratel, *Institutions et vie municipale à Aix en Provence sous la Révolution, 1789- an VIII* (Aix, 1981), pp.110-113.

<sup>163</sup> These displays of popular mobilisation predate the French Revolution itself. See Patrice Gueniffey, *La politique de la Terreur: Essai sur la violence révolutionnaire. 1789-1794* (Paris: Fayard, 2000), pp. 78-80.

<sup>164</sup> Roger Dupuy, 'Notes sur un dossier: Le Complot de La Rouerie à Rennes, août 1792-janvier 1793', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, 82.3 (1975), 337-360.

<sup>165</sup> William John Fitzpatrick, *The Sham Squire' and the Informers of 1798*, 2 vols (London: Simpkin & Marshall & co, 1866), II p.327.

themselves.’<sup>166</sup> Indeed, the history of espionage during the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods reveals time and again how the royalist cause was harmed by the indiscretion and perfidy of its recruits. As William Wickham, Britain’s spymaster on the continent, complained just four years later:

I cannot say that I could ever bring myself to approve of any attempt of the kind of which was projected, because I always thought it will necessarily be discovered as well from the number of persons to whom the secret must be intrusted as from the facility with which breth brethren might introduce themselves to the fraternity.<sup>167</sup>

## VI

In abstract terms, the formation of increasingly complex civil and military structures, together with the rise in the number of persons occupying posts within them, meant that the opportunities to compromise national security, as well as the susceptibility to fear subversion, were genuinely increased. As Cubitt puts it, conspiracies were not solely ‘imagined against the security of the state but in defence of that security, and in subversion of that defence from within’.<sup>168</sup> For the revolutionaries, the reconstruction of a state based upon fundamentally new abstract notions of popular sovereignty would always stand under threat as long as it was staffed and administered by functionaries of continuing, doubtful allegiance. The French diplomatic corps, overseen by the Comte de Montmorin at the *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères* was especially perceived to be vulnerable to security leaks, not least because it was almost exclusively comprised of members from the *noblesse*

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<sup>166</sup> *ibid*, p.x.

<sup>167</sup> William Wickham, *Correspondence of the Right Hon William Wickham*, 2 vols (London: R. Bentley, 1870), II, p.25.

<sup>168</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, ‘Conspiracism, Secrecy and Security in Restoration France: Denouncing the Jesuit Menace’, *Historical Social Research*, 38.1 (2013), 107–128 (p.6.); Cornel Zwielerlein, ‘Security Politics and Conspiracy Theories in the Emerging European State System (15th/16th c.)’, *Historical Social Research*, vol. 38, no. 1, (2013), pp. 65-95.

who were largely attached to the *ancien régime*.<sup>169</sup> As General Charles-François Dumouriez complained to the king, ‘presque tout votre corps diplomatique est contre-révolutionnaire ouvertement’.<sup>170</sup> To be sure, some of these individuals did rally to the new order whilst others voluntarily ceased their functions or were subsequently divested of them.<sup>171</sup> François Barthélémy, who served as the king’s ambassador to the Helvetic Body, was especially assiduous in discharging his important functions, as will be seen in the following chapter. Yet, the underlying fear that France’s ministers were colluding with the same foreign courts which were threatening invasion did not, of course, dissipate in any way. Indeed, it was this fear of ministerial collusion with the Revolution’s external enemies that prompted the national assembly to exert a stricter measure of legislative surveillance in the area of foreign affairs.<sup>172</sup> With the prospect of war looming, and perceived signs of complacency, if not downright negligence, it was perhaps unsurprising that the revolutionaries would doubt the fealty of a ministry which possessed all the means to compromise the security of the state. Referring to the baleful influence of foreign diplomats accredited to the French court, for example, one complained how the ministry had not even taken ‘les mesures nécessaires pour écarter de la France les ministres étrangers qui travaillent sans cesse contre notre Révolution’.<sup>173</sup> Of course, the deputies in the assembly had good reason to distrust the king’s

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<sup>169</sup> Montmorin himself was labelled an ‘araignée diplomatique, qui a renoué tous les fils épars de la vaste conspiration qui, comme un coup de tonnerre, allait éclater sur la France’. Quoted in Frédéric Masson, *Le Département des Affaires Étrangères pendant la Révolution, 1787-1804* (Paris: E. Plon et Cie, 1877), p.101.

<sup>170</sup> Charles-François Dumouriez, *La Vie et les Mémoires du General Dumouriez avec des Notes et des Éclaircissements Historiques*, 4 vols (Paris: Baudouin Freres, Libraires, 1822), II, p.140.

<sup>171</sup> Upon assuming the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs on 15 March 1792 General Dumouriez began to purge the diplomatic corps of the ‘creatures’ of the *ancien régime* in the interests of ‘la sûreté politique’. Those who displayed ‘hautement des intentions contre-révolutionnaires’ were recalled immediately whilst those who conducted themselves ‘prudemment’ were ordered to change diplomatic residence. Jean Bailou, Charles Lucet, Jacques Vimont, *Les Affaires étrangères et le Corps diplomatique français* (Paris: CNRS, 1984), p.306; Frédéric Masson, *Le Département des Affaires Étrangères, op. cit.*, pp.154-155. Dumouriez also left a plan for the organisation of the diplomatic corps, *Mémoire sur le ministère des Affaires étrangères, par Dumouriez, maréchal de camp de la 12<sup>e</sup> division de l’armée* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1791), in-8.

<sup>172</sup> Jeremy J Whiteman, *Reform, Revolution and French Global Policy, 1787-1791* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p.224.

<sup>173</sup> AN D/XXIXbis/33, Dossier 367 pièce n°9. Of course, even before the Revolution, foreign diplomatic agents had been the first object of vigilance for the obvious reason that the line between diplomatic functions and espionage was naturally blurred. In referring to ‘des agents, des espions, des ambassadeurs’ Louis Noailles confessed how ‘je confonds assez facilement ces mots-là’, Frédéric Masson, *Le Département des Affaires Étrangères, op. cit.*, p.91. Consequently, states found themselves in the contradictory position between trying to develop diplomatic networks and trying to limit, or at the very least, to control the networks of others. Lucien

ministers. Without needing to recount the secret diplomacy of Comte de Montmorin, or the surreptitious activities of the *amis du roi*, a number of instances can be cited when France's diplomats either willfully furnished bogus intelligence, refused to provide any or simply aroused suspicion by their associations.<sup>174</sup> On 4 January 1791, for example, Colbert de Maulévrier, the French Minister Plenipotentiary in Cologne, was instructed to uncover the designs and activities of the *émigrés* in that city. As the instructions stipulated, he was to be 'attentif à tout ce qui pouvait concerner le royaume de France et se tramer contre lui'. Maulévrier, however, refused, professing him-self indignant at the prospect of spying on what he characterized to be refugees in distress. Further suspicions were cast on the Comte Vergennes, son of the former minister. On 16 December 1791, the very same day Louis XVI issued an ultimatum to the elector of Trèves demanding the dispersion of the army of Coblenz, Vergennes sent a communiqué from his diplomatic post there, claiming that the *émigrés* were not even mobilizing and that he had not seen any "force armée".<sup>175</sup>

It was this failure, or refusal, of some of France's diplomatic corps to furnish reliable intelligence on counter-revolutionary activities that led the Assembly to adopt measures designed to safeguard the state's institutions from infiltration and other breaches of security. On 2 January 1792, in a move to seize full control of international *renseignement*, the assembly ordered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to transfer to the *Comité Diplomatique* all 'les notes et éclaircissements relatifs auxdits complots' fomented by the foreign courts and their principal agents whilst, at the same time, demanding the denunciation of all 'agents de

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Bély, *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien régime, op.cit.*, p.360. The simplest solution to limit the risk of military espionage practiced by foreign emissaries was thus to rupture all diplomatic relations, which generally speaking, was the first act of war between two belligerent states. Stéphane Genêt, *Les Espions des Lumières, op. cit.*, p.381.

<sup>174</sup> For information on Montmorin and the 'amis du roi' see Olivier Blanc, *Les Hommes de Londres: Histoire Secrète de la Terreur* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1989), Oliver Blanc, *Les Espions de la Révolution et de l'Empire* (Paris: Éditions Perrin, 1995). Jules Flammarion (ed.), *Négociations secrètes de Louis XVI et du baron de Breteuil avec la cour de Berlin (décembre 1791-juillet 1792)* (Paris: Picard, 1885) in-8°, p.9, Munro Price, 'The Comte de Vergennes and the *Baron de Breteuil*', unpublished doctoral thesis, Cambridge University, 1988), Gary Savage, 'Favier's Heirs: The French Revolution and the *Secret du Roi*', *The Historical Journal*, 41.I (1998), 225-258.

<sup>175</sup> Quoted in Alain Montarras, *Le Général Bonaparte et le Renseignement: La période révolutionnaire et la première campagne d'Italie* (Paris: Éditions SPM, 2014), pp.19-20.

la nation' who had either connived with them, neglected to transmitted intelligence on their 'dispositions hostiles' or were suspected of 'mensonges par omission'.<sup>176</sup> In other words, the purpose of the decree was not only to vest the committee with jurisdictional control of the ministry's diplomatic secrets but also to uncover and proscribe disloyal ministers and other 'hommes corrompus'.<sup>177</sup> Indeed, this protection of secrecy, as the Cardinal Richelieu affirmed, is fundamental to the security of the state.<sup>178</sup> In relation to counter-espionage, Colonel Walther Nicolai, the Head of the German General Staff's military intelligence department (Sektion IIIb) during WWI went so far as to claim that 'the number of spy arrests is no proof of the efficiency of the defense service; that is only proved if state interests are successfully kept secret'.<sup>179</sup> So, if the principal objective of state sponsored espionage is to collect sensitive information from an adversary then a function of counter-espionage, or 'counter-intelligence' according to specific Anglo-American terminology, is to protect or conceal such information against infiltration and subversion.<sup>180</sup> The problem, of course, is that the prevention of the loss of sensitive information remains very difficult to assess, not least because a nation's constituent authorities are naturally unexcited by the prospect of disclosing to the public the embarrassing truth that such information has been stolen.<sup>181</sup> Nor would they especially be open to revealing the measures taken to guard their secrets,

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<sup>176</sup> AP, XXXVII, *op. cit.*, p.9. As the decree read: 'comme aussi de dénoncer à l'Assemblée nationale ceux d'entre les dits agents qui peuvent s'être rendus coupables de connivence avec les révoltés, soit en favorisant ouvertement leurs projets, soit en négligeant d'instruire le gouvernement des dispositions hostiles qu'ils ont manifestées et des négociations qu'ils ont préparées et suivies sous leurs yeux dans les cours étrangères'.

<sup>177</sup> Anonymous, *Tables Générales des Lois, Arrêtés, Décrets, Ordonnances du Roi, Arrêts et Avis du Conseil d'État* (Paris: Ménard et Desenne, 1826), III, p.8.

<sup>178</sup> Or in his words, 'Secrecy is the first essential in affairs of state', Richelieu, 'Maxims,' *Testament Politique* (1641).

<sup>179</sup> Quoted in Chris Northcott, *MI5, op. cit.*, p.228.

<sup>180</sup> It should be noted that the French language only recognizes the one term, 'counter-espionage', whilst the Anglo-Saxon model makes a subtle, conceptual distinction between it and counter-intelligence. The latter is essentially a more passive activity, focusing on the dissimulation and protection of sensitive state secrets and information rather than the prevention of a threat. For an authority on American terminologies, see Paul W Blackstock, Frank L Schaf, *Intelligence, Espionage, Counter-espionage and Covert Operations, a Guide to Information Source* (California: Gale Research Company, 1978), p.59.

<sup>181</sup> An example can be recently found in France. On 24 May 2018, the *Ministère des Armées* announced that judicial enquiries had been launched against two retired agents of DGSE for the suspected disclosure of national defense secrets to China where they were formerly stationed.



whatever the latter are considered to be.<sup>182</sup> The 1791 Penal Code only identifies the disclosure of a ‘secret d'une négociation, d'une expédition ou d'une opération militaire’ as a punishable offense.<sup>183</sup> Kaitlyn Carter, on the other hand, argues that much of this secrecy, which required protection, revolved around the procedures to uncover counter-revolutionary plots.<sup>184</sup> Highlighting the ‘paradoxical interplay of surveillance, publicity and secrecy’, she shows in her recent article how the revolutionary committees, beginning with the *Comité des Recherches*, came to work *à huis clos* despite public calls for greater transparency.<sup>185</sup> Later echoed by Jean Paul Marat, this recourse to procedural secrecy was justified by Brissot who argued that the existence of foreign and domestic enemies demanded such extraordinary precautions:

Si donc nous avons tout à craindre, et des ennemis de la révolution, et du dehors, devons-nous confier notre sûreté à des précautions ordinaires? Le salut de la patrie n'exigeait-il pas que l'on créât dans le sein de la capitale, des comités extraordinaires peu nombreux, plus actifs, plus secrets que des assemblées générales, qui eussent le pouvoir de veiller sur les conspirations, et d'en arrêter les effets, par de promptes et vigoureuses mesures?<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Articles R. 2311-2 and R. 2311-3 of today's *Code de la Défense*, for example, has three levels of classifications; ‘Très Secret Défense’, ‘Secret Défense’ and ‘Confidentiel Défense’ with each representing information of varying sensitivity to national security, <http://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/missions/protoger-le-secret-de-la-defense-et-de-la-securite-nationale/>

<sup>183</sup> *AP*, XXXI, *op. cit.*, pp.326-339; It was not until 1810 that the ‘révélation de secrets’ were extended beyond the diplomatic and military sphere. Under Articles 378 & 418 in Section VII of the Napoleonic Penal Code, medical professionals such doctors and surgeons, as well as commercial directors, were prohibited from disclosing the ‘secrets’ of their activities or their manufactured goods to foreigners or French people residing abroad., A D Chauveau, F Hélie, (eds.), *Théorie du Code Pénal*, 2 Vols (Brussels: M Eline, Cans et Cie, 1844-1845). The law of April 18, 1886 against espionage made official the concept of state secrets, and punished anyone who attempted to expose particular information. The law itself did not clearly define these secrets, however, and therefore the specifics of what kind of knowledge was deemed to be property of the French state was left to be determined by the courts.

<sup>184</sup> Kaitlyn Carter, ‘The Comités des Recherches’, *op. cit.*, 45-65.

<sup>185</sup> *ibid*, p.48. The elimination of secrecy from state proceedings was a purported, if unrealised, ideal of the French Revolution. For studies on this topic, see Antoine de Baecque, *Le Corps de l'histoire. Métaphores et politique (1770-1800)* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1993), pp. 257-302, P Serna, ‘Pistes de recherches: du secret de la monarchie à la république des secrets’, in *Secret et République (1795-1840)*, B Gainot, P Serna (eds.) (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise-Pascal, 2004), pp. 13-37.

<sup>186</sup> Jacques Pierre Brissot, *J. P. Brissot, Membre du Comité des Recherches de la Municipalité* (Paris: chez Buisson, 1790) p.10. In April 1793 Jean Paul Marat demanded that the committees ‘soient autorisés à délibérer

In essence, Brissot argued that to preserve the secrets of the state, it was necessary that they were confided to as few people as possible. Even today, as France's *Secrétariat Général de la Défense et de la Sécurité Nationale* affirms, this principle of 'need to know' – or *cloisonnement* – is a central tenet of national security policy.<sup>187</sup> The Legislative Assembly's *Comité de Surveillance*, for example, only employed three secretaries for its twelve members. Moreover, the *séances* were convened in strict secrecy in order to preserve the integrity of the denunciations.<sup>188</sup> Unfortunately, in the absence of procedural records, it is seemingly impossible to identify the full range of precautions taken at this particular stage. Not wanting to air in public all its activities, the National Assembly mostly remained silent about certain proceedings or prerogatives of the *comité*, whether in terms of the employment of spies, or of the remuneration of its agents and informers etc. It is known that the *Comité des Recherches* took the elementary precaution of keeping records of its proceedings in a locked armoire.<sup>189</sup> Furthermore, conforming to a decree rendered by the National Assembly in October 1790, the *comité's* missives were confidentially signed, sealed and hand-delivered to the newly established *Bureau de Contre-seing & d'Expédition* where they were accordingly classified. Under the supervision of four *inspecteurs des secrétariats-bureaux*, this office was staffed with two or three functionaries who were responsible for affixing a 'griffe numérotée' to committee documents, each of which contained a unique 'point secret' only known to the *administration des postes*.<sup>190</sup> This affixation of a unique mark, identifiable

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à huis clos, jusqu'à l'arrestation des traîtres qui sont à l'intérieur, des agents des puissances ennemies et de tous les gens suspects.' *AP*, LXI, *op. cit.*, p.128.

<sup>187</sup> The SGDSN stipulates that two criteria need to be satisfied for access to classified information to be gained: 'le besoin d'en connaître soit la nécessité impérieuse, évaluée par l'autorité hiérarchique, d'accéder à cette information pour la bonne exécution d'une fonction ou d'une mission précise l'habilitation de sécurité, soit l'autorisation d'accéder à des informations classifiées au niveau requis et précisé dans la décision.' <http://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/missions/protéger-le-secret-de-la-défense-et-de-la-sécurité-nationale/>

<sup>188</sup> Michel Eude, 'Le Comité de Surveillance', *op. cit.*, 137, 141. *Adresse au Comité de constitution sur la question de savoir si les délibérations des commissaires doivent rester secrètes ou si le lieu de leurs séances doit être ouvert à tous les citoyens, avec lettre d'envoi de M. Bailly*. 7, 11 décembre 1790. AN/D/IV 3 doss.21.

<sup>189</sup> AN D/XXIXbis/\*/1.

<sup>190</sup> *Décret qui admet une nouvelle rédaction de celui qui établit un seul bureau de contre-seing & d'expédition près l'assemblée nationale oct 12, 1790* in Anonymous, *Collection générale des décrets rendus par l'Assemblée Nationale: Mois de Septembre 1790* (Paris: chez Baudouin, 1790), pp.68-70.

only to a few individuals, remains one of the fundamental elements in the protection of classified documents.<sup>191</sup> Another measure, less secretive but no less important, was to reinforce the security of the installations where the documents themselves were kept. Following the flight to Varennes, for example, the National Assembly issued the following decree:

Il est ordonné au ministère de l'Intérieur de faire établir à l'instant même une forte garde aux dépôts des Affaires étrangères à Paris et aux dépôts des Affaires étrangères, de la Guerre, de la Marine et autres qui sont à Versailles, avec défense de laisser sortir aucuns papiers ou paquets des lieux où ils se trouvent. Pareils ordres seront exécutés à l'égard du logement qu'habite à Paris le ministre des Affaires étrangères.<sup>192</sup>

The establishment of static defences, such as the militarised protection of an installation, are generally designed to obstruct all aggressive acts, regardless of who performs them.<sup>193</sup> Such control of an area is essentially a *physical* security measure that includes checkpoints, the screening and clearance of personnel, the possession of 'locking containers' etc (ie the *armoire*). It is, by its nature, a passive measure, which is not limited to deterring spies, and can be distinguished from the more proactive activities that require the identification of enemy agents, knowledge of their operations, and the capability to reverse them. Following the outbreak of hostilities, this function turned ever more urgent as espionage became increasingly associated to the war effort.<sup>194</sup> As far as the revolutionaries were concerned, the

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<sup>191</sup> Hughes Moutouh, Jérôme Poirot (eds.), *Dictionnaire du Renseignement* (Paris: Perrin, 2018), p.34.

<sup>192</sup> Assemblée Nationale Constituante, *Collection Générale des Décrets rendus par l'Assemblée Nationale: Mois de Juin 1791* (Paris: Chez Baudouin, 1791), p.29.

<sup>193</sup> Loch K Johnson (ed.), *Strategic Intelligence: Understanding the Hidden Side of Government* (Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2007), p.186.

<sup>194</sup> A distinction needs to be drawn between French spies working for the revolutionary armies and those working against them. Obviously, the revolutionaries deployed spies on reconnaissance missions to monitor the movements of the allied armies' movements. See, for example, AN/d/XV2 doss 19, pièce 1. 'Note d'un espion, contenant des renseignements sur la position de l'ennemi.' Further examples of this key difference will be given in chapter 3.

war was not simply conceived as a series of pitched battles between rival dynasties in which the role of espionage was primarily limited to reconnaissance and other auxiliary operations such as subornment or sabotage. With reason, they also saw it as a manifestation of the counter-revolution.<sup>195</sup> This meant, of course, that domestic subversion was directly linked to the conduct of the war and that, as Robespierre demanded, ‘pour faire la guerre utilement aux ennemis du dehors, il est une mesure absolument indispensable, c’est de faire la guerre aux ennemis du dedans.’<sup>196</sup> The war, in other words, created an added dimension as far as counter-espionage was concerned: the revolutionaries were now on the hunt for both military spies and counter-revolutionary agents.

## VII

As with other counter-espionage operations during this period, the hunt for military spies was characterized by three interrelated factors- localization, identification and control. At the outbreak of the war in April 1792, these operations were invariably confined to the fortress towns such as Douai, where, following the Austrian occupation of Orchies and Valenciennes, the municipal authorities were confronted with the twofold problem: the prospect of a protracted siege and the spectre of a *grande inondation* of foreigners, refugees and soldiers straggling from the front.<sup>197</sup> To control the influx, and root out the ‘suspects’ thought to be among them, the municipal police stopped all new arrivals, whether found in the streets or at the city gates and arrested anyone who did not possess valid identity

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<sup>195</sup> During one *séance*, the counter-revolution was equated to ‘des armées étrangères dans l’intérieur de l’État’. *AP XXXVI, op. cit.*, p.48. Or as Robespierre put it, ‘la guerre n’est que le fruit des intrigues de nos ennemis intérieurs, ligues avec nos ennemis de dehors.’ Maximilien Robespierre, *Recueil des Oeuvres de Max. J. Robespierre, et de pièces pour servir à son Histoire* (Paris: Recueillis, 1819), IV, p.5.

<sup>196</sup> Benjamin Buchez (ed.), *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française, ou Journal des Assemblées, depuis 1789 jusqu’en 1815* (Paris: Paulin Librairie, 1835), XIV, p.361.

<sup>197</sup> Monique Mestayer, ‘Suspects et espions en 1792 - An II à Douai’, *Revue du Nord*, 71, n°282-283 (1989), 885-901 (p.885), Bernard Lefebvre, ‘La Terreur et ses victimes dans une ville de la frontière nord. L’exemple de Douai (juin 1793, juillet 1794)’, *Revue du Nord*, 342 (2001), 777-800.

documents, officially in the form of a *certificat de résidence* and/or a passport.<sup>198</sup> According to Monique Mestayer's interpretation, the interrogations of these detainees at Douai were more or less divided into three distinct periods with the revolutionaries' characterisation of a 'suspect' dependent on the circumstances and exigencies of the moment.<sup>199</sup> Between May and mid-August 1792, where this chapter terminates, Douai's municipal authorities were principally looking for deserters or soldiers that had either been recruited into Austrian regiments or those groups or individuals- confusingly deemed to be spies- who were inciting sedition.<sup>200</sup> Naturally, with the country now at war, it was logical that the revolutionaries would be primarily concerned with the fighting capacity and loyalty of the army. Indeed, it was for this reason that, on 13 May 1792, just days following the dispersal of two French regiments at *Le Mons*, the *Assemblée Nationale* instructed the royal government to report, seemingly for the very first time, on the efforts that it would take to track spies. As the decree read, 'le pouvoir exécutif rendra compte, de huitaine en huitaine, des poursuites qu'il doit faire contre les espions et traîtres qui ont excité les soldats à l'insubordination'.<sup>201</sup> Whilst no trace of the discussion surrounding these 'poursuites' can be found, probably due to the royal government's disincentive to investigate the matter, we do know that nine men accused of sowing disorder among the troops were incarcerated in Lille whilst at Valenciennes a suspected spy disguised as a dragoon was arrested for crying out 'sauve qui peut' during that

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<sup>198</sup> During the years 1760-1770, the absence of papers was cited as the most frequent motive of arrest. Vincent Denis, *Une Histoire de l'Identité: France 1715-1815* (Seysse: Champ Vallon, 2008), p.220. The ordinance of 19 April 1760, for example, prescribed the cavaliers of the *maréchaussée* to arrest 'tous ceux qui leur paraîtront suspects, n'ayant ni passeports ni certificats pour se faire connaître'. Initially issued by military chiefs to authorise the passage of civilians in warzones, the passport gradually became an instrument of the French state to identify and control the mobility of the whole population in peace-time too. Vincent Milliot, 'Police et identification dans la France des Lumières', *op. cit.*, pp.11-18.

<sup>199</sup> A discussion of the other two periods, April- September 1793 and July-September 1794 will be covered in chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

<sup>200</sup> Mestayer cites A. M. Douai, H 4 4, *Interrogatoires de Mathieu Agaçant, Antoine Savary, de plusieurs autres soldats et enfin de Séraphin Rollin, ex-religieux* (7 septembre 1792); One exception relates to the interrogation of d'Urbain Joseph Richer (9 septembre 1792). Richer, a former writer, was arrested as a suspected spy in Douai after having made a long trek on foot from Boulogne where he claimed to have sought succour from his father. His interrogation, however, yielded no evidence against him and the twin accusations of espionage and treason were dropped. A. M. Douai, H4 4, (9 septembre 1792).

<sup>201</sup> *Annales patriotiques et littéraires de la France*, CXXXIV, *op. cit.*, p.591.

*journée*.<sup>202</sup> Moreover, upon orders from the Assembly, a provisional military tribunal was convened in order to judge the ‘coupables qui, dans le 5e et 6e régiments de dragons, ont crié la trahison, et ont excité à la défection’.<sup>203</sup>

Similarly, in Metz, the fear of a ‘fifth column’ undermining the war effort led the municipality to adopt a series of corresponding security measures.<sup>204</sup> Like their counterparts in Douai, the local authorities were concerned about the presence of ‘ennemis à la fois intérieurs et extérieurs’, not least because the *émigré* army under the command of the Prince of Condé’s army was gathering in the forest around Coblenz, approximately one month’s marching distance away.<sup>205</sup> With the nation mobilising for war, the municipal authorities carried out a census of all its inhabitants, focusing especial attention on the identity of *étrangers* as well as ‘personnes notées suspectes, mal intentionnées ou sans aveu’ - in other words, royalist officers, refractory priests and nobles. As the *Journal des départements (de la Moselle et de la Meurthe etc)* reported, a ‘grande nombre’ of *étrangers* were able to slip into the town and ‘échapper aux regards et à l’action de la police’.<sup>206</sup> Given the impracticality of keeping a *registre* of all inhabitants, the police resorted to targeting specific groups thought to be potential sources of disorder, a strategy that also predated the Revolution.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> *Journal du Département de la Vienne* (Poitiers: Imprimerie de M.V Chevrier,) LXII, p.322.

<sup>203</sup> Anonymous, *Table Générale par Ordre Alphabétique de Matières des Lois, Sénatus-Consultes, Décrets, Arrêtes, Avis du Conseil d’état publiés dans Le Bulletin des Lois et les Collections Officielles* (Paris: chez Rondonneau et Declé, 1816), I, p.166. Research on military justice during the early years of the Revolution is lacking. However, the most notable studies are Bernard Schnapper, ‘Le droit pénal militaire sous la Révolution: prophétisme ou utopie?’, *Travaux de l’Institut de Sciences criminelles de Poitiers*, 5, (1986), pp. 1-13; Georges Michon, *La justice militaire sous la Révolution* (Paris, Alcan, 1922); Georges Michon, ‘La justice militaire sous la Convention, à l’armée des Pyrénées-Orientales’, *AHRF*, (1926), 37-46, Louis Henneouin, *La justice militaire et la discipline à l’armée du Rhin et à l’armée de Rhin-et-Moselle (1792-1796). Notes historiques du chef de bataillon de génie Legrand* (Paris: Chapelot, 1909).

<sup>204</sup> These measures appear to have been prompted by the Marquis de la Fayette who was instructed by Louis XVI ‘à prendre toutes les précautions qui pourront dépendre de lui pour éviter toute surprise et toute trahison dans l’intérieur et qu’aussitôt que le décret sera rendu sur la guerre, toutes les villes et postes de la frontière soient en état de guerre’. Two days later, on 25 April, La Fayette went in person to Metz to inform the municipal corps the measures that were to be taken in subordination of the war effort. *Délibérations du 23 avril 1792*. Fortunately, these deliberations have been digitised by the municipal archives staff at Metz and are archived under série D n°1DB.

<sup>205</sup> A month’s march was estimated by the German general Adolf von Horsetzky, *A Short History of the Chief Campaigns in Europe since 1792* (London: John Murray, 1909), p.21.

<sup>206</sup> *Journal des départements*, 3 mai 1792 cited in Zoltan-Etienne Harsany, *Metz Pendant la Révolution*, (Metz: Mémoires. de l’Académie nationale de Metz, 1971).

<sup>207</sup> For other, useful studies on the ‘contrôle des étrangers’, see Michael Rapport, *Nationality and Citizenship in Revolutionary France: The Treatment of Foreigners, 1789-1799* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), A Gazier,

Focusing their search on ‘des munitions de guerre destinées à l'étranger’, the municipal police intercepted carriages and riverboats, arresting, among others, for ‘complot contre la sûreté de l'État’ Jean-Baptiste Chappe, former lieutenant of Louis XVI who was accused of being a porter of ‘nombreuses lettres et de pièces pour les apporter à Coblenz’.<sup>208</sup> As the *Conseil général de la Commune* complained, recruitment for the émigré army was gathering apace with ‘autant de force que de facilité’ and that regiments loyal to the monarchy were passing ‘en corps à l'étranger sans obstacle’, a complaint equally made by the city’s *Commissaire de Police*, Nicolas-Gaspard Bricard in his report of 15 May 1792:

Depuis la Révolution, les ennemis de la Constitution se permettent non seulement d'exciter du trouble en cette ville et d'y répandre l'alarme, mais encore d'embaucher des militaires et autres pour les faire passer chez l'étranger, à l'effet de tourner leurs armes contre leur patrie; que ces traces odieuses et ces menées sourdes ont été jusqu'à présent très difficiles à découvrir malgré les soins que la police et les citoyens y apportent.<sup>209</sup>

Of course, even before war was declared, the municipal authorities at Douai, Metz and elsewhere had imposed a range of security controls which led to the arrest of suspects for either espionage or its related crime, ‘embauchage’. On 2 January 1792, for example, the assembly were informed of the arrest at Douai of one François Auguste ‘comme suspect d'espionnage’.<sup>210</sup> In fact, only months after the fall of the Bastille, after having received a

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*La police de Paris en 1770: Mémoire inédit composé par ordre de G. de ... Le Maire ; avec une introd. et des notes par A. Gazier* (Paris: 1879) especially pp. 74-75, 79, 101, 128. The archival records can otherwise be found under *Ministères des Affaires Étrangères*, ADP, France, 14, dossier 302 (*Rapports avec la Police générale relativement aux Étrangers en France*, 1782-1826).

<sup>208</sup> Zoltan-Etienne Harsany, *Metz Pendant la Révolution*, *op. cit.*, pp.62, 77. Many of the suspects arrested were released for lack of evidence including, Jean Duteil, former *colonel-général* of the National Guard who was imprisoned for five days.

<sup>209</sup> Arch. mun. de Metz série D, n° 1 D 7, *délibérations du 10 mai 1792. Conseil général de la Commune: Délibérations du 20 novembre 1791 au 14 août 1792*, p.72. Arch. mun. de Metz, série I, n° 2 I 42.

<sup>210</sup> AP, XXXVII, *op. cit.*, p.138.

denunciation of a ‘complot découvert à Douai’, the authorities there announced ‘des mesures prises, tant dans la ville que sur les remparts, pour arrêter les suspects et visiter les étrangers,’ measures which included ‘visites domiciliaires’, a rather innocuous term that would gain disrepute following the storming of the Tuileries on 10 August 1792.<sup>211</sup> Likewise, in Lille, the municipality issued an ordonnance on 17 April 1790, subsequently republished and redistributed fourteen months later, ‘*relatifs au séjour et à la surveillance des étrangers à Lille*’.<sup>212</sup> With increasing numbers defecting to the émigré army, the authorities appear to have kept careful vigilance of local ‘embauchers’, exchanging reports to that effect with, among others, the patriotic *Société des Amis de la Constitution*.<sup>213</sup> The journals of the day also report on various incidents in which the constant rumours of an impending attack had not only created a permanent state of public alarm but also had incited mob violence.<sup>214</sup> In Lille, a peasant from Croix, who had been caught with ‘preuves’ of his spying in the coëffe of his hat, was lynched, his head decapitated and paraded through the town on the tip of a sword. The fact that he had concealed the ‘preuves’ in his hat was reasonable cause for his original arrest.<sup>215</sup> Boulanger, on the other hand, recounts an episode which occurred in July 1791, over a year before the city fell under siege, in which two Dutch officers from the garrison at Breda had walked onto the ramparts of the citadel without authority where they were spotted tampering, supposedly, with the pieces of cannon. The locals cried foul and

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<sup>211</sup> AN/D/XXIXbis/2 dossier 18.

<sup>212</sup> *Rappel par la municipalité de Lille, le 13 août 1791, de son ordonnance du 17 avril 1790*, AN/D/XXIXbis/39, dossier 401, pièces n°44.

<sup>213</sup> *Lettres de la société des Amis de la Constitution des ville et district de Lille relatives aux allées et venues suspectes d'un embaucheur, aux espérances des contre-révolutionnaires et à leurs enrôlements, 23 septembre-30 octobre 1790*. AN, D/XXIXbis/1 doss 366 pièces n°36. Alternatively, in the papers of the *Comités des Recherches*, one can find, ‘Procès-verbal de l'interrogatoire par la municipalité de Lille du sieur Alexandre-Louis Ollivier (1), appréhendé comme suspect. inventaire des papiers trouvés sur lui et ces papiers eux-mêmes, à savoir: adresses, chiffre et sa clef, trois lettres signées Mauny et une autre non signée. 14-21 août 1791’. AN/D/XXIXbis/35 dossier 359, Pièces n 3.

<sup>214</sup> H Boulanger, ‘L’Affaire des Belges et Liégeois unis, (1792-1793)’, *Revue du Nord*, 1<sup>e</sup> année, n°3, (1910), 216- 244.

<sup>215</sup> Eugène Debièvre, *La Guerre dans les environs de Lille (28 avril au 23 novembre), Le bombardement de Lille (24 septembre au 8 octobre): Documents militaires et anecdotiques recueillis dans un journal de l'époque* (Lille: G Leleu, 1892), p.185. The journal also reported how one priest, a suspected spy, had received ‘mistreatment’ from the people, p.147.



accused them of espionage.<sup>216</sup> The two officers were promptly arrested, their belongings deposited at l'Hôtel Villeroy searched and it was not until eight days later, following a succession of inconclusive interrogations- denunciations alone not being proof of guilt- that they were safely released upon orders of the *département*.<sup>217</sup> Whilst no recorded arrests were made, a similar situation arose in Metz where the ability to spy on the city's fortifications led the municipality in October 1791, following a request from the military authorities, to prohibit any unauthorised individual from frequenting the parapets and ramparts of the town in order to prevent them from making 'observations sur les différents moyens de défense préparés pour la sûreté de la place, soit sur la quantité de munitions de guerre qui y sont destinées.'<sup>218</sup> At the same time, the *commissaires* paid unannounced visits to the city's *hôtels* and *auberges* in order to inspect the guest registers whilst detachments of the National Guard, formed of local volunteers, were stationed before all public buildings to protect them from infiltration.<sup>219</sup>

## VIII

These incidents would suggest that the rampant spy-mania, which would eventually grip the French population during the Terror, began to feel its first, real rumblings during

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<sup>216</sup> H Boulanger, 'L'Affaires des Belges', *op. cit.*, 225-226.

<sup>217</sup> Another incident of interest occurred on 18 June 1792 involving the suspicion of espionage. As the *commissaires* despatched to Lille reported to the assembly, 'nous avons parlé dans le dernier bulletin, d'une légère escarmouche qui a eu lieu entre une patrouille du camp de Cysoing et les hulans ; il en est résulté que nos gens ont fait prisonniers deux personnages qui ont été conduites dans les prisons de Lille. L'un d'eux, soupçonné d'espionnage, a obtenu sa liberté le même jour, mais l'autre a été conduits dans une voiture fermée, ... on dit que c'est un émigré de Lille qui conduisait les hulans sur notre territoire...', Eugène Debièvre, *La Guerre dans les environs de Lille, op. cit.*, p.34.

<sup>218</sup> *Journal des départements du 13 octobre 1791*, p.48. In relation to the respective jurisdictions of the police and the military authorities during war and peacetime, see articles 6 and 7 of the *loi du 10 juillet*. J B Duvergier (ed.), *Collection complète des Lois, III, op. cit.*, p.82.

<sup>219</sup> *ibid*, p.64. Similarly, during the deliberations of 8 February 1792, it was recorded that 'les corps administratifs ont pris des précautions pour empêcher des troubles; on a redoublé les patrouilles et fait allumer toute la nuit les lanternes qui éclairent la ville; Comme on n'avait plus confiance en la Garde nationale, la municipalité fait installer, à la maison d'arrêt, avec le concours de l'armée, « un poste de troupes de ligne » which was also responsible for 'L'ordre, la tranquillité publique et la sécurité de la place.' Arch. mun. de Metz, série D, n° 1 D 7.

the prewar period. In any event, with the military reverses on the front, and the nation plunged further into chaos, demands for ‘promptes mesures’ were repeatedly demanded in the Assembly to deal with the growing security threat from within.<sup>220</sup> During the *séance* of 12 May 1792, the *Ministre de l’Intérieur*, Jean Marie Roland, warned how counter-revolutionaries and *étrangers* (ie Austrians arrayed in French dress) were swelling the capital and transforming it into ‘un foyer d’intrigues où affluent des inconnus et où se font des rassemblements nocturnes.’<sup>221</sup> Professing not to be scaremongering with ‘des craintes et de fausses alarmes’ Roland also complained of ‘le manque de moyens d’action de la police municipale’ to combat ‘les trames dangereuses et les intelligences secrètes qui agitent la capitale’, a complaint that was greeted with incredulity by some deputies and agreement by others.<sup>222</sup> Of course, similar rhetoric had been employed just ten months earlier during the occupation of the *Champs de Mars* when demands were raised for ‘les précautions nécessaires pour expulser les brigands, les assassins, les scélérats et les conspirateurs dont Paris regorge’.<sup>223</sup> But with the country now facing the possibility of a calamitous defeat and occupation, the Legislative Assembly were compelled to act with increased rigour, and over the following weeks, passed a set of decrees, the first on 27 May, calling for the deportation of refractory priests, the second, abolishing the king’s constitutional guard on the basis that it was a counterrevolutionary force and the third, demanding the deployment of twenty thousand *federés* in Paris to replace the regular troops dispatched to the front.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Étienne Lehodey de Saultchevreuil (ed.), *Journal de l’Assemblée nationale*, *op. cit.*, p.199.

<sup>221</sup> *ibid.*, p.198.

<sup>222</sup> *ibid.*, pp.6-7. AN/C148 no 241; As one skeptical deputy observed, ‘Il est vraiment étrange qu’un ministre vienne nous communiquer des inquiétudes, qu’il nous parle de sa correspondance avec les chefs de l’administration; et que ceux-ci ne trouvent encore aucun moyen de prévoir les désordres qui peuvent survenir,’ *AP*, XLIII, *op. cit.*, p.273.

<sup>223</sup> Sigismond Lacroix, *Actes de la Commune de Paris pendant la Révolution (du Octobre 1790 au 10 août 1792)*, 2e série (California: AMS Press, 1973), V, p.476.

<sup>224</sup> David Andress, *The Terror: Civil War in the French Revolution* (London: Abacus, 2006), p.74. The first and third decrees were subsequently vetoed by the king.

In retrospect, these ‘defence decrees’ would mark the first in a series of emergency measures that formed part of a broader process to securitize the revolutionary state.<sup>225</sup> Whilst this process was not preplanned or predesigned, as the next chapter will make clear, a related discussion was raised in the Assembly that is commonly overlooked by historians. On 30 May 1792, whilst the ‘defence decrees’ were debated, Armand Gensonné, the future deputy for the department of the Gironde, tabled a motion, proposing the creation of a new ‘national-security’ system completely detached from the royal government. In his discourse, Gensonné lamented the fact that the legislative Assembly’s *Comité de Surveillance*, like the Constituent Assembly’s *Comité des Rapports* and *Comités des Recherches* before it, had not been invested with sufficient police powers to investigate or suppress counter-revolutionary activity. As he complained, the *Comité* possessed ‘aucun des moyens qui pourraient le rendre utile. Il n’a pas le pouvoir de rechercher les crimes et d’assurer des prévenus.’ Instead, highlighting its absence, he suggested the formation of an ‘organisation de la police de sûreté générale pour la recherche des délits de haute trahison, car dans l’état actuel des choses, cette police n’existe pas...’<sup>226</sup> Brissot supported his plan but expressed concern that it would be quickly reduced to prosecuting minor offences if not careful. As he declared, there was ‘rien de plus ridicule, par exemple, que d’organiser une grande institution de sûreté générale, pour punir quelques propos de café, ou les atrocités de quelques feuilles ignorés.’<sup>227</sup> Like Gensonné, Brissot raised the urgent need to circumvent the royal government, arguing that the *juges de paix* and the local courts, whose authority emanated from the monarchy, could not be relied upon to keep the Assembly informed on the existence of the conspiracies nor were they adequately equipped to.<sup>228</sup> As he claimed, albeit with exaggeration, it was only

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<sup>225</sup> Patricia C Howe, *Foreign Policy and the French Revolution: Charles François Dumoriez, Pierre LeBrun, and the Belgian Plan, 1789-1793* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), p.81.

<sup>226</sup> A Ray (ed.), *Réimpression de l’ancien Moniteur, op.cit.*, XII, pp.536-537.

<sup>227</sup> Walton incorrectly quotes Jacques Brissot, *Discours de J-P. Brissot, député du département de Paris, sur les causes des dangers de la patrie, et sur les mesures à prendre* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1792), pp. 6-7.

<sup>228</sup> Brissot cites ‘la circonscription des fonctions des juges de paix, le peu de rapport et de correspondance qui existe entre eux, l’insuffisance de leurs moyens d’exécution, la difficulté de les mettre en relation avec le corps législatif.’ Auguste Amic, Étienne Mouttet (eds.), *Choix des discours et des rapports les plus remarquables prononcés dans nos assemblées parlementaires* (Paris: Mairet et Fournier Libraires, 1841), I, p.596.

due to the ‘zèle et du patriotisme des municipalités ou *les corps administratifs* that the Assembly were made aware of the conspiracies at all.<sup>229</sup> The crux of the problem, so Brissot supposed, was the lack of jurisdictional clarity surrounding France’s policing institutions. Mirroring Roland’s earlier complaint, he argued that the lack of authority invested in the police had ultimately impeded the state’s capacity to quash these plots, the number of which had been multiplying as a result of the war. In other words, whilst the municipal police had the powers to search for the authors of criminal acts and issue arrest warrants, the ability to anticipate and prevent the commissioning of a crime was, however, hindered if they possessed no intrusive powers to intercept and decrypt correspondence, raid homes or premises unannounced or, in terms of manpower, conduct round the clock surveillance, especially in a city as ‘immense’ as Paris.<sup>230</sup> For all the loud noises of a city populated by *mouchards*, there is very little evidence to suggest that this was the case or that they made any notable contribution to rooting out traitors or foreign spies.<sup>231</sup> In his discourse ‘sur les mesures de sûreté générale’, which he delivered on 25 July 1792, Brissot summarized the situation as follows:

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<sup>229</sup> *ibid.*, p.596. The *juges* were the subject of several denunciations which were either sent directly to the Legislative Assembly’s *Comité de Surveillance* or to the police. On 29 May 1792, a medical practitioner named Joseph Petit made a formal declaration to the *commissaire de police* in the section of Faubourg-Saint-Denis, stating how he had earlier sent a denunciation to the *comité*, accusing the *juge de paix* of the section Poissonnière of ‘faits d’embauchage et projets de contre-révolution’, Tuetey, *Répertoire, IV, op. cit.*, p.55 (AN., series C 218, nos 118 & 160). Similarly, during the search of La Rouërie’s premises, for example, the municipal authorities seized two letters, one from the mayor of Saint Ouen and a second, from the *Juge de Paix du canton de Saint-Brice*, purportedly containing ‘des traces de connivence entre ces particuliers et le sieur Tuffin’ cited in Charles-Louis Chassin, *La Préparation de la guerre*, II, *op. cit.*, p.515.

<sup>230</sup> Despite the non-sanctioned activities of some municipalities, the renegade actions of local surveillance committees, and the special discretion conferred to the *Comités des Recherches*, the *commissaires de police* (or other policing institutions) were never legally permitted to intercept and open private correspondence. For the debates over the inviolability of the *secret de correspondance* during the first years of the Revolution, see Katlyn Marie Carter, ‘The *Comité des Recherches*’, *op. cit.*, 51-56.

<sup>231</sup> Schmidt has not found any traced of organized ‘espionage’, nor has any historian provided evidence of its pervasive existence or patent efficacy. This is despite the pronouncements of Sylvain Bailly, the former mayor who denounced ‘l’espionnage qui portait une inquisition sur les paroles et même sur les pensées’. Sigismond Lacroix, *Actes de la Commune de Paris pendant la Révolution* (Virginie: AMS Press, 1973), VIII, p.37: In no. 360 of *Ami du Peuple*, Marat too denounced ‘dans l’hôtel de la mairie, un bureau d’espionnage public, sous la dénomination du bureau de sûreté, dont les infâmes agent ont été décorés’, Jean Paul Marat, *Œuvres Politiques, 1789-1793: Jan 1791-Mars 1791* (Bruxelles: Pôle Nord, 1989), p.22.

Il est donc démontré qu'il existe des conspirations contre la sûreté générale de l'état; que la guerre où nous sommes engagés va les multiplier. Il faut donc, ou songer à les prévenir, ou se résoudre à périr. Mais comment les prévenir, s'il n'existe pas un pouvoir qui, à l'origine même, ou dans quelque état que soit la conjuration, puisse mander, arrêter les coupables et saisir leurs papiers? Cette lacune existe dans l'organisation des pouvoirs qui doivent poursuivre et juger les crimes contre la sûreté générale. La constitution, à la vérité, délègue au pouvoir législatif exclusivement le droit de connaître des crimes contre la sûreté nationale. Cet article le constitue bien jury d'accusation à cet égard; mais quant aux formes nécessaires pour les rechercher, elles ne sont pas fixées, elles n'existent même pas. Des rebelles peuvent conspirer impunément sous nos yeux, et il n'existe aucun pouvoir bien défini qui puisse décerner contre eux le mandat d'amener ou d'arrêt.<sup>232</sup>

To address the problem- at least how he perceived it- Brissot proposed that the *juges de paix* be stripped of their functions and that the power to combat the crimes against *la sûreté de l'État* should be officially and without ambiguity, delegated to the municipalities, districts and départements.<sup>233</sup> The reasoning behind this delegation of policing powers was simple. Since the principal function of the municipalities was to 'maintenir la tranquillité et la sûreté de la commune', and since they were already best placed to police their own jurisdiction, it thus made logical sense that they should be uniformly charged with investigating high crimes as well, a function which many of them were, of course, discharging already.<sup>234</sup> As the late Gérard Sautel put it, the municipality's role as the *de facto police de sûreté générale* was

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<sup>232</sup> Auguste, Amic, Étienne Mouttet (eds.), *Choix des discours*, *op. cit.*, p.595.

<sup>233</sup> As Brissot expressed it, 'la nature des choses veut donc que le pouvoir de rechercher des complots soit attribué aux municipalités', *AP XLVII*, *op. cit.*, p.136.

<sup>234</sup> Article 50 of the *loi municipale 1789* only prescribed them limited policing powers that assured 'la sûreté et la tranquillité dans les rues, lieux et édifices publics'. Adolphe Chauveau, Faustin Hélie, *Théorie du Code Pénal*, 3 vols (Brussels: Société Typographique Belge, 1844), III, p.301.

‘loin d’être chose nouvelle.’<sup>235</sup> At the same time, as Gensonné’ recommended, the *Comité de Surveillance* would be renamed and invested with plenary powers to oversee their activities. In other words, whilst the municipalities would still enjoy some independence of action, as the theoretical devolution of powers permitted, they would nevertheless be required by *fiat* to correspond with the committee within a prescribed timeframe, thus strengthening the ties with the centre and facilitating the creation of ‘un système entier de surveillance’.<sup>236</sup>

## IX

Gensonné’s proposal exposes the difficulty that the revolutionaries faced in pursuing, and executing, a coherent national security policy at the time. Despite the promises of the 1791 constitution, France remained a highly fractured state, torn between loyalties, and with neither a strong executive nor legislative to assume direction of the security agenda. Indeed, by the end of July 1792, the royal ministry resembled nothing more than a ‘straw government’ with the Legislative Assembly itself reduced in numbers and divested of any power to enforce its own decrees.<sup>237</sup> Gensonné’s proposal, seconded by Brissot, was thus designed to impose a measure of central oversight, at least in security matters, not by frustrating local initiative but by ensuring that there was a more consistent demonstration of vigilance.<sup>238</sup> In relation to counter-espionage activities, it would be hard to disagree with

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<sup>235</sup> Gérard Sautel, ‘Police de Sûreté générale et Municipalités en 1792: Genèse d’une loi révolutionnaire’, in *Études offertes à Pierre Jaubert. Liber amicorum, textes réunis par Gérard Aubin* (Bordeaux: Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, 1992), pp.647-664 (p.648).

<sup>236</sup> *ibid.*, p.527.

<sup>237</sup> Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 2004) p.520.

<sup>238</sup> Of course, with France divided into 41,000 ‘communes’ in 1789, it would be a considerable task for any historian to prove the case for or against a consistent demonstration of vigilance. It would ultimately require the consultation of most municipal archives throughout the country where the records of local surveillance efforts are traditionally kept.

their reasoning. Despite the revolutionaries' efforts to establish a uniform, legal framework to indict individuals for high crimes, no systematic attempt appears to have been made to hunt for spies 'on the ground' - whether in the fortress towns, the capital or provinces - a problem, unhelpfully compounded by the conceptual confusion between espionage, subversion and sedition. Of course, in hindsight, the revolutionaries would have been better served with forming a single body charged with coordinating efforts between the country's civil, military, naval and diplomatic authorities. Neither the *Comité de Surveillance*, nor the National Assembly's *Comité des Recherches* before it, came close to fulfilling this function. Instead, over-relying on denunciations and the cooperation of otherwise rivalrous institutions, the revolutionaries scoured the country for spies, traitors and counter-revolutionaries- the enemies within - employing methods of control that, for the moment, were usually untargeted, sometimes unsanctioned, but mostly deterrent in nature and departing little from the practices of their predecessors. But with the *patrie en danger*, and the fall of the monarchy, the conditions were created for the revolutionary state to undergo a process of securitization that would mark a new phase in the development of French counter-espionage.

## CHAPTER 2

### State of Emergency: August 1792- September 1793

With the monarchy deposed, but the threat of counter-revolution still alive, the task now facing the revolutionaries was to consolidate their power and forge a national state based on staunch, republican principles.<sup>239</sup> In the ensuing days and weeks, dozens of delegations and commissioners were sent into the provinces to instill discipline, prepare the nation's defenses and purge the body politic of all royalists.<sup>240</sup> At the same time, on walls throughout the country, proclamations were placarded exhorting France's citizens to surveil their neighbours and root out the *traîtres* hidden among them.<sup>241</sup> From the great urban centers to the remotest corners of the country, the enemies of the Revolution were perceived to be growing in number and advanced in their plans to reinstate the *ancien régime*. On 23 August 1792, less than two weeks following the storming of the *Tuileries*, the fortress of Longwy surrendered in suspicious haste, prompting Vergniaud to claim that it had been 'vendus aux ennemis'.<sup>242</sup> As military catastrophe loomed and the country descended into fratricidal civil war, rampant spy-mania began to take hold. To combat this perceived surge in espionage activity and 'se délivrer de l'ennemi intérieur', the revolutionaries adopted a series of emergency measures that, though not necessarily predetermined, nevertheless formed part of a broader process of securitization.<sup>243</sup> This chapter will examine this dual development and its relation to counter-espionage operations during the thirteen months prior to the Terror. It will not only explore the methods and structures employed to suppress espionage

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<sup>239</sup> Antoine Boulant, 'Guerre et renseignement sous la Révolution. Les agents du Conseil exécutif provisoire (1792-1793)', *Revue historique des armées*, 254 (2009), 82-91 (p.82).

<sup>240</sup> According to Boulant, the task was 'd'imposer aux administrations et aux armées une unité d'action et de principes', *ibid*, p.82. Address moreover argues how this political and administrative purge or 'Second Revolution', as he put it, was more radical and complete than that of 1789. David Address, *The Terror*, *op. cit.*, p.90.

<sup>241</sup> During the afternoon *séance* of 25 August 1792, for example, the *Conseil Général du Département* at Strasbourg determined that 'une proclamation devra être adressée aux habitants pour leur rappeler leurs devoirs quand la patrie est en danger'. *Archives Départementales du Bas-Rhin de 1790 l'an II, Répertoire numérique, sous série*, 1L 492, p.269.

<sup>242</sup> *AP*, *LIII*, *op. cit.*, p.130.

<sup>243</sup> Cited in Henri Alexandre Wallon, *Histoire du Tribunal révolutionnaire de Paris avec le journal de ses actes*, 5 vols (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1880), I p.22



and related subversive threats but explain how they overlapped with both domestic surveillance programs and the parallel efforts to expand the security apparatus of the revolutionary state.

## I

On 18 August 1792, just over a week following the storming of the *Tuileries*, the National Assembly sanctioned the formation of the first state organ officially charged with government propaganda.<sup>244</sup> Under the direction of Jean-Marie Roland, the *Ministre de l'Intérieur*, the *bureau* was awarded one hundred thousand *livres* to print and distribute throughout the *departements* writings that ‘éclairer les esprits sur les trames criminelles des ennemis de l’État, et sur les vrai causes des maux qui ont trop longtemps déchiré la patrie.’<sup>245</sup> With these allocated funds, Roland launched a nationwide propaganda offensive, pasting the walls with proclamations, subsidizing patriotic publications and dispatching agents or *missionnaires patriotes* to all corners of the country.<sup>246</sup> The purpose of this campaign was twofold: First, to discredit the spread of royalist ‘disinformation’ and second, to legitimize the series of emergency measures that the National Assembly, and its competing center of power, the Paris commune, enacted in the hours, days and weeks following the insurgency. As the great wave of anti-royalist purges swept the country, in chaotic scenes so vividly depicted by Baroness d’Orczy in *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, over a thousand suspects were detained with hundreds brought before the newly established *Tribunal Criminel* in Paris and

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<sup>244</sup> Jacques Driencourt, *La Propagande, Nouvelle force politique* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1950), p.33. Anne Kupiec, ‘La Gironde et le Bureau d’esprit public: Livre et révolution’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 302 (1995), 571-586 (p.572).

<sup>245</sup> André Rémy Arnould, (ed.), *Collection des Décrets de l’Assemblée Nationale Constituante* (Dijon: L’Imprimerie de P. Causse, 1792), p.621. The preamble to the decree of 18 August 1792 is instructive. ‘L’Assemblée Nationale, considérant que depuis longtemps les ennemis de la patrie ne cessent d’égarer l’opinion publique par des correspondances mensongères, par des libelles inciviques et par toutes sortes d’écrits calomnieux et empoisonnés; qu’il est instant de déjouer ces manœuvres perfides en exposant aux yeux de la nation française la vérité qu’on s’efforce de lui cacher.’ *ibid*, p.621.

<sup>246</sup> Pierre Caron, ‘Les Commissaires du Conseil Exécutif et leurs rapports,’ *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine* (1899-1914), 19.1 (1914), 5–23 (at p.6).

judged for espionage-related crimes. Among them were Jean Jacques Chambon and Joseph Douligny, two royalists who were executed for plotting to steal the crown jewels ‘pour les faire servir à l’entretien et au secours des ennemis intérieurs et extérieurs’. Also arrested was the Sieur Jean Baptiste Dossonville who was accused, but acquitted, of facilitating ‘les enrôlements et soldes d’espions contre-révolutionnaires’ in collusion with Louis Collenot d’Angremont, the *secrétaire de l’administration de la garde nationale*.<sup>247</sup> In Lille, meanwhile, dozens of customs officials were removed from office for their purported *incivisme*, a recent revolutionary construct that counted among its criminal acts, acting as spies for the invading Austro-Prussian armies. As the *Gazette du département du Nord* made clear to its readers:

Un certain nombre des préposés aux douanes nationales seront cassés de leurs fonctions. Une partie de ces scélérats servoient d’espions à l’ennemi au lieu de nous informer de ses invasions sur notre territoire.

And just as promised, five days later, the journal announced how ‘plusieurs particuliers suspectés d’incivisme et convaincus, ou peu s’en faut, d’entretenir correspondance avec nos ennemis extérieurs, ont été arrêtés et incarcérés.’<sup>248</sup>

In their dogged pursuit of these ‘conspirators’, the revolutionaries imposed a range of overlapping security controls - some temporary, others already or formerly employed - that included the staging of military road blocks, the suspended allocation of passports and

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<sup>247</sup> Henri Alexandre Wallon, *Histoire du Tribunal révolutionnaire de Paris avec le journal de ses actes*, 5 vols (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1880), II, p.481. Anonymous, *Bulletin du tribunal criminel établi par la loi du 17 août 1792 pour juger les conspirateurs* (Paris: Imprimerie Clément, 1792) in-4°, pp.1-15, Benjamin Buchez, *Histoire Parlementaire*, *op. cit.*, XXI, p.53. Dated 23 September 1792, the text of the judgement stated ‘qu’il a existé un complot formé par les ennemis de la patrie, tendant à enlever à la nation, de vive force et à main armée, les bijoux, diamants, et autres objets de prix déposés au Garde-Meuble, pour les faire servir à l’entretien et au secours des ennemis intérieurs et extérieurs conjurés contre elle....’

<sup>248</sup> Cited in Eugène Debièvre (ed.), 1792, *La guerre dans les environs de Lille*, *op. cit.*, pp.146, 150.

the conduct of large-scale, *visites domiciliaires*.<sup>249</sup> Moreover, upon further pressure exerted by the Commune, the revolutionaries ordered the deportation to Guyana of all refractory priests under the age of sixty (by the *loi* 26 août 1792) and the *de-facto* proscription of parents whose offspring had emigrated for unjustifiable (ie non-commercial) reasons. As Philippe Jacques Rühl made clear to the Assembly on 12 August, the latter were complicit in the emigration by providing ‘secours’ to the very same sons who now ‘*attaquent leur patrie et servent aux ennemis d’indicateurs & d’espions*’.<sup>250</sup> In many respects, the enactment of these emergency measures formed and conformed to a wider process hitherto referred to as ‘securitization’. According to the original, constructivist formulation posited by The Copenhagen School, ‘securitization’ occurs when a state uses a perceived threat- in this instance an existential one- to justify and deploy a series of illiberal measures in order to protect itself.<sup>251</sup> As Buzan argues:

The question of when a threat becomes a national security issue depends not just on what type of threat it is, and how much the recipient state perceives it, but also on the intensity with which the threat operates.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> For the full range of security controls implemented by the Paris Commune and municipalities see the section ‘Mesures de Répression’ in Paul Mautouchet, *Le Gouvernement révolutionnaire: 10 août 1792-4 brumaire an IV* (Paris: E. Cornély, 1912), pp.34-41, Maurice Tourneux (ed.), *Procès-Verbaux de la Commune de Paris (10 août 1792-1<sup>er</sup> juin 1793)* (Paris: Au Siege de la Société, 1894). For additional reading on the Paris Commune’s campaign of repression, see Frédéric Braesch, *La commune du dix août 1792: Étude sur l’histoire de Paris du 20 juin au 2 décembre 1792* (Paris: Hachette & Cie, 1911), pp.334-61. Specifically, for the allocation of passports, including loopholes and inconsistencies in legislation, pp.357-359, the closure of barriers pp.349-360, *certificates de residence* and *certificates de civisme*, p.361 and the *visites domiciliaires*, pp.437-445.

<sup>249</sup> Cited in Eugène Debièvre (ed.), *1792, La guerre dans les environs de Lille, op. cit.*, pp.146, 150.

<sup>250</sup> Anonymous, *Journal Politique ou Gazette des gazettes, année 1792* (Paris: De l’Imprimerie du Journal, 1792) p.22.

<sup>251</sup> The analytical framework of securitization was developed by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998). Buzan’s earlier work, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd ed., (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 1991) is otherwise regarded as one of the foundation texts.

<sup>252</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear, op. cit.*, p.119. In Great Britain, meanwhile, a similar move to securitize the state was undertaken by William Pitt’s government. Faced by growing radical movements as well as the importation of revolutionary ideas etc, Pitt attempted to convince parliament and the people that only the adoption of extreme measures would eradicate these twin threats. As Tomline explains, William Pitt ‘perceived the formidable co-operation of internal and external enemies; but the former could not be effectually resisted, except by open war, nor the latter without coercive acts of the legislature: and he was persuaded, that neither of these expedients, exclusive to his own earnest wish not to have recourse to them, would be approved, till their necessity was obvious and incontestable.’ George Tomline, *Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honorable*

During the summer of 1792, with the *patrie* declared *en danger*, these conditions were certainly met. As the revolutionaries correctly perceived, the war, with its attendant disorders, not only exposed the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the revolutionary state but also rendered securitization an imperative.<sup>253</sup> Yet, it is a mistake to believe that this process is necessarily smooth or certain. In reality, the securitization of a state does not occur quickly or instantaneously, nor is it limited to a set of temporary measures, but rather evolves over the course of time in accordance with the vicissitudes and exigencies of the moment. As Thierry Balzacq explains, ‘securitization is not necessarily the result of a rational design wherein goals are set beforehand, following a predetermined agenda.’<sup>254</sup> This appeared to be the case during the early revolutionary period where the structures of surveillance and control were more or less taking a tentative shape. As this chapter will argue, the events of 10 August 1792 marked a critical moment in how the state protected itself against foreign and domestic enemies. At the same time that these repressive measures were being justified and deployed, the revolutionary state entered a new phase of restructure and expansion, a process facilitated by securitization that evolved imperfectly but nevertheless had important implications for the practice of French counter-espionage.

In the month before the convocation of the National Convention, the revolutionaries took a major step forward in implementing the ‘national-security’ administration that Gensonné and Brissot had proposed less than three months earlier.<sup>255</sup> On 11 August 1792,

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*William Pitt, 2nd ed.* (London: John Murray, 1821), III, p. 548. Indeed, Pitt himself argued that there was ‘not one moment to be lost in arming the executive power with those additional means, which might be sufficient effectually to stop the farther progress’ of radicalism. Consequently, it was necessary ‘to enact a temporary suspension of the Habeas Corpus laws’. Thomas Curson Hansard, William Cobbett (eds.), *Cobbett’s Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803* (London: C Hansard, 1818) XXXI, p.497. As the cases of France and Britain thus demonstrate, security was and remains ‘the immediate object of government’. William Godwin, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on Morals and Happiness, 3rd Ed.*, (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1798), I, pp. xxiv-xxv.

<sup>253</sup> As Buzan puts it, ‘Insecurity reflects a combination of threats and vulnerabilities’. Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear, op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>254</sup> Thierry Balzacq (ed.), *Securitization Theory, op. cit.*, p.15.

<sup>255</sup> *Discours de M. Gensonné,.... sur la police de sûreté générale, prononcé le 30 mai 1792* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1792). Although consisting of eighteen articles, much of Gensonné’s plan had originally been proposed by the deputy M Français, *Projet de décret sur les troubles intérieurs, lu à l’Assemblée Nationale au nom du comité des douze le 5 mai 1792* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1792).

despite the opposition from Emmanuel de Pastoret and other deputies, the National Assembly issued a decree stripping the incumbent *juges de paix* of their quasi-police powers and formally vesting the départements, districts and municipalities with the ‘fonctions de sûreté générale pour la recherche des crimes contre la sûreté extérieure ou intérieure de l’État.’<sup>256</sup> Comprised of eighteen articles, and constituting a semi-blueprint for action, the decree rendered the municipalities responsible for all aspects of security within their jurisdiction, from the compilation of criminal files to the arrest, dispersal and disarmament of all suspect individuals and groups. It also made it a civic requirement for every citizen to denounce to the municipality anyone ‘fort soupçonné’ of committing a crime against the *sûreté générale*, a decree which contained the ‘germs’ of the future legislation against ‘suspects’ in September 1793.<sup>257</sup> Just as importantly, it prescribed a strict seventy-two hour time-frame for which all information relating to a high crime (ie the corresponding *pièces, procès-verbaux* or *interrogatoires*) was to be transmitted from the municipalities and *directoires du département* to the National Assembly.<sup>258</sup> As Gensonné anticipated, this decree was designed to tighten communications with the centre without impeding initiative on a local level.

This decree, which was intended to impose a measure of uniformity on matters of state security, was to be reinforced with the formation of strong central organs. Just hours following the storming of the Tuileries, the Legislative Assembly awarded its *Comité de surveillance* new powers to summon and interrogate individuals, raid premises, lift the seals

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<sup>256</sup> L Rondonneau (ed.), *Décret qui charge spécialement les Municipalités des fonctions de la Police de sûreté générale: Collection générale des lois, décrets, arrêtés, sénatus-consulte, avis du Conseil d’état* (Paris: chez Rondonneau et Declé, 1818), III, pp.611-612. Samuel Marlot, *Les lois révolutionnaires 11 août 1792 - 22 prairial an II. La codification du salut public*, Unpublished Thesis, (Paris 2: Histoire du droit, 2009). The *Juges de Paix* nevertheless continued to hear cases on suspected spies. On 20 September 1792, it was reported, ‘On a emmené hier trois espions, dont un ecclésiastique celui-ci a reçu quelques maltraitements du peuple, mais ce dernier, soumis à la loi qui l’a réclamé, l’a abandonné à sa vengeance. Un scribe de Roubaix, arrêté pour le même crime, a été conduit chez le juge de paix qui, apres un long interrogatoire, l’a envoyé en prison. On dit que ce malheureux à oser se charger d’un ordre de l’Autrichien, chef de brigands qui sont dans Roubaix.’ *Le Mercure Universel: L’an Quatrieme de la Liberté. Septembre* (Paris: Imprimerie de Cussac, 1792), XIX, p.323.

<sup>257</sup> Paul Mautouchet, *Le Gouvernement révolutionnaire, op.cit.*,p.35.

<sup>258</sup> L Rondonneau (ed.), *Décret qui charge spécialement les Muncipalités, op. cit.* ,p.611

of private correspondence and ‘faire arrêter toutes les personnes suspectes, soit pour leur propre sûreté dans les circonstances actuelles, soit pour découvrir les ennemis de la patrie et leurs trames criminelles.’<sup>259</sup> With these new powers, the *comité* ordered the Paris Commune to transmit the names and addresses of all the persons that were suspected of ‘malveillance’, an analogous term for the twin crimes of subversion and espionage.<sup>260</sup> Although little is otherwise known about its activities during this intervening period, the Legislative Assembly’s decision to toughen its *Comité* with an expanded role in security matters would nevertheless prove a significant move, no less in creating a model for the famous *Comité de sûreté générale*.<sup>261</sup> Formed on 2 October 1792, and surviving the duration of the National Convention itself, the *comité*’s successor was charged with four principal objectives, as publicized in the *National Almanach*. It was to:

1. Surveiller à Paris les ennemis de la chose publique et les interroger, lorsqu’ils sont arrêtés, pour découvrir les complots.
2. Rechercher et poursuivre les fabricateurs de faux assignats.
3. Faire arrêter ceux qui lui sont dénoncés comme agents des cours étrangères et tous ceux qui troublent l’ordre public.
4. Surveiller ceux qui se trouvent compris dans la liste civile, c’est-à-dire, dans la liste des hommes vendus au ci-devant roi.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Michel Eude, ‘Le Comité de Surveillance’, *op. cit.*, p.143.

<sup>260</sup> Speaking of the existence ‘de leurs espions et de leur assassins’ the deputy of the *Département de la Charente-Inférieure*, Garnier de Saintes rallied the revolutionaries to expunge France ‘d’étrangers qui conspirent contre nous, nous allons chercher les moyens d’enchaîner la malveillance qui les secondes.’ *Réimpression de l’Ancien Moniteur*, *op. cit.*, pp.311-312. Similarly, in denouncing the ‘espions’ of General Dumouriez, Antoine Tournon inveighed against ‘un système combiné de malveillance, qui tend à agiter nos troupes.’ Antoine Tournon, *Révolutions de Paris, dédiées à la Nation, An Premier de la République. No. 170, tome 14* (Paris: 1792), p.114.

<sup>261</sup> Whilst the precise activities of the *Comité de Surveillance* are mostly unknown during those fraught days and weeks, Tuetey has reproduced a trail of correspondence between the *Conseil général de la commune de Dunkerque* and the *comité* relative to the original arrest, interrogations and prison transfers of Sébastien Rosé (Castillon) and Jean-Marie-Anastase Boulland (Bonfond), two former *gardes du corps* who had made suspicious journeys from Coblenz and across enemy occupied territory between 14 and 29 August 1792. Reproduced in Tuetey, *Répertoire*, *op. cit.*, VII, p.204. Bulletin 1198.

<sup>262</sup> Anonymous, *Instruction sur l’établissement des Comités de la Convention Nationale: Conforme au rapport fait par Eugene Gossuin, Président du Comité des Pétitions & de Correspondance & au décret rendu sur ce*

Although the *Comité de sûreté générale*'s counter-espionage role is implicitly understood, at least in reference to the arrest of 'agents des cours étrangères', it is incorrect to assume that it possessed supreme authority for it, as some historians have erroneously claimed. In his study of the Jacobin Republic, for example, Marc Bouloiseau stated that:

The security of the state rested with the Committee whose discretionary power extended to all of France and beyond, since it was also in charge of Counter Espionage. Civilian authorities and generals were also subject to its control.<sup>263</sup>

Equally, Françoise Brunel argued how, as *Organe de Haute Police*, the *comité* was responsible for the 'sûreté de la république et des personnes, du contre-espionnage, de la recherche et surveillance des suspects, de l'exécution des lois révolutionnaires.'<sup>264</sup> Strictly speaking, neither was entirely the case, as will shortly be demonstrated. Indeed, just how far the Convention's *comité* played an active role in counter-espionage in the first eleven months of its existence, is difficult to determine. Except for the dispatch of double agents to infiltrate and arrest the members of the Marquis de Rouërie's cells, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, there are few instances- at least found in the surviving archival sources and existing historiography- of its direct intervention in localized operations for the period up to September 1793, particularly in cases relating to military espionage.<sup>265</sup> It is known, however,

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*rapport* (Paris: De l'Imprimerie Nationale, 1792), pp.10-11. At the same time, the *comité* was charged with compiling a report on the criminal investigations surrounding the events of 10 August 1792. Anonymous, *Décret de la Convention nationale, autorisant le Comité de sûreté générale à se faire rendre compte des arrestations relatives à la révolution qui a eu lieu depuis le 10 août, de prendre connaissance de leurs motifs et de se faire représenter les correspondances des personnes arrêtées, pour en faire le rapport à la Convention nationale*. This report was thereupon to be printed and distributed to the eighty-three *departements* of France.

<sup>263</sup> Marc Bouloiseau, *The Jacobin Regime, 1792-1794* trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.94.

<sup>264</sup> Françoise Brunel, *Thermidor: La Chute de Robespierre* (Paris: Éditions Complexe, 1989), p.132.

<sup>265</sup> Although a number of secondary works exist concerning the organization, composition and functions of *Le Comité de sûreté générale* few ultimately assess these operations and none of them adequately- or even- address these operations in relation to the pursuit of spies. In the most comprehensive study, for example, Georges Belloni makes only one mention of the existence of enemy spies. By contrast, wherever he seldomly uses the term 'espion' it is to denote the agents employed by the *comité* itself. Georges Belloni, *Le Comité de sûreté*

that the *comité* conducted the arrest, interrogations and investigations into the theft of the *Garde-Meuble* and that it played an, albeit ambiguous, role in the hunt for the ‘Grand Corrupteur’, the Duc du Châtelet and his network of royalist agents.<sup>266</sup> Yet, in the latter case, there exists evidence to show how the *comité* instructions were called into question and ultimately ignored.<sup>267</sup> In all probability, the *comité* seldomly intervened in localized operations but progressively acquired the importance of its fonctions, ‘en devenant un organe de plus en plus centralisateur’.<sup>268</sup> In other words, it was only following its reorganisation and the passage of the *Loi des Suspects*, as the next chapter will argue, that its interventions and activities in counter-espionage became more pronounced and decisive.

A second observation to make about the *Comité de sûreté générale* at this stage relates to its methods. On 2 October 1792, the same day that it was officially formed, Joseph Delaunay d’Angers expounded on the revolutionaries’ preferred strategy of containment in its combat against espionage and related counter-revolutionary acts:

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*générale de la Convention nationale* (Paris: L Arnette, 1924). In relation to counter-espionage, the same absence of discussion can be found in the following articles: Émilie Cadio, ‘Le Comité de sûreté générale (1792-1795)’, *La Révolution française [En ligne]*, 3, (2012), 1-14. David L Dowd ‘Security and the Secret Police during the Reign of Terror’, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LIV (1955), 328-339, Michel Eude, ‘Le Comité de Sûreté Générale en 1793-1794’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 261(1985), 295-306. James Guillaume, ‘Le Personnel du Comité de Sûreté Générale’, *Études Révolutionnaires*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series (Paris: 1909), 253-347. Only the following *mémoire* contains information of interest but of questionable veracity. Gabriel Jérôme Sénar, *Révélations puisées dans les cartons des Comité de Salut Public et de Sûreté Générale ou Mémoires (inédits) de Sénart (sic), agent du gouvernement révolutionnaire*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Paris: 1824). Claude Hohl, *Contribution à l'histoire de la Terreur: Un agent du Comité de sûreté générale: Nicolas Guénot* (Paris: Commission d'Histoire économique et sociale de la Révolution française, 22, 1968), 116 p. Otherwise for a comprehensive and very useful description and inventory of the sources preserved at the *Archives Nationales* see Pierre Caron, *Le Fonds du Comité de sûreté générale* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1954).

<sup>266</sup> See, for example, the order of the *Comité de sûreté générale* dated 1 May 1793, authorising its president, Charles Jean-Marie Alquier, to travel wherever necessary in order to conduct interrogations of the individuals complicit in the theft of the *Garde-Meuble* with the purpose of gathering ‘les renseignements les plus précis’ on the purported plot. Tuetey, *Repertoire, op. cit.*, V, p.96. Bulletin 734 and letter of the *Ministre de l’Intérieur* to the Président de la Convention Nationale, relative to the arrest of citoyen Restout, *inspecteur général du Garde-Meuble*, operated the preceding night by order of the *Comité de sûreté générale*. Bulletin 730, *ibid*, V, p.96.

<sup>267</sup> Although the Duc de Châtelet had not emigrated, but was still at large, the *administrateurs du département de Seine-et-Marne* continued to sell his *meubles* despite having received orders to stop. As they were sternly reprimanded by the *Ministre de l’Intérieur*, Dominique Joseph Garat, ‘il paraît que sans egard pour l’arrêt du comité de sûreté générale et pour ma lettre, vous continuez vos poursuites contre le citoyen Duchâtelet... le résultat des recherches du comité de sûreté générale à son égard une preuve de sa non emigration.’ Cited in A de Lestapsis, ‘Un Grand Corrupteur: Le Duc Du Châtelet: II Partie’, *Annales Historiques De La Révolution Française*, 25.133 (1953), 316–338 (at p.332).

<sup>268</sup> Émilie Cadio, ‘Le Comité de sûreté générale’, *op. cit.*, p.1.



Quant aux personnes arrêtées comme suspectes d'incivisme, et comme prévenues de délits contre-révolutionnaires, nous pensons qu'il serait extrêmement dangereux de les mettre provisoirement en liberté, sans avoir préalablement scruté leur conduite dans ses rapports avec les conspirateurs du dedans et du dehors. Les scellés ont été apposés sur leurs papiers. Il est très important d'examiner leurs correspondances. Nous croyons avec d'autant plus de raison à la possibilité de trouver dans cet examen des lumières utiles, que les opinions de la plupart des détenus ne sont pas équivoques. Ce sont des écrivains marqués dans la révolution par un incivisme scandaleux; ce sont des agents de la liste civile; ce sont des femmes attachées aux émigrés, et chargées de leur correspondance. Il ne faut pas se le dissimuler, la surveillance la plus active est encore nécessaire... Il importe de suivre les ramifications de cette vaste conjuration, et de ne négliger aucun moyen d'en connaître et les plans et les complices.<sup>269</sup>

De Launay's preference for preventative arrest, detainment and investigation was a favoured method that predates the Revolution. As Genêt has well documented, it was equally practiced by the police, military and civil authorities during the *ancien régime* in order to uncover spies. Once suspicion was roused, usually prompted by a denunciation, a dossier was compiled and the suspect imprisoned, often in the *Bastille* for a month or so, during which time, he or she was interrogated, the object of which was to extract a morsel of facts, whether real or invented, to expose them. During their incarceration, attempts were also made to 'turn' the suspect into a 'double agent'. The purpose of this ploy was not just to return to the service of their king but to spread disinformation and spy, in turn, on their paid masters.<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Joseph Delaunay d'Angers, *Rapport fait au nom du Comité de sûreté générale, sur les arrestations relatives à la révolution du 10 août. 2 octobre 1792* (Paris: De l'Imprimerie Nationale, 1792).

<sup>270</sup> Lucien Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs, op. cit.*, p.81, Genêt, Stéphane, *Les Espions des Lumières, op. cit.*, p.410. Indeed, the early eighteenth century also saw the publication of certain manuals on how to interrogate and 'turn' a suspected spy. See, for example, chapter VII, *Sur les personnes, que vous découvrez être en intelligence avec les ennemis. Observations par rapport à celles, qui sont en intelligence avec vous. Comment quelques Généraux se sont comportés à l'égard des Espions, qui ont été arrêtés en venant reconnoître une*

Yet, as the following pages of this thesis will reveal, de Launay's proposed strategy of containment was not uniformly adopted by the revolutionaries, at least in relation to the treatment of suspected spies. Spies were not always rounded up immediately and cast into prison to await trial. Some were the object of prolonged investigations and/or entrapment first, as occurred with the Marquis de Rouerie's accomplices, whilst others were offered immunity in exchange for testimony. Many were executed immediately without any process. Ultimately, just how the civil and military authorities pursued and punished spies which fell under their jurisdiction or zone largely depended not just on local and individual initiative but how espionage itself was perceived, ie as a conspirational crime with its attendant 'ramifications' or a military operation with limited objectives such as reconnaissance.

The third and final observation that will be made at this stage relates to the composition of the *comité*. On 7 January 1793, in a striking example of how the combat against espionage directly impinged on the deliberations of the *comité*, the Convention issued a decree, requiring that the former cannot issue arrest warrants without a twofold majority vote from at least eighteen of its sitting members. The motive behind the decree stemmed from the arrest, and subsequent release under caution, of a young Englishman named Blackwood who was originally accused of being an 'agent des émigrés'. This incident, along with disagreements surrounding the arrest of Antoine de Rivarol's brother, was denounced by both Jean Louis Carra and François Buzot, the deputy d'Eure, with the second demanding '...que le Comité de sûreté générale soit doublé, et qu'il ne puisse arrêter personne qu'en vertu d'une délibération prise aux deux tiers des voix'.<sup>271</sup> Thus, although the

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*armée, qui étoit en bon état* in Puerto de Santa Cruz, *Réflexions militaires et politiques, traduites de l'Espagnol De M. le Marquis de Santa Cruz de Marzenado* (La Haye: Chez Jacques van den Kieboom, 1739) I, p.392. Similarly, in his treatise on the art of war, Count Turpin de Crissé, a brigadier in the king's army, instructed his readers on the recommended interrogation techniques to employ against captured spies. As he wrote, 'Si on conduit au Général quelque Espion de l'armée ennemie, il doit le prendre en particulier, l'interroger avec douceur, lui parler avec une espèce de confiance, ne point le menacer (sic), et lui promettre récompense, s'il veut lui dire ce qu'il sçait de l'Armée. S'il lui trouve de l'intelligence, il doit tâcher de l'engager à le servir.' Turpin de Crissé, *Essai sur l'Art de la Guerre* (Paris: Chez Prault & Jombert, 1754), I, p.237.

<sup>271</sup> *Archives Parlementaires*, LVI, p.260. James Guillaume, 'Le Personnel du Comité de sûreté générale', *Études révolutionnaires*, 29<sup>e</sup> (1909), reproduced in 2<sup>nd</sup> part, 253-347.

majority of the Girondins was assured, every case had to be settled by a vote of half of the members present, some of whom would later excuse themselves for having turned into 'signature machines'.<sup>272</sup> Yet, just how far these committee rules made an impact on anti-spy activity is- it is reasonable to say - impossible to judge. So much, after all, remains unknown at this junction. Without making a statement of fact, it could perhaps be argued that it had little effect on espionage as long as the *comité*'s supremacy or control over domestic security matters had not been asserted.

## II

Despite the leniency afforded to Blackwood it was clear, from March 1793, that the French nation was witnessing a resurgence of *l'état d'esprit* that Hugues Marquis otherwise referred to as 'l'espionnisme' or 'la psychose de l'espionnage'.<sup>273</sup> In the *feuilles des rapports et déclarations faites au Bureau de Surveillance*, a special branch of the Parisian police, one can find several instances where foreigners were increasingly identified as dangerous, subversive elements responsible for the recent disorders in the capital.<sup>274</sup> As one report made clear:

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<sup>272</sup> Cited in Marc Bouloiseau, *The Jacobin Republic, op. cit.*, p.95

<sup>273</sup> Hugues Marquis, 'L'espionnage Britannique et la Fin de l'Ancien Régime', *HES* (1998), 261-276 (p.275). For early use of the term 'spy fever' in the historiography see Maurice Hutt, 'Spies in France, 1793-1808', *History Today*, 12 (1962), 158-167 (p.158).

<sup>274</sup> Even the riots in the capital, which were ostensibly sparked by anger over the high price of food, was attributed to the machinations of enemy agents. As the municipal authorities in Paris pretended, the recent disorders in the capital 'ne sont que le prétexte de ce mouvement. Sa véritable cause, c'est la haine de la Révolution; son but c'est la contre-révolution. Ses auteurs, ses moteurs sont les malveillants de l'intérieur coalisés avec les agents des puissances étrangères...' *Adresse présentée à la Convention nationale le mardi 27 février 1793 par la Municipalité de Paris*, AN C247 no 360 fol 36 cited in Isabelle Fourneron, 'La décentralisation de l'administration des subsistances. Pache et la Commune de Paris, février-septembre 1793', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 306 (1996), 649-673 (p.670). Equally, in May 1793, there were demands for the arrest of anyone without demonstrable proof of employment since, according to the revolutionaries logic, they must be in the pay of foreign enemies. As one report stated, 'Vu les troubles actuels et les vols qui sont journellement dans Paris, il serait bien urgent d'arreter tout individu sans etat et sans moyen connu d'exister. Ce ne peut etre qu'un voleur ou un brigand solde par nos ennemis'. AN AN/AFIV/1479 doss 108, 2 mai 1793. For a concise study on brigandage see, Alan Forrest, 'The Ubiquitous Brigand: The Politics and Language of Repression', in C J Esdaile (eds), *Popular Resistance in the French Wars* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

On n'est pas surprise de voir arriver dans cette ville une grande quantité d'étrangers de tous états au moment ou les citoyens se preparent à partir pour le département de la Vendée...afin d'allumer la guerre civile dans Paris...on soupçonne ces gens-là, quoi qu'ils affectent un patriotisme exalte, d'être des agitateurs payés par des ennemis du bien public, pour allumer la guerre civile dans Paris.<sup>275</sup>

This surge of xenophobia, which was fuelled by the nationalisation of the war, was most vehemently directed against the subjects of France's ancient rival, the British.<sup>276</sup> On 10 March 1793, the *Bureau de Surveillance* characterized the popular mood in the capital as follows:

Le bruit court qu'il y a dans Paris quantité d'agents de Pitt, chargés d'espionner tout ce qui se passe dans la République: Ils logent dans des grands hôtels qu'ils louent dans le faubourg Saint-Germain, ou dans des maisons de campagne des environs de Paris, afin d'être moins découverte.<sup>277</sup>

Just whether the *commissaires de police* genuinely believed in the omnipresence of Pitt's agents or spuriously claimed so to curry favour with the Convention, remains open to debate. Either way, their reports are loaded with allegations levelled against 'les Anglais suspects' whose frequent ballads in different *quartiers* of Paris was sufficiently disconcerting for them to report that 'la Cour de Londres a du répandre dans Paris un grand nombre d'émissaires et

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<sup>275</sup> AN C247 doss 110, undated.

<sup>276</sup> Michael Rapport has shown how, whilst foreigners were treated on a more or less individual basis, there did witness a resurgence in xenophobia during the spring of 1793, Michael Rapport, *Nationality and Citizenship, op. cit.*, p.225. Otherwise, for more on the historical enmity between France and England, see his article Michael Rapport, 'Deux nations malheureusement rivales': Les Français en Grande-Bretagne, les Britanniques en France, et la construction des identités nationales pendant la Révolution française', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 342 (2005), pp. 21-46. Other useful publications include Norman Hampson, *The Perfidy of Albion: French Perceptions of England during the French Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 1998) and Sophie Wahnich, Marc Bélissa, 'Les crimes des Anglais: trahir le droit', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 300 (1995), 233-248.

<sup>277</sup> AN AFIV/1470 doss 19.

d'espions.'<sup>278</sup> Indeed, in his diary, the surgeon and temporary resident, John Moore, writes how such tales of British agents purportedly distributing guineas to promote confusion, and 'excite that spirit of jealousy and sedition' throughout France was 'generally believed' by widespread sections of the population, a perception which he himself dismissed as 'ridiculous fiction'.<sup>279</sup> To be sure, foreign spies were present in France, just as there were French agents operating abroad, not least in Britain.<sup>280</sup> However, despite the mounting body of research, there is little evidence to suggest that these types of foreign spies (as opposed to military ones on strict reconnaissance missions) were *fort nombreux* or collectively engaged in sponsoring counter-revolution, whether in collaboration with the *émigrés*, and their correspondents, or not.<sup>281</sup> Certainly, the British government did attempt to establish lines of communication between London and Paris, especially following the recall of its ambassador, Lord Gower, in August 1792, but their probable aim was to procure intelligence principally on the political and military state of France rather than to subvert the newly proclaimed Republic.<sup>282</sup> And even if the government's designs were more insidious at this stage, as the revolutionaries did not fail to propagate, there is good reason to concur with Hugues Marquis that the establishment of a network- already a 'complex and delicate task' in peacetime- was quite a formidable challenge following the outbreak of the Anglo-French war.<sup>283</sup> If the

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<sup>278</sup> Ibid, doss 19.

<sup>279</sup> As Moore writes, 'it is generally thought that there are many agents now in Paris, employed by the emigrant princes to circulate alarming reports of this nature, and to create universal distrust and suspicion. This, at least, is infinitely more probable than the ridiculous fiction which however I find is credited by many, namely, that the guineas of the British treasury are scattered over the suburbs of St Antoine, to keep up the spirit of discord and sedition.' John Moore, *A Journal during a Residence in France from the beginning of August to the middle of December, 1792, 2 vols* (London: G.G.J and J Robinson, 1793), I, p.241. Paul Gerbod, 'Visiteurs et Résidents: Britanniques dans le Paris révolutionnaire de 1789 à 1799', in M Vovelle (ed.), *Paris et la Révolution* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1989), p.139.

<sup>280</sup> In August 1792, for example, the secret agent, Jean-François Noël was dispatched to London and charged with spreading revolutionary turmoil in Britain either in concert with the *Orateurs* of the radical clubs and/or with the Roman Catholics in Ireland.

<sup>281</sup> Alfred Cobban, 'British Secret Service in France, 1784-1792', *op. cit.*, p.240.

<sup>282</sup> Elizabeth Sparrow, *Secret Service, op. cit.*, pp.31-37.

<sup>283</sup> Hughes Marquis, *Les agents de l'ennemi, op. cit.*, p.52. In his article on the Channel isles correspondence, Cobban observes meanwhile how, in relation to the collection of information about the movements of warships, 'the outbreak of war with France evidently had a disrupting effect on even such minor espionage as was being conducted'. Alfred Cobban, 'The Channel Isles Correspondance', *op. cit.*, p.41.

revolutionaries had not altogether rendered France an impenetrable target for foreign espionage, they nevertheless made it an increasingly unattractive one.

One of the principle methods of deterrence - at least in relation to combatting espionage - is through the threat, and delivery, of capital punishment. Whilst the enactment of legislation to punish spies took (undue) time, the first serious advances were made in 1793, beginning with the *déclaration sur les étrangers*. On 18 March, Bertrand Barère appeared before the National Convention, now under the presidency of Gensonné, and proposed that the Republic banish ‘ces hommes sans aveu qui ne vivent que de l’or étranger, qui ont des relations avec nos ennemis, qui alimentent les troubles et les conjurations, alors Paris sera tranquille.’<sup>284</sup> Barère’s call was echoed the following day, when, during an intense debate on the supposedly counter-revolutionary nature of foreigners, Joseph Cambon argued that chasing them ‘des terres de la République’ - as Barère’s proposed decree expressed it - was the best means of disrupting the lines of communications between them and the enemy powers now at war with France.<sup>285</sup> As he explained:

En faisant la guerre Aux Anglois, aux Allemands, et à tous les despotis, vous épuisez vos ressources, vous leur en laissez une toujours active et beaucoup plus dangereuse que leurs armées et leurs vaisseaux; c’est la correspondance qu’ils peuvent entretenir ici avec des mal-intentionnés qu’ils y sont vivre; je demande que toute communication soit romper avec les puissances en guerre avec nous; que tous les étrangers soient tenus de sortir du territoire de la République’.<sup>286</sup>

The disruption of enemy communications is, of course, a key counter-intelligence measure. Yet, whilst few revolutionaries were disposed to authorize mass deportation, at least at this

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<sup>284</sup> *AP, op. cit.*, XV, p.741.

<sup>285</sup> *Réimpression de l’Ancien Moniteur*, XV, p.741.

<sup>286</sup> Anonymous, *Journal des débats et des décrets*, XLIII, p.227.

stage, the decree of 21 March 1793, which legally recognized the famed *comités de surveillance*, did nevertheless contain a clause that was especially draconian. Given the way revolutionary thought was leaning, it had no other likely object than to deter all *étrangers*, either residing in or planning to enter France, from committing the slightest infraction, not least given the revolutionaries' known tendency to inflate even a minor civil disturbance into a full blown conspiracy.<sup>287</sup> As it read, 'tout étranger saisis dans une émeute, ou qui serait convaincu de l'avoir provoquée ou entretenue, par voie d'argent ou de conseil, sera puni de mort.'<sup>288</sup>

Of course, in terms of surveillance, it was not so much that foreigners were being singled out but that were being added to the groups of state enemies to be monitored on a *nationwide* basis.<sup>289</sup> On 21 March 1793, the same day that the National Convention issued its *déclaration sur l'étrangers*, the *directoire de département de Loir-et-cher* announced its intention to form a *comité de surveillance* vested with broad powers to uncover all counter-revolutionary plots threatening the security of the state. Emphasizing how only through strict surveillance could 'les projets des traitres et des conspirateurs' be frustrated that the *directoire* ordered:

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<sup>287</sup> In fact, it was not the first time that the expulsion of foreigners had been proposed. During the *séance* of 17 December 1791, for example, the *directoire du département du nord* had proposed to 'faire sortir de la ville, dans les vingt-quatre heures, les étrangers qui s'y étaient introduits, et de les faire conduire sur la frontière. AP, XXXVI, p.260. See also, Sophie Wahnich, *L'impossible Citoyen: L'étranger dans le discours de la Révolution Française* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997), p.97. Moreover, on 12 May 1792, the Girondin deputy, Marguerite-Élie Guadet declared, 'purgeront la ville de Paris avant demain, de plus de 6,000 étrangers qui y sont sans passe-ports'. AP, XLIII, p.274.

<sup>288</sup> Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection Complète des Lois, op. cit.*, V, p.207. Of course, the Jacobin *comités* were forming throughout the country long before the promulgation of the national decree on 21 March 1793 including in the political heart itself, Paris. See Ernest Mellié, *Les Sections de Paris pendant la Révolution française (21 mai 1790-19 vendémiaire an IV): Organisation, fonctionnement* (Paris: Société de l'histoire de la révolution française, 1898), p.179. Otherwise, for a study on the genesis of these *comités* see, P. Chopelin 'Un Cancer politique? Vies et morts des comités de surveillance de la ville de Lyon (1792-1795)', in *Les Comités de surveillance. D'une création citoyenne à un d'institution révolutionnaire*, D. Pingué and J.-P. Rothiot (eds.), 170-97, 172-3.

<sup>289</sup> To denote their character, the Girondin, Jean Baptiste Boyer-Fonfrède, suggested they be called 'un comité des recherches ou des étrangers', *Réimpression de l'Ancien Moniteur, op.cit*, XV, p.319.

...qu'il est à craindre que des insurrections n'éclatent dans l'arrondissement de Loir-et-cher' forme une comité de surveillance...de faire toutes les recherches et perquisitions nécessaires, de prendre des renseignements pour découvrir les complots qui pourraient menacer la liberté, découvrir les émigrés et les prêtres réfractaires et prendre toutes les mesures provisoires qu'exige la « sûreté générale » (sic) de l'Etat à charge de faire part au Directoire du résultant de ces démarches. Le Directoire rendra définitives ces mesures et dans les 24 heures les arrestations effectuées, après délibération.<sup>290</sup>

Strikingly, the *directoire* makes no mention of targeting *étrangers*, despite the ostensible mission of the *comités de surveillance* to receive and examine the *déclarations* of all foreigners in their commune, especially those who were native to the countries with which the Republic found itself at war.<sup>291</sup> Indeed, it would appear that up to September 1793, these committees were mostly inclined to investigate, interrogate and release foreign suspects after a few days internment once their political loyalty was amply demonstrated.<sup>292</sup> One form of documentary evidence was, of course, the colour-coded *carte de sûreté* (alternatively called a *certificate de civisme*) or a validated *certificat d'autorisation de résidence* whose possession would demonstrate assimilation into a community as well as exculpation from crimes such as espionage.<sup>293</sup> In fact, despite the mounting fears that, following the outbreak

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<sup>290</sup> Quoted in Henri Calvet, 'Les rapports du comité de surveillance et des autorités constituées du département de Loir-et-Cher (Mars 1793-Août 1793).' *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 5.29 (1928), 430–441 (pp.430-431).

<sup>291</sup> Émile Galmiche, 'Quelques documents sur le Comité de surveillance de Saint-Brieuc', *Annales de Bretagne*. 28.4 (1912), pp. 585-596 (at p.585).

<sup>292</sup> In his study of the *comité de surveillance* in Carcassonne, Rufas noticed a period of activity until the end of September 'peu près inexistante.' Marcel Rufas, 'Le comité de surveillance et les suspects de Carcassonne (17 Avril 1793-21 Mars 1795).' *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 26.136 (1954), 232–253 (p.240).

<sup>293</sup> See, for example, bulletin 2937, 'Déclaration du sieur Georges Gonnet, domicilié quai de la Grève, faisant connaître que son fils Jean-Baptiste, ancien soldat au régiment de Navarre, après avoir été enfermé dans les prisons de Valenciennes pour maraudage, était venu en congé chez lui, du 20 janvier à la fin d'avril, et qu'étant retourné à Valenciennes en habit bourgeois, il y avait été arrêté sous l'inculpation d'espionnage, et demande d'un certificat constatant sa résidence à Paris, avec attestation de 2 témoins en faveur dudit Gonnet, qu'on déclare bon citoyen, patriote et observateur de la Loi.' Alexandre Tue

tey, *Répertoire générale*, op. cit., V, p.293. For articles on these documents, see Olivier Faron, Cyril Grange, 'Un recensement parisien sous la Révolution: L'exemple des cartes de sûreté de 1793', *Mélanges de l'École*



of hostilities with Great Britain, the *peuple anglais* would inundate them with spies, a prospect that an agent in London had forewarned the *Ministre des Affaires Étrangères* a month earlier, the revolutionaries accorded the British residents in France a measure of protection if, in the words of one report, they ‘justifieront des affaires qui les y retiennent.’<sup>294</sup> Famously among them were the eighty plus members of the British Club of Jacobins who convened their meetings at the White’s Hotel in Paris.<sup>295</sup> In fact, in an example of how certain residents attempted to demonstrate their revolutionary zeal, Nicholas Madgett, the Irish Head of the *Bureau de Traducion* attached to the *Comité du Salut Public* proposed to his employers on 22 March 1793 to establish a ‘*comité révolutionnaire anglaise*’ dedicated to rooting out British spies among them. As he suggested, it should be composed of:

Citoyens britanniques d’un civisme éprouvé pour purger la ville autant qu’il sera possible de tous les espions envoyés par le ministre anglais. (...) J’ai déjà proposé, ajoute t’il non sans arrière-pensées, d’établir des commissaires anglais ou irlandais dans les principaux ports de la République pour y accueillir les matelots prisonniers.<sup>296</sup>

Although Madgett’s proposal seems to have come to nothing, the revolutionaries were naturally content to draw on the divisions within the British expat community to uncover the

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*française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée*, 111.2 (1999), 795-826 (p.795) and Général Herlaut, ‘Les certificats de civisme’, *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 15.90 (1938), 481–536.

<sup>294</sup> On 1 February 1793, the Girondin, Jean Birotteau, cautioned the National Convention how ‘sous prétexte de protection à accorder au peuple anglais, il ne faut pas que le peuple anglais nous inonde d’espions’ cited in Sophie Wahnich, *L’impossible Citoyen*, *op.cit.*, p.111. Writing from London on 28 and 29 January 1793 to the *Ministre des Affaires Étrangères* in Paris, alerting it that English spies were passing through the straits. *Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères* (hereafter: MAE), *Correspondance anglaise*, 587, fols 104, 117.

<sup>295</sup> Rachel Rogers, ‘White’s Hotel: A Junction of British Radical Culture in Early 1790s Paris’, *Caliban*, 33 (2013), 153-172. J G Alger, ‘The British Colony in Paris, 1792-93.’ *The English Historical Review*, 13.52 (1898), pp. 672–694.

<sup>296</sup> Madgett sent the *Ministre des Affaires Étrangères* a list of twenty names for this committee which can be found in MAE, *Correspondance Politique: Angleterre*, 587, fol 28. The names included Sampson Perry, Joel Barlow, Robert Merry, Robert Smith and John Oswald. Sir Robert Smith’s prison file is found under AN F7/4775 doss 20-32 whilst AN F7/4774/69 and F7/4775/13 pertain to the arrest and subsequent release of Sampson Perry.

false brethren among them. Even before Madgett had suggested the formation of its own *comité*, the authorities were made aware of the existence of possible British spies thanks to the rumours that were circulating Paris' fashionable *sociétés* and cafés. In January of that year, for example, the famous Captain George Monro was forced to flee France after having been denounced by a certain publisher named Thomas. Thomas had recognized Monro by chance and began to talk publicly of him as a spy working in the service of William Pitt's cabinet. His name was thus added to a list of proscribed persons and placarded against the city walls, prompting his swift but safe departure.<sup>297</sup>

In any event, the 'mesures provisoires' which the constituent authorities at the Loiret pronounced expedient, seem to have conformed to a general pattern of police action. In co-ordinated sweeps, conducted by the *officiers municipaux, juges de paix* and supported by detachments of the *gardes nationales* and/or brigades of the *gendarmerie*, hundreds of 'suspects' were arrested following early morning raids and interrogated by the *comités de surveillance*. An inventory of the papers - discovered or seized- purportedly concerning *la sûreté générale* was also kept.<sup>298</sup> Often the members of the *comités* accompanied the municipal police during these *visites domiciliaires*. In Carcassonne, where the advancing Spanish army was sowing panic among the local populace, the *Conseil général du département de l'Aude* ordered the closure of the city gates on 29 April 1793 'pour aucun des citoyens présents ne pût sortir et aller prévenir les personnes suspectes.'<sup>299</sup> According to that study, of the seventy three individuals arrested in the first sweep, the motives of arrests

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<sup>297</sup> Hughes Marquis, 'Espionnage Britannique', *op. cit.*, p.266.

<sup>298</sup> Henri Calvet, 'Les rapports du comité de surveillance', *op. cit.*, 432-434. Similar examples of mass sweeps occurred in Paris during the riots that took place on 25 February 1792 with the *commissaires de police* arresting dozens of domestics accused of being in the pay of secret agents. As one report recorded, 'En face du Marché des Innocents, rue Saint-Denis, on en a saisi d'un seul coup de filet, quarante à cinquante; on a des preuves que plusieurs personnes qui excitaient au pillage et au meurtre étaient des déserteurs, des émigrés ou leurs agents...Parmi les femmes il y en avait qu'on peut soupçonner d'avoir été payées par quelques agents secrets de troubles et de confusion...' Georges Rude, 'Les Émeutes des 25, 26 Février 1793 à Paris: D'après Les Procès-Verbaux Des Commissaires de Police des Sections parisiennes.' *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 25.130, 1953, 33-57 (p.54), *Archives Prefecture de Police*, AA/148 fol 128 and AA/248 fol 71-73.

<sup>299</sup> Marcel Rufas, 'Le comité de surveillance et les suspects de Carcassonne (17 Avril 1793-21 Mars 1795).' *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 26.136 (1954), 232-253 (at p.237).

were vague at best - *attachement à l'ancien régime, aristocratie, propos inciviques*. Most significantly, given the ostensible mission of the *comités*, not a single person was arrested for specifically committing espionage related acts as a foreigner. Indeed, the study concludes that the cause of arrests were 'peu grave' and 'ne denotent pas l'existence d'un complot contre-révolutionnaire.'<sup>300</sup> Anyhow, in response to the exigency of the moment, they were questioned by the local *comité de surveillance* before their dossiers, which included the *procès-verbaux* and transcripts of the interrogations, were sent to the *administration du département* and thereon to the *Comité de sûreté générale de la Convention*.<sup>301</sup> Similarly, in Lyon, where the arrests of suspects were conceived as 'preventives', sentries were posted at the city gates to not let anyone pass after ten o'clock. Also, the rivers were monitored for crossings and, in assuring 'toute mesure extraordinaire de sûreté', as their domestic security role entailed, armed forces were stationed at the door steps of each residence to bar the entry and exit of individuals during the *visites domiciliaires*.<sup>302</sup> As the report of one such raid read:

Que la visite commencerait dans toute l'étendue de la cité à cinq heures du matin ; que les commissaires de section conduiraient à l'hôtel-commun les personnes suspectes; que les commissaires de police se rendraient dans leurs cantons respectifs, pour instruire, au besoin, le Conseil général; que le comité de police tiendrait ouvert son bureau pour recevoir les procès-verbaux des personnes suspectes

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<sup>300</sup> *ibid*, pp.238-239.

<sup>301</sup> *ibid*, p.238.

<sup>302</sup> As the *Conseil municipal* of Lyon ordered, 'la force armée serait requise et distribuée sagement; qu'elle se tiendrait au dehors des domiciles pour, au besoin, donner secours aux commissaires-visiteurs domiciliaires.' Anonymous, *Lyon en 1793. Procès-verbaux authentiques et inédits du Comité de surveillance de la section des droits de l'homme pendant le siège.... 1847* (Lyon: A Mothon), pp.7-8. 1222. For another example of how the army was employed in domestic raids against suspects see *Arrêté du Comité de sûreté générale, requérant le général Santerre, commandant provisoire de la garde nationale, maréchal des camps et armées de la République, employé dans la 17<sup>e</sup> division, d'envoyer de suite un détachement de la force armée à Arillers-Cotterels pour faire visite dans diverses maisons suspectes, notamment chez une femme, présumée émigrée, recélant l'exécrable assassin Paris, dont il a le signalement, avec autorisation donnée à l'officier, qui sera envoyé par le général Santerre, de requérir toutes les autorités civiles et la force armée. 29 janvier 1793*. Alexandre Tuetey, *Répertoire Général, op. cit.*, VIII, p.176. Otherwise, for an excellent study of the army's role in conducting security operations within the interior during the spring and summer of 1793, see Richard Cobb, *Les armées révolutionnaires: Instrument de la Terreur dans les départements. Avril 1793 – floréal an II*, 2 vols (Paris: Mouton, 1961-1963).

arrêtées....L'exécution de cet arrêté déjoua les complots des contre-révolutionnaires, et répandit l'alarme dans leurs rangs.<sup>303</sup>

The closure of city gates and surveillance patrols was standard security procedure to contain and ensnare suspect individuals and groups. Again in August 1793, following a petition from the *section du change* in Lyon, no boatman or individual was permitted to ford the Saône between six o'clock in the evening and seven o'clock in the morning under risk of being treated as a suspect. Equally, during the day, no one was authorised to stop near the arches of bridges. Sentinels were also to be posted on the quays and ports in order to 'surveiller les malveillants qui s'évertuent en malveillance'.<sup>304</sup> According to the *Comité particulier De Police, Surveillance et sûreté publique du Département de Rhone et Loire*, the enemies within had been planning to facilitate the entry of the allied forces, identifying the old stonebridge, *La Guillotière*, on the Rhône as a strategic target. Moreover, according to their assessment, counter-revolutionaries were employing all manner of ruses and subterfuge for these auxiliary operations, such as donning republican uniforms and forming false patrols, stashing munitions, staging assassinations of local officials.<sup>305</sup> Thus, to thwart these 'manœuvres perfides' the *comité* enjoined the divers clubs, municipalities, section committees to ramp up surveillance, raid all premises, arrest all suspects 'indistinctement' and body-check them especially in their shoes and other hidden areas since it was there where they would expect to discover clandestine correspondence.<sup>306</sup>

Of course, not all police operations were sweeping in nature. The *comités révolutionnaires* did also conduct focused investigations of suspected spies. The case of the Marquis du Roveray is one notable example.<sup>307</sup> At midnight, on 4 May 1793, the

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<sup>303</sup> *ibid*, p.8

<sup>304</sup> *ibid*, p.64.

<sup>305</sup> *ibid*, p.87.

<sup>306</sup> *ibid*, p.60.

<sup>307</sup> Another object of investigation that month was Christopher White, the proprietor of the famous hotel that bore his name. In May 1793, the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* ordered the *comité de surveillance du Section du Mail* to arrest, interrogate and seize his papers and belongings. AN F7/4775/52 folio 78. *Interrogatoire*

*commissaires de police* arrested the Swiss born lawyer at his residence in the *Faubourg Honoré*, Paris.<sup>308</sup> As the *procès-verbal d'arrestation* states, he had been denounced to the *Comité de Surveillance de la Section de la Halle au Blé* for supposedly possessing papers that indicated he was an ‘agent de l’Angleterre’.<sup>309</sup> In fact, a month before the storming of the Bastille, du Roveray was already the object of denunciation. On 12 June 1789, during the *séance* of the National Assembly, the deputy Noël-Joseph *Madier* de Montjau declared. ‘Je demande à la chambre qu'elle ordonne l'expulsion hors de son sein des individus non députés qui se trouvent assis parmi nous’. Alluding to du Roveray, he continued ‘j'en aperçois un, étranger, pensionnaire du roi d'Angleterre, que nous voyons depuis quelques jours, écrire et faire circuler des billets dans la salle’<sup>310</sup>. Du Roveray had been assigned to the French embassy in London by Brissot, despite the objections of the diplomat Guillaume de Bonne-Carrère who had ‘bonnes raisons’ to suspect that he was actually one of William Pitt’s spies.<sup>311</sup> During his preliminary interrogation, the investigators instructed du Roveray to provide them with his correspondence, confidential or otherwise, with ‘Angleterre’. Du Roveray accordingly complied with the request and presented them with several bundles which, he declared, contained the aforesaid correspondance ‘laquelle paraît être depuis l’année 1789 jusqu’à la présente.’<sup>312</sup> The pieces were transported in a box under lock and key and transported to the *Comité de Surveillance de la Section* for examination. At the same time, du Roveray was summoned to appear before its members that same morning to account for himself. In a striking example of their limited expertise in decryption or stenography, the *comité* forwarded the *pièces* to the *Comité de salut public* – after a two month delay no less – after having concluded that ‘dans lesdits papiers, il y en a de caractères sténographiques et

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*d'anglais Christopher White par le Comité de Sûreté Générale*. The file also contains the order of his arrest and *procès-verbaux*.

<sup>308</sup> Anonymous, *Mémoires et Documents publiés par la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève* (Genève: Alex, Julien Librairie, 1962), XLI, p.432.

<sup>309</sup> Hughes Marquis, ‘Des Suisses au service de l’Angleterre (1789-1794)’, *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 315.1 (1999), 183-187.

<sup>310</sup> Jean Louis Soulavie, *Mémoires du règne de Louis XVI* (Paris: chez Treuttner et Würtz, 1801), V, p.369.

<sup>311</sup> Olivier Blanc, *Les Espions de la Révolution et L'Empire*, *op. cit.*, p.36.

<sup>312</sup> Just what evidence they contained is unknown as unfortunately, these papers no longer survive.

d'anglais a-t-on dit) et que le Comité n'a aucune connaissance en ces sortes de caractères et langues.<sup>313</sup> Indeed, in a rare find, a pamphlet appeared in circulation that May instructing investigators and laymen on how to decrypt correspondence. Titled *Le contr'Espion ou les clés de toutes les correspondances secrètes*, and authored by an individual identified by the *Moniteur* as Dlandol, it represents the only printed publication of the period that not only provides lessons on decryption but employs the term 'contr'Espion'.<sup>314</sup> Recognising the important contribution that it represents, the *Gazette nationale* wrote the following editorial piece upon its appearance in circulation:

un des moyens les plus efficaces de déjouer les trames & les complots, c'est de connaître toutes les recettes (?) dont on peut le servir pour les correspondances secrètes. Après de longues & laborieuses recherches, M Dlandol est enfin parvenu à se mettre en état d'en offrir à ses concitoyens le recueil parfaitement complet & il ose dire que ce n'étoit pas un des moindres services à rendre à la patrie dans les circonstances actuelles, que d'anéantir ainsi, par la publicité, l'arme la plus dangereuse des ennemis secrets de la République.<sup>315</sup>

Notwithstanding this publication, the case-file of du Roveray reveals just how much importance the revolutionaries attached to written proof to substantiate their criminal case at this stage. As one historian rightly points out, documentary evidence was far more valuable than a potentially false witness.<sup>316</sup> Yet, conversely, the sole fact that an individual was the

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<sup>313</sup> *Mémoires et Documents, op. cit.*, XLI, p.432. Henri Pouget de Saint-André, *Les auteurs cachés de la Révolution française: d'après des documents inédits* (Paris: Impr. Monce et Cie, 1923), p.76.

<sup>314</sup> Dlandol, *Le contr'Espion ou les clés de toutes les correspondances secrètes* (Paris: chez la veuve Guillot, imprimeur – libraire, 1793). Given the rarity of this pamphlet, the title page image and tables have been reproduced in appendix I.

<sup>315</sup> *L'Esprit des Journaux, françois et étrangers par une Société des des Gens-de-Lettres* (Paris, 1793), V, p.413.

<sup>316</sup> Carla Hesse, 'La preuve par la lettre', *op. cit.*, p.636. Indeed, it was largely due to the discovery of the *Armoire de Fer* in the Tuileries, revealing the secret correspondance between the Austrians and the *émigré* Princes that the trial against Louis XVI became a serious possibility. Michael Walzer, *Régicide et Révolution le procès de Louis XVI Discours et controverses* (Paris: Payot, 1989) pp.56-57.

recipient of counter-revolutionary correspondance, despite the possibility of error, nevertheless constituted a crime. It was for this reason that, during her interrogation by the *Comité de sûreté générale* on 28 floréal an II a certain Madame Pichard, the wife of the former président of the *Parlement de Bordeaux* admitted to not signing her letters in order to not compromise herself or her correspondants.<sup>317</sup>

As these episodes nevertheless demonstrate, the formation of the *comités révolutionnaires* during the spring of 1793 thus marked a significant step in the securitization of the state. In the first place, as Jeanne Grall, a former curator at the municipal archives at Caen, explains in her article on the *Comité de sûreté générale du Calvados*, the *comités* played ‘un rôle eminent de liaison’ not just with the central organs constituting the revolutionary government but also with the divers *comités* in the different *départements* of France.<sup>318</sup> Not just on ground operations, but also on everything that transpired in their commune, they thus represented an essential source of information for the revolutionary authorities in Paris. To emphasize the importance of these inter-communications, and how they strengthened ties within the Republic, Grall cites one letter in which the *comité* members write:

Nous acceptons avec reconnaissance la correspondance que vous nous proposez; nous vous informerons des trames contre la sûreté générale qui nous seront dévoilées. Par cette correspondance les départements resserront les liens qui les rattachent la République.<sup>319</sup>

Second, the proliferation of these local surveillance structures throughout France generated an increase ‘sans précédent de la dénonciation’, a tool in the service of the revolutionary

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<sup>317</sup> AN W400, 2e partie doss 3 : *Interrogatoire de Mme Pichard*.

<sup>318</sup> Jeanne Grall, ‘Le Comité de Sûreté Générale du Calvados’, *Annales de Normandie*, 11.3 (1961), 197-208 (p.198)

<sup>319</sup> *ibid*, p.200.

government and, as the following chapter will demonstrate, one of the ‘rouages de la Terreur.’<sup>320</sup> Equally, the proliferation of denunciations during this period, many of which continued to be actuated by motives less than sincere, engendered the need to constitute organs specifically to receive them. As the Representatives to Mont Blanc informed the *Comité de salut public* on 27 April 1793, not only were many of these denunciation plain absurd but that they also supposedly played into the hands of the spies and counter-revolutionaries operating within the region, just how is not so clear:

De la méfiance sans fin, les dénonciations absurdes, les plus fausses et plus ridicules nouvelles, presque à chaque quart d’heure. Les prêtres, les ci-devant, les aristocrates, les espions suisses, piémontais, genevois etc profitent merveilleusement de cette disposition d’esprit. Chambéry est le foyer principe d’où circule, dans le département, cette contre-révolution en détail. Nous avons pris le parti de former un comité de surveillance générale que tient chez nous, et qui, pour plus de sûreté et d’activité, n’est composé que de trois personnes.<sup>321</sup>

Thirdly, the *comités de surveillance* were often the drivers of the securitization process. Whilst many did limit their activities to processing the *déclarations des étrangers*- according to their interpretation of the national decree - others dispensed their mission with far greater zeal.<sup>322</sup> In one striking example of local initiative, certain *comités révolutionnaires* demanded an extension of their powers by claiming the right to intercept and open all correspondance exchanged between the *émigrés* and their correspondants in France.<sup>323</sup> On

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<sup>320</sup> Virginie Martin, ‘La Révolution française ou « l’ère du soupçon ». Diplomatie et dénonciation’, *Hypothèses*, 12.1 (2009), 131-140, (p.134.)

<sup>321</sup> François Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, III, p.499.

<sup>322</sup> In a local debate surrounding their powers the *comité de Saint-Dié*, for example, argued that their remit was ‘uniquement destiné à recevoir les déclarations des étrangers’ whereas the overall surveillance of *ennemis intérieurs* ultimately fell under the legal jurisdiction of the municipal authorities. As they maintained, their ‘fonctions ne s’étendront pas plus loin, la surveillance des ennemis intérieurs relevant des municipalités’. Cited in Jean-Paul Rothiot, ‘Comités de surveillance et Terreur dans le département des Vosges de 1793 à l’an III’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 314 (1998), 621-668 (at pp.625-626).

<sup>323</sup> See ‘Renvoi au Comité central de surveillance d’un arrêté du Conseil général des Vosges tendant à intercepter la correspondance entre les émigrés et les ‘mauvais citoyens’ de l’intérieur du royaume’. *Séance du*



28 April 1793, to impose a measure of uniform control throughout the départements, the newly instituted *Comité de salut public* decreed that postal correspondence should be superintended in each commune by special commissions composed of *agents municipaux*. Specifically, any letter coming from abroad, or from persons inscribed on the list of *émigrés*, was to be examined before being forwarded, if necessary, to the *Comité de salut public*.<sup>324</sup> As the decree of 6 April 1793 permitted, the *comité* had the power to take ‘dans les circonstances urgentes les mesures de défense générale extérieure et intérieure.’<sup>325</sup> To justify this breach of privacy, it cited how:

le secret de la correspondance est un moyen funeste de perdre la patrie, le Salut public exige que l’on découvre cette source des maux de la France et qu’aucun citoyen, dans un danger aussi imminent, ne peut réclamer le secret de ses lettres et de sa correspondance, lorsque le Salut de la patrie en exige impérieusement l’ouverture et la communication. À arrêté que toutes les lettres venant de l’étranger seront ouvertes. Qu’il sera écrit à tous les corps administratifs, pour leur recommander de déléguer à des citoyens d’un civisme reconnu et bien épuré la fonction d’ouvrir les lettres venant

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31 août 1792, après-midi, Arch Dept 1L 492 (p.297) *Délibérations et arrêtés du Conseil général du Département du Bas-Rhin*. And letter to the *Conseil général des Vosges* relating to the illicit correspondence between the *émigrés* and ‘invitation au Comité de surveillance’ to examine the measures taken by the *municipalité de Strasbourg* to intercept the correspondence sent between the two banks of the Rhine by another ‘voie’ than by post. – 1L 492, *Séance du 31 août, après-midi 1792* (p. 313).

<sup>324</sup> *Décret relatif aux lettres chargées ou non chargées dans les bureaux de poste, à l’adresse des personnes portées dans la liste des émigrés. Les 9 = 11 mai 1793*, Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection complète des lois, op. cit.*, V, p.278.

<sup>325</sup> Bertrand Warufsel, ‘Les notions de défense et de sécurité en droit français’, *La Revue Droit & Défense*, 94/4(1994), 11-20.

de l'étranger dans les divers bureaux de la république, et de rendre compte au Comité de Salut public de toutes les lettres et correspondances suspectes<sup>326</sup> [...]

For the *Comité de sûreté générale de Calvados*, however, the proposed measure did not go far enough. Arrogating extra powers to itself, it reserved the right to intercept not only letters coming from abroad but all suspect correspondence belonging to the *émigrés*, refractory priests and 'ennemis de la République'.<sup>327</sup> On 27 May 1793, upon its own volition, the *comité* decreed that all letters sent to *l'étranger* and to the rebellious departments under arms, will be opened and examined by it without fail. Similar rights to intercept suspect correspondence were claimed by several other *comités de surveillance*. In Nancy, the local *comité* stipulated that such intrusive powers were defined by decree issued by a *commissaire* of the National Convention. As they argued, the prime methods of surveillance had to include the examination of *all* correspondence that is sent by post and messengers as well as receive denunciations from 'bons citoyens' on the *incivisme* of suspect individuals. In other words, to gather all the 'renseignements propres' that permit the discovery of the 'ennemis plus ou moins dangereux de la chose publique'.<sup>328</sup> At the same time, the *comité* claimed that the powers conferred to them included issuing arrest warrants against suspect persons and placing under the surveillance of the *corps administratifs* and 'bons citoyens', all individuals who 'sans mériter d'être mis en état d'arrestation' but should be surveilled immediately anyway.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> Auguste Théodore baron de Girardot, *Des administrations départementales électives et collectives, 1790-an VIII* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1857), p.172. This copy of the letter written by the *ministre de l'Intérieur* to the *Administrateurs du Département de la Marne* on 28 Avril 1793 is stored in the *Archives municipales d'Épernay*, under 1B1 and conveniently reproduced online.

[http://www.cndp.fr/crdp-reims/fileadmin/documents/preac/patrimoine\\_archives\\_epernay/Dossier\\_2009-2010.pdf](http://www.cndp.fr/crdp-reims/fileadmin/documents/preac/patrimoine_archives_epernay/Dossier_2009-2010.pdf);

Le comité, recalling the similar argument made by Muguet de Nanthou before the National Assembly in September 1791, declared '...Aucun citoyen dans un danger aussi imminent ne peut réclamer le secret de ses lettres et de sa correspondance, lorsque le salut de sa patrie en exige impérieusement l'ouverture et la communication.' Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, III, p.506.

<sup>327</sup> Jeanne Grall, 'Le Comité de Sûreté Générale du Calvados', *op. cit.*, p.199.

<sup>328</sup> Jean-Paul Rotheriot, 'Comités de surveillance et Terreur', *op. cit.*, p.626.

<sup>329</sup> *ibid*, p.626.

Indeed, the enthusiasm with which certain *comités* embraced their mission is exuded in a letter from the *comité de surveillance* for the *Section de la Cité*, demanding the re-arrest of a suspect who had been released without charge following interrogation by the *commissaires de police*. In it, the *comité* denounced the *administration de police* themselves for not detaining the suspect, in accordance with the containment strategy, whilst simultaneously underlying the importance of continued surveillance:

Nous dénonçons l'administration de police pour avoir mis en liberté le citoyen Maillard....Citoyens, que deviendra la liberté, que deviendra la révolution, si de pareil les infractions sont commises par les autorités....A quoi sert la surveillance exercée envers les gens suspects par les comités révolutionnaires, si les mesures qu'ils prennent en conséquence sont ainsi paralysées par ceux mêmes qui doivent non seulement les soutenir, mais même les stimuler en cas de besoin?<sup>330</sup>

### III

At the same time that thousands of these *comités révolutionnaires* were spontaneously forming throughout France, the central authorities in Paris took fresh steps to compartmentalise responsibilities in their quest for securitization. On 23 April 1793, five days before the *Comité de Salut Public* issued its decree on the violability of correspondence emanating from abroad, the National Convention authorized the creation of a special bureau dedicated to tracking the manufacture of fabricated *assignats* both within France or abroad with, as their agents detected, Zaehringen in Switzerland being the centre of distribution.<sup>331</sup>

In clause VI, it prescribed how:

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<sup>330</sup> *Archives Prefecture de Police, Section Divers Section de la Cité, 29 août 1793*. The subject of this complaint should not be confused with Stanislas Maillard, the *agent provocateur* and one of the principle subjects of the work by Ernest d'Hauterive, *Mouchards et Policiers* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1936).

<sup>331</sup> *Décret relatif à la découverte et à la poursuite des fabricateurs et distributeurs de faux assignats, soit dans l'intérieur de la France, soit à l'étranger*. Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection complète des lois, op. cit.*, V, p.254.

Les agens du bureau de vérification, porteurs des ordres nécessaires, sont autorisés à se faire assister, sur leurs réquisitions, par tous officiers de police, juges de paix et autres dépositaires de l'autorité, et par la force publique, pour faire les recherches et perquisitions nécessaires, et pour obtenir et mettre à exécution tout mandat d'amener ou d'arrêt.<sup>332</sup>

With reason, the revolutionaries saw the trafficking of *assignats* as an espionage-related crime employed by the counter-revolutionaries to wreck economic disruption on the country.<sup>333</sup> Furthermore, the massive scale in which *assignats* were fabricated abroad, required the response to be both transnational and decisive with agents on the ground vested with the authority to surveil, arrest and repatriate to France the culprits for trial and judgement:

Le tort incalculable qui résulte pour la patrie de la fabrication de faux assignats, ou de fausse monnaie, doit exciter particulièrement la surveillance des agents de la République en pays étranger. Ils feront en conséquence tout ce qui dépendra d'eux pour découvrir les coupables, les faire arrêter et livrer aux tribunaux de leur nation.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> *ibid*, p.317. Significantly, clause 11 set out the standard procedure of separating indicted criminals in order to avoid collusion. As it read: les prévenus ou accusés du crime de distribution ou fabrication de faux assignats, seront détenus séparément les uns des l'autres, sans pouvoir communiquer entre eux pendant l'instruction de leur procès, soit qu'ils soient complices ou non, et ils ne pourront communiquer avec personne de dehors de la prison, sans l'autorisation du directeur du jury.' The *bureau de vérification* of Paris was subsequently dismantled on the 3 *nivôse an VI* with responsibility for its operations transferred to the *commissaires de la Trésorerie nationale*. Georges Depeyrot, *Monnaie et papier-monnaie pendant la Revolution, 1789-1803* (Paris: Maison Florange, 1996)

<sup>333</sup> Whilst the extent of the economic damage caused by the fabrication of the *faux assignats* remains open to historical debate, it is hard to credit seriously some of the claims made by the revolutionaries. On 13 July 1793, in a report that he presented in the name of the *Comité de Salut public*, Pierre Joseph Cambon made the following wild allegation. 'Certains administrateurs de département le secondent. Comment détruire la République, ont-ils dit ? « Depuis que Je vois Pitt, dit-il, toucher 5 millions sterling pour dépenses secrètes, je m'étonne plus qu'on sème avec cet argent des troubles dans toute l'étendue de la République. On est parvenu avec un fonds de 120 millions en assignats à faire baisser nos changes. Et Pitt avec 5 millions sterling s'est procuré 500 millions en assignats avec lesquels il nous fait une guerre terrible.' A Ray, *Réimpression de l'ancien Moniteur, op. cit.*, XVII, p.101.

<sup>334</sup> Barthélemy wrote how 'toute la ressource de cette horde scélérate d'émigrés consiste actuellement dans la commerce de faux assignats'. Jean Baptise Kaulek (ed.), *Barthélemy*, III, p.292.

It would appear that the revolutionaries felt compelled to violate Swiss territory and extract the manufacturers of the *assignats* themselves as, during the deliberations of the *Conseil general du department du Doubs*, it was revealed that the Fribourg senate had refused to comply with what can only be described as an ‘extradition’ request.<sup>335</sup> Local agents thus had a dual role. They were not only charged with verifying whether *assignats* were fabricated or not- the discovery of which was often prompted by denunciations- but they also possessed powers of enforcement.<sup>336</sup> In other words, whilst the revolutionaries had attempted to impose a measure of centralised control, principally with the formation of a head bureau in Paris, it nevertheless recognised that, due to tempo-spatial constraints- operations had to be coordinated on a local level. Indeed, as Georges Hubrecht has revealed, it was ultimately the French soldiers in the occupied territories who were deployed in search of clandestine printing shops.<sup>337</sup>

Simultaneously, but on a far larger scale, the revolutionaries set about expanding the ‘system’ of mass surveillance within France. This *service de renseignement* was not, however, organized from one single epicenter but consisted of parallel operations, of varying extensiveness, attached to the ministries composed of the *Conseil Exécutif*.<sup>338</sup> Foremost among these services was the one instituted by the *Ministre des Affaires étrangères*, Pierre-

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<sup>335</sup> During the *séance* of Sunday 3 February 1793 the *Conseil général du département du Doubs* denounced ‘une fabrication de faux assignats qui se fait en Suisse, canton de fribourg. Il y a envoyé un commissaire pour rechercher les contrefacteurs mais le senat, violant le droit des gens, a refusé de lui livrer les coupables.’ *Journal des Débats et des Décrets*, *op. cit.*, XLII, p.33. Although a subject of undoubted interest, the interrelation between diplomacy (or most specifically ‘non-diplomatic interference’) extradition and cross border security operations is far too complex and important to be seriously tackled within the limits of this discussion. For further reading on the relations between Fribourg and France see Alain-Jacques Czouz-Tornare ‘Les relations entre la France et le canton de Fribourg en Suisse, de 1789 à 1814 (Lille III, 1982) ; Marius Michaud, *La contre-révolution dans le Canton de Fribourg en Suisse, 1789-1815* (Fribourg, 1978). Otherwise, for an academic study on the evolution of extradition law, see Ivan Anthony Shearer, *Extradition in International Law* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971).

<sup>336</sup> One indication that the *assignats* were fabricated was a secret mark inscribed by the royalists. For further on the efforts to disrupt the manufacture of fake *assignats* see George Hubrecht, ‘Faux Assignats dans le Bas-Rhin’, *Revue d’Alsace*, 510 (1931), 58-78 and Jean Bouchary, *Les Faux-Monnayeurs sous la Révolution française* (Paris: M. Riviere, 1946).

<sup>337</sup> George Hubrecht, *Faux Assignats*, *op. cit.*, p.68.

<sup>338</sup> Alphonse Aulard, ‘Les Commissaires du Conseil Executif provisoire’, *La Revolution Francaise*, XXXVI, 406-410.

Henri-Hélène-Marie Tondu, otherwise known as Lebrun. That spring, having purged the ministry of Dumouriez's appointees, he began to reorganize the secret service of the interior, drawing on the pecuniary and manpower resources disposed to him. For his surveillance activities, he formed the *Central Bureau*, a kind of special branch that controlled a domestic spy network of approximately one hundred and eighty agents dispersed throughout France including the counter-revolutionary hotspots, La Vendée, Brittany, Lyon and Toulon. According to their broad remit, they were charged with keeping the *Central Bureau* informed every day 'de tout ce qui se passe dans la capitale et dans les départements'.<sup>339</sup> Significantly for this discussion, the system that Lebrun put in place was also conceived to neutralize enemy spies, another example of how the lines between *surveillance en masse* and counter-espionage operations were often blurred. The blue-print for this system are detailed in three anonymous documents that Alphonse Aulard claimed to have discovered and which fortunately survive today.<sup>340</sup> Given the pertinence to the discussion, the most relevant instructions, contained in three subsections, have been transcribed below.

As the instructions plainly state, the purpose of Lebrun's surveillance system was ultimately to 'prévenir les crimes pour n'avoir point à les punir.'<sup>341</sup> For it, the author of the document identifies three groups deemed to be the key perpetrators of espionage- or at least the three groups which fall under the *Central Bureau's* jurisdiction- diplomatic agents, false patriots and émigrés. As the instructions read:

Le peu d'agents diplomatique restes en espionnage; Notamment Gouverneur Morris, des États-Unis. Le plus grand ennemi de la liberté. Il a été manqué dans les visites domiciliaires, mais il faut absolument connaitre ses allures;

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<sup>339</sup> Patricia Chastain Howe, *Foreign Policy and the French Revolution: Charles-François Dumouriez* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), p.94.

<sup>340</sup> Alphonse Aulard, 'Organisation du Services des Agents Secrets dans la Première République', *La Révolution Française: revue d'histoire modern et contemporaine*, XII (1887), 1117-1128.

<sup>341</sup> *ibid*, p.1117.

Les hommes qui circulent dans nos saintes sociétés patriotiques avec un excès peu naturel et très suspect. Il faut savoir s'ils n'ont pas des coteries ou s'ils se de dommagent de leur hypocrisie civique.

....Je n'ai pas besoin de dire qu'ils tacheront de dépister les projets des émigrés qui résideront dans les pays où ils se trouveront, et qu'ils feront ce qu'ils pourront pour avoir à tout prix leur correspondance avec la France, car, à coup sûr. Ils en ont une.<sup>342</sup>

The instructions also set out on how the *agents extérieurs*, who were charged with the surveillance of the frontiers, should discharge their functions. Essentially, the author of the document states that the activities of these agents would be 'médiocrement utile si elle ne pouvait se communiquer de proche en proche et d'agent à agent.' As he explains:

En effet, je suppose qu'un agent à Dunkerque ait connaissance d'un projet qui concerne la sûreté de Lille, et que ce projet doive avoir son exécution sous peu de jours; il en instruira le ministre: mais le retard que la bureaucratie fait éprouver aux réponses, quelque activité que le ministre ait personnellement, rendra inutile cette communication, et le projet aura lieu. Si, au contraire, il écrit de suite à l'agent à Lille, celui-ci s'occupera, sans perdre de temps, de déjouer le projet.

Thus, in order to eliminate the loss of time expended in notifying the Minister ie Lebrun of a purported plot, the agents were first to coordinate a response directly with one another. In other words, whilst the *Bureau Central* existed to provide central oversight, the conduct of local operations was not to be impeded by bureaucratic intervention. The agents were, of course, required to maintain a daily correspondence but that priority was always to be

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<sup>342</sup> *ibid*, p.1123.

accorded to operations on the ground. Also, for reasons of expediency and security, these agents were not to rely on the usual postal routes to transmit their confidential communications but were to entrust their despatches to a genuine patriot:

Comme il est des circonstances où la voie des postes est encore trop lente et souvent peu sûre, chacun des agents est autorisé à s'attacher un vrai sans-culotte, courageux, qui aura pour principal objet de porter, lorsque le cas l'exigera, des communications importantes, soit à l'agent, soit au général, soit enfin au représentant le plus proche de l'agent principal.

At the same time that Lebrun was developing the procedures around his surveillance system Dominique-Joseph Garat was also laying down his own 'véritable service d'information'.<sup>343</sup> As *Ministre de l'Intérieur* from 14 March 1793 to 15 August 1793, he had attempted to install an 'État général d'observation et de correspondance pour tous les départements de la République' through the deployment of eighty commissaires.<sup>344</sup> The role of *commissaires*, especially those of the Convention, is of importance for furthering our understanding of security for this period, not least as their activities, from October 1792, demonstrate that the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* did not possess overall responsibility for counter-espionage as formerly argued. As the deputy Charles-Nicolas Osselin made plain during the *séance* of 5 May 1793, the overcrowding in the prisons could just as equally be attributed to the orders issued by the *Commissaires* of the National Convention as those by the *Comité de sûreté générale*, of which he himself was a member:

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<sup>343</sup> As he was told, 'J'estimais qu'un véritable service d'information était la contrepartie essentielle des responsabilités du pouvoir. Oui, je pense que vous avez été le premier homme d'État à organiser un service complet de renseignements.' Cited in Michel Duhart, *Dominique-Joseph Garat: 1749-1833* (Atlantica: 2009), p.139.

<sup>344</sup> Antoine Boulant, 'Guerre et renseignement', op. cit., p.83.



Les prisons, dit-il, sont en ce moment engorgées par un nombre prodigieux de détenus, arrêtés tant à Paris que dans les départements, les uns en vertu de mandats d'arrêt du Comité de sûreté générale, les autres en vertu des ordres des commissaires de la Convention nationale dans les départements. Votre comité vous propose de l'autoriser à examiner les causes pour lesquelles ces citoyens sont détenus, renvoyer les uns devant les tribunaux pour être jugés sur les faits articulés contre eux, et mettre en liberté ceux qui ont été arrêtés sans preuve de crimes.<sup>345</sup>

These powers to arrest, as they pertained to counter-espionage, were vaguely defined by the decree of 26 January 1793 which credited the *commissaires de la Convention* (not to be confused with those appointed by the *Conseil Exécutif*) with the mission to preserve state security.<sup>346</sup>

La Convention nationale autorise tous ses commissaires à prendre toutes les mesures, même celles de sûreté générale, que les circonstances rendront nécessaires. Elle décrète que leurs arrêtés ou délibérations, pris ou à prendre, seront exécutés provisoirement, à la charge par lesdits commissaires d'envoyer, dans les vingt-quatre heures, copie des arrêtés ou délibérations, pour être infirmés ou confirmés par la Convention.<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> Cited in Henri Alexandre Wallon, *Le Tribunal Révolutionnaire* (Paris: E Plon, Nourrit et cie, 1899), I, p.37.

<sup>346</sup> During the months of March and April 1793, the functions of the *commissaires* were formalised with the change of their title to the now famous *représentants en mission*. As per the terms of article IX of the decree of 4 April 1793: 'Les commissaires porteront désormais le nom de représentants de la nation, députés par la Convention nationale à ...' Anonymous, *Débats de la Convention nationale: ou analyse complète des séances* (Paris: Baudouin Frères, 1828), III, p.446.

<sup>347</sup> Anonymous, *Collection générale des Lois, Proclamations, Instructions et autres Actes du Pouvoir exécutif* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale du Louvre, 1793), XIII, p.163. In his discourse on the dangers facing the *patrie*, which he delivered 9 July 1792, Brissot emphasised the necessity of despatching commissaires into the heart of every government and military institution. 'Messieurs; vous complétez le système de recherches contre les conspirateurs. Commissaires aux armées; Commissaires aux municipalités; Commissaires dans le sein de l'Assemblée nationale; activité dans la cour d'Orléans. C'est en combinant toutes ces mesures sous les auspices de notre réunion, que nous écarterons tous les dangers.' *Discours de M. Brissot sur les causes de danger de la patrie, et sur les mesures à prendre, etc (Séance du 9 juillet 1792, an 4 de la liberté)*, Guillaume N Lallement (ed.), *Choix de Rapports, op. cit.*, IX, p.222. A year before, on 22 June 1791, at the moment of Louis XVI's flight to Varennes, the Constituent Assembly had sent *commissaires* to liaise with local civil and military

Indeed, the counter-espionage role that the *commissaires de la Convention* played is well demonstrated in the case of the royalist suspect, Geneviève de Vielfort.<sup>348</sup> In a letter to the National Convention dated 5 October 1792, the *commissaires* attached to *l'armée du Nord*, the *Pas de Calais* and adjacent zones reported how:

Le Pas de Calais est, comme le nord, farci d'aristocrates de toutes les espèces, dont les intelligences avec les Autrichiens sont aussi dangereuses pour la partie que préjudiciables au maintien de l'ordre. Les espions et les agitateurs sont dans ce moment les hommes les plus nuisibles. Leur ôter les moyens de nuire, c'est servir essentiellement la République.<sup>349</sup>

Whilst possibly overestimating the dangers posed by such spies and agitators- at least compared to the destructive impact of regular army formations- the *commissaires* clearly recognised the imperative need to neutralise acts of espionage. Then, having established the contribution that this would render to security of the state, the *commissaires* proceeded to inform the Convention of the circumstances surrounding the arrest of Vielfort:

et c'est dans cet esprit que nous nous sommes conduits en faisant arreter l'aristocratie Geneviève Vielfort, dont ci-devant château nous a été dénoncé comme un asile de conspirateurs et un rendez-vous d'espions. Il a resté à la force armée, et s'est donné le temps, par cette résistance, de brûler les preuves de ses intelligences avec nos ennemis du dehors et du dedans. On vient de le ramener ici. On l'a sauvé de

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authorities and concert '... les mesures qu'ils croiront propres au maintien de l'ordre public et à la sûreté de l'État.' Michel Biard, 'Les pouvoirs des représentants en mission sous la Convention', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 311 (1998), 3-24 (at p.4).

<sup>348</sup> Henri Libermann, *Les commissaires de l'Assemblée législative et de la Convention, depuis la révolution du 10 août 1792 jusqu'en avril 1793* (Paris: Jouve, 1926).

<sup>349</sup> Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes, op. cit.*, I, p.99. Henri Libermann, *Les commissaires de l'Assemblée législative et de la Convention, depuis la révolution du 10 août 1792 jusqu'en avril 1793* (Paris: Jouve, 1926).

la fureur des citoyens qui voulaient immoler à leur vengeance, et nous le ferons partir pour Douai, sous un escorte.<sup>350</sup>

Just with the case of the Marquis de la Rouërie, the activities taking place at Vielfort's château had attracted unwanted attention. With his person in custody, the *accusateur public* d'Arras ordered the authorities of the district de Béthune to question the aristocrat's wife and servants. According to the transcripts of the interrogation, they were each asked the following pedestrian questions. 'Avez vous connaissance...

1. que de Vielfort ait eu aucune correspondance avec les émigrés?
2. qu'il ait recruté ou conspiré à aucun recrutement pour les ennemis?
3. d'aucun complot de contre-révolution dans lequel leditde Vielfort aurait bu n'aurait pas trempé?
4. quelles étaient les personnes qu'il voyait le plus fréquemment?
5. quelles étaient les matières ordinaires de leur conversation?'<sup>351</sup>

At this juncture, the *commissaires de la Convention*, Duquesnoy, d'Aoust and Doulcet charged the *juge de paix* d'Houdain, Charles François Puchois with assessing the casefile. On 22 December 1792, the magistrate cleared the Marquis de Vielfort of the crime imputed to him, arguing that, in resisting the individuals who were sent to arrest him, he was only defending himself against an armed attack. Moreover, Puchois concluded that no treasonous correspondence existed between Vielfort and the enemies of the state. The protection accorded to Vielfort was, however, shortlived. On 12 March 1793, the mayor of Arras, Joseph Le Bon, instigated new proceedings against him. Moreover, just one week later, on

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<sup>350</sup> *ibid*, p.100.

<sup>351</sup> A J Paris, *La Terreur dans le Pas-de-Calais et dans le Nord: Histoire de Joseph le Bon et des Tribunaux révolutionnaires d'Arras et Cambrai*, 2 ed. (Arras: Chez Rousseau-Leroy, 1864), II. p.29.

29 March, in yet another example how the investigators themselves became the target of investigation, the *juge de paix* Puchois and his purported accomplices, notably Philippe-Martin Lagache, Vielfort's postmaster, were seized along with their suspect papers and epistolary correspondence. They were subsequently conveyed to the Prison de Baudets under armed escort where, on 2 *floréal* (21 April 1793), the two defendants were accused by members of the Jacobin club d'Arras of high crimes against the state and subsequently condemned to death.<sup>352</sup>

#### IV

The extensive powers that the *commissaires* possessed, at least in relation to pursuing spies and traitors, is also evidenced in the case of General Dumouriez and his purported 'plan de contre-révolution'.<sup>353</sup> By virtue of the decree of 30 March 'rélatif à l'état actuel de l'armée de la Belgique', they were awarded powers to arrest Dumouriez, who was suspected of high treason, as well as his General staff. As article 3 of the text read, they were accorded the:

pouvoir de suspendre et faire arrêter tous généraux, officiers militaires, quels qu'ils soient, fonctionnaires publics et autres citoyens, qui leur paraîtront suspects de les faire traduire à la barre et d'apposer les scelles sur les papiers[...]<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> *ibid.*, p.354. According to the *acte d'accusation*, the two men were 'des traîtres à leur patrie, des ennemis résistant au gouvernement républicain, d'avoir pris une part très-active dans toutes les conspiration sourdies et continuées depuis la Révolution contre le peuple français et sa liberté: de Vielfort, en n'ayant cessé d'entretenir les correspondances les plus criminelles tant avec les ennemis intérieurs qu'avec ceux de l'extérieur, comme aussi en conservant des papiers qui ne tendaient qu'à exciter la guerre civile, en armant les citoyens les uns contre les autres et à ébranler leur fidélité envers la Nation française, ainsi qu'il l'a déjà manifesté hautement lors du désarmement qu'on a été obligé de faire chez lui, et étant, en outre, le protecteur des aristocrates et des prêtres insermentés; — Lagache, en n'ayant cessé de correspondre avec ledit Gennevièrès de Vielfort, de la manière la plus aristocratique et la plus royaliste, ainsi qu'il conste des lettres annexées au présent acte.'

<sup>353</sup> AN AF/IV/1470, doc 80, 16 avril 1793, 'On dit partout qu'il n'est pas possible que Dumouriez ait formé son plan de contre-révolution sans qu'une partie de la Convention Nationale en ait été instruite.'

<sup>354</sup> Anonymous, *Débats de la Convention nationale*, *op. cit.*, III, p.396.; Despite augmenting their powers, the Convention still desired to control the commissaires with article IV of the decree specifying that they '... ne pourront agir qu'autant qu'ils seront réunis au nombre de quatre'.

Although the article did not identify Dumouriez and his General Staff directly, they were clearly the intended target. Originally, the *commissaires* were only authorised to suspend suspects of their functions but as the military situation deteriorated, and ever more numbers of the officer corps deserted their posts, the National Convention resorted to extraordinary measures.<sup>355</sup> As the *Comité de sûreté générale Calvados* communicated to the districts in the *département*, never, in the face of ‘de plus grands dangers’ were they ‘environnés d’un plus grand nombre de traîtres’.<sup>356</sup> Indeed, the reaction to Dumouriez having crossed enemy lines was swift and robust. At Douai, the *directoire du département* reinforced measures to control all persons arriving at the gates and other points of entry. Anyone who could not present valid papers- whether in the form of a passport or *certificat de civisme*, was arrested and interrogated. Among them included the Brigadier General, Philippe Evrard Longeville, who was provisionally detained on 3 April 1793, the same day that Dumouriez was declared an outlaw, on the grounds that he possessed a ‘faute de certificat de civisme.’<sup>357</sup> Perhaps with reason, the authorities were suspicious of the streams of refugees, vagabonds and soldiers straggling from the shifting frontlines. In the first place, there did stand the possibility that the civilians who had found themselves under Austrian occupation were *contaminé* by foreign influence. After all, not all the refugees who originated from occupied territories were supporters of the Revolution. Some, rather, were staunch partisans of the old

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<sup>355</sup> Just how many French officers either deserted or crossed enemy lines is difficult to determine with any exactitude. What is known is that the French army lost the bulk of its officer corps between 1791-1793 not in a single bout but over an extended period. This desertion was not limited to the officer corps but also to recalcitrant peasants and the Flemish contingents recruited in the French army, many of whom crossed enemy lines.

<sup>356</sup> Jeanne Grall, ‘Le Comité de Sûreté Générale du Calvados’, *op. cit.*, p.199. Similarly, in August 1793, the *Ministre de la guerre*, Jean-Baptiste Bouchotte appointed several agents to monitor and assess the fealty of the army’s officer corps. As the instructions read, ‘Une des choses les plus importantes de la mission des agents de Conseil de prendre des renseignements, et surtout près des soldats, sur les officiers qui ne méritent pas la confiance publique et sur ceux qui ont du patriotisme et de la capacité, Ils doivent faire mention de leur âge, s’ils sont français ou étrangers et de leur ancienneté de leurs services.’ Auguste Philippe Herlaut, *Le Colonel Bouchotte: Ministre de la guerre en l’an II* (C Poisson, 1946), p.293. Herlaut dedicates a chapter on these ‘agents d’information’. These agents (or *commissaires du Conseil*), which are not to be mistaken for the *représentants en mission*, were chosen by the *Secrétaire général du ministère de la guerre*, and drawn from the most zealous citizens of Paris sections, many of whom belonged to the *Club des Jacobins* and *Cordeliers*. Auguste Philippe Herlaut, ‘La Républicanisation Des États-Majors Et Des Cadres De L’armée Pendant La Révolution (Suite),’ *Annales Historiques De La Révolution Française*, 14.84 (1937), 537–551 (p.543).

<sup>357</sup> Monique Mestayer, ‘Suspects et Espions’, *op. cit.*, p.888. Mestayer cites A.M. Douai, H4 4, *Arrestation provisoire de Philippe Evrard Longeville, maréchal de camp* (3 avril 1793).

order who had made common cause with the Austrians. Interestingly, in her examination of the interrogations from April to September 1793, mostly drawn from the H4 series of the municipal archives at Douai, Monique Mestayer has identified certain individuals who even confessed to have acted as spies, albeit for accentuating circumstances. Following a denunciation made by a notable from Auchy, a commune in the Pas-de-Calais, the municipal authorities at Douai arrested at *le Pont de Râches* a servant, Pierre- Joseph Madoux for acting as a guide and intelligence provider for the Austrians. During his interrogation Madoux explained that he had never ‘espionné’ *per se* but nevertheless confessed to having been forced by the Austrians to comply supposedly ‘sous la menace de voir le village pillé et incendié’.<sup>358</sup> Indeed, as Mestayer demonstrates, many of the arrests and interrogations were prompted by all manner of denunciations which had been sent to the *tribunal de police*. Whilst some individuals were the subject of prolonged detention, others were promptly released after the enquiries revealed that they had either been spuriously accused or were the victim of mistaken identity or simple human error. In one example, a *conducteur d'artillerie*, who had been issued an order to go to Cateau in the north Pas de Calais, was arrested for having asked the local peasants the route, an act that automatically rendered him suspect. With the signature missing from his authority pass, he was assumed to be a spy and it was only after a letter from his commanding officer validating his identity that he was released.<sup>359</sup>

At the same time that these arrests were made, the revolutionary authorities were identifying which of the returning soldiers were attempting to desert, a punishable ‘crime’ that was now being associated with espionage. As the *Commissaire pour le recrutement dans les départements des Ardennes et de l’Aisne* claimed in his report on 30 April 1793, ‘L’opinion publique soutient que tous les déserteurs sont des espions. J’ai autorisé les administrateurs à les arrêter.’<sup>360</sup> To judge and punish them, the revolutionaries created a

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<sup>358</sup> *ibid*, p.892. A.M. Douai, H 4, *Interrogatoire de Pierre Joseph Madoux* (15 juin 1793).

<sup>359</sup> *ibid*, p.893. A.M. Douai, H4 4, *Interrogatoire de Jean-Philippe Lefebvre* (17 juillet 1793).

<sup>360</sup> Bonnal De Ganges, *Les représentants en mission près les armées (1791-1797)*, 4 vols (Paris: A. Savaete, 1891-1899), II, p.201.

special penal code to be applicable during the war.<sup>361</sup> Whilst there were no specific provisions for the high crime of espionage, section I of the *Code Pénal militaire* of 12 May 1793 contained articles that characterized desertion and sedition as a crime of conspiracy punishable by death. As the following articles of Title 1 of Section 1 on Desertion states:

Art. I. Tout militaire, c'est-à-dire, depuis le général d'armée jusqu'au soldat ou volontaire inclusivement, ou tout autre employé, soit dans les armées, soit à leur suite, qui passera à l'ennemi ou chez les rebelles, sans y être autorisé par ses chefs, sera puni de mort.

Art. VIII. Tout chef de complot de désertion à l'ennemi, ou chez les rebelles, quand même le complot ne serait pas exécuté, sera puni de mort; et si c'est à l'intérieur, de quinze ans de fers.

Art. XI. Tout embaucheur pour l'étranger ou pour les rebelles sera puni de mort

Whilst the new code's treatment of desertion and treason was, according to Georges Michon, 'particulièrement rigoureux', certain sections of the military remained dissatisfied.<sup>362</sup> In a letter to the National Convention, the artillery captain and *commissaire* to *l'armée du Midi*, Thomas Auguste de Gasparin, complained that no actual law existed to satisfactorily punish espionage as it relates to the protection of military secrets.

Tous vos généraux réclament une loi sévère et un jugement prompt contre les espions. Un des grands obstacles au succès est le défaut du secret de nos opérations.

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<sup>361</sup> *Contenant le Code pénal militaire pour toutes les Troupes de la République, en temps de guerre. Du 12 Mai 1793.* M Lepec (ed.), *Bulletin annoté des lois, décrets et ordonnances, Depuis le Mois de Juin 1789 jusqu'au Mois d'août 1830* (Paris, chez Paul Dupont, 1839), IV, pp.203-4

<sup>362</sup> Georges Michon, *La Justice Militaire, op. cit.*, p.38.

À peine un general a conçu un projet que l'ennemi est en instruit et prend les mesures pour le déjouer, tandis que leur sévérité contre nos moyens de connaître leurs marches nous laisse toujours dans l'incertitude. *Nos soldats s'indignent de voir échapper tous ceux qui sont arrêtés . . .*<sup>363</sup>

Indeed, the contents of Gasparin's letter reflect just how nebulous the revolutionaries' conception and treatment of espionage had hitherto been. Whilst no single, centralized *registre* exists documenting each individual case, it is reasonable to argue that the punishment of military 'spies' recalled the arbitrary practices of the *ancien régime*, with some of the accused summarily executed whereas others languished in prison.<sup>364</sup> On 3 May 1793, for example, more than a week before the *code militaire* was instituted, the *représentants en mission* assigned to the *côtes de la méditerranée*, informed the *Comité du Salut Public* how a 'porteur de lettres du camp espagnol', otherwise designated a spy, 'a été condamné à mort par le tribunal.'<sup>365</sup> Moreover, in their bulletin, the *représentant* expressed the hope how this 'puisse cet exemple salulaire en imposer aux malveillants et aux traîtres dont nous sommes entourés!'<sup>366</sup> Just what the content of these letters were is unknown but the general practice, if they were found concealed, and generally pertained to the dispositions of the armies etc, was sufficient ground for arrest.<sup>367</sup> Similarly, months earlier, the *Moniteur* reported how at

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<sup>363</sup> Rose Barral-Mazoyer (ed.), *Thomas Augustin de Gasparin, officier de l'armée royale et conventionnel: d'après sa correspondance et ses papiers inédits, 1754-1793* (France: J Laffitte, 1982), p.249.

<sup>364</sup> One such case involved Henri Van Hamme, the *prévôt général et lieutenant-colonel de l'ancienne armée Belgique* who, since September 1792, had been languishing in prison without trial for the crime of espionage. AN d/XV/2 dossier 11. See also, *Petition présentée à la Convention nationale par le citoyen belge Henri VanHamme, Prévôt- Général et Lieutenant-Colonel de cavalerie de l'ancienne Armée Belgique, détenu arbitrairement en état d'arrestation à la Citadelle de Cambrai* (Imprimerie de Defréremy, frères & Raparlier, 1793). Van Hamme claimed that he had deserted his post in Belgium to seek refuge in the 'terre de la liberté' but his presence in France, without fixed abode or employment, was sufficient to raise suspicion.

<sup>365</sup> François-Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des actes du Comité de Salut Public: avec la correspondance officielle des représentants en mission et le registre du Conseil exécutif provisoire* (Paris: L'Imprimerie Nationale, 1890), III, p.592.

<sup>366</sup> *ibid*, p.592.

<sup>367</sup> In an early example, the *commissaire* reported to the Convention how he, and a band of peasants, had arrested the *valet de chambre* of the Prince de Ligne for bearing *pièces* which pointed to his role as a spy: 'Hier les paysans ont arrêté dans le bois le valet de chambre du prince de ligne, je l'ai moi même fait souiller et conduire au cachot; cet homme, par les pièces trouvées sur lui, paraît être un espion; le coquin est Français.' *Journal des débats et de la correspondance de la Société des amis de la Constitution*, 10 September 1792, no. 102, p.428



Châlons, in the *département de la Marne*, a spy had also been made an example of. As the reporter unduly announced, ‘hier on a coupé la tête à un espion. Il faut rétablir la confiance et ramener l’ordre, ou consentir à tout perdre.’<sup>368</sup> In other words, these two examples demonstrate how, in the conflict zones or around military camps, spies were punished according to the principles enunciated in *L’Encyclopédia*: ‘Quand on trouve un espion dans un camp, on le pend aussitôt’.<sup>369</sup> Indeed, Genêt nevertheless observes how during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries the trials of spies were seldom held with judgement sometimes based on political rather than military calculation.<sup>370</sup> In his book, he cites the example of a young Scottish officer, Alexandre Gordon de Wardhouse who was decapitated in Brest for espionage. Although possibly innocent of the crime imputed to him, Wardhouse’s brutal execution in 1769 was publicly staged to assure the population that the court at Versailles remained vigilant in the face of British spies.<sup>371</sup> Where suspects were not executed, they were otherwise imprisoned without trial, usually through-out the course of a war and/or according to the decision of a superior officer or minister of state. In other words, imprisonment served as a preventative means to isolate a suspect, a kind of *arme de temporarisation* whilst the investigation into their guilt was conducted, an often arduous task given the inherently secretative nature of espionage.

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<sup>368</sup> *Réimpression de l’Ancien Moniteur*, XIII, p.742. 17 September 1792.

<sup>369</sup> Cited in Hugues Moutouh (ed.), *Dictionnaire du Renseignement*, *op. cit.*, p.47. However, in cases where the individual proved less malleable, they were to be made a public example of. As Tuprin de Crissé advised, ‘Si au contraire cet Espion ne paroît pas intelligent, ou qu’il affecte de la stupidité, il faut le punir de mort, et le faire prendre à la vûe de l’Armée, pour effrayer les autres.’ Turpin de Crissé, *L’Art de la Guerre*, *op. cit.*, I, p.237. As for the conditions surrounding a prisoner’s release, Genêt argues how it was often the consequence of financial pressures. In 1762, for example, the *Lieutenant Générale de Police*, Antoine de Sartine authorised the release of a prisoner named Girard, after ten years imprisonment, as it purportedly cost too much. Stéphane Genêt, *Les Espions des Lumières*, *op.cit.*, p.178.

<sup>370</sup> *ibid*, p.454.

<sup>371</sup> Prosper Jean Levot, *Procès d’Alexandre Gordon espion anglais décapité à Brest en 1769* (Brest: Imprimerie E. Anner, Rampe, 1861). One notable exception involved a young soldier named Fossart who was accused of intelligence with the enemy. Dissatisfied by the judgment of the *Prevôt of the marechaussée* of Flanders, the Comte d’Argenson argued that it made more sense that the prisoner be contained in France than banished abroad. ‘(Du fait) que ce particulier n’a été condamné qu’a un bannissement hors du royaume, il vaut mieux, pour être a couvert de ses intrigues le retenir dans les prisons de Lille pendant le temps que la guerre durera.’ Capitaine Jean Colin, *Les Campagnes du Marechal de Saxe* (Paris: R Chapelot, 1901), I, p.309.

In any event, it was not until 16 June 1793, after such complaints were raised about the absence of legislation to adequately punish military spies, that the National Convention finally instituted the death penalty for espionage. As the first two articles decreed:

I. Les Français ou étrangers convaincus d'espionnage dans les places de guerre ou dans les armées, seront punis de mort.

II. Ils seront jugés par une commission militaire, formée comme il est décrété par la loi du 9 octobre dernier contre les émigrés pris les armes à la main.<sup>372</sup>

This law, we shall shortly see, was often cited either alone or in conjunction with the Penal Code of 1791 in order to justify the execution of hundreds of individuals accused of abetting the allied war effort. Indeed, as the conflict intensified, it became increasingly evident to the revolutionaries that not only did the allied powers make prolific use of spies but that the very nature of warfare itself was changing. On the 12 June 1793, in a bulletin to the *Comité de Salut Public*, the *représentants en mission* to the *armée des côtes de la Rochelle*, characterized the situation as follows:

Cette guerre n'est point une guerre ordinaire. C'est une guerre de chicane. Il faut que la ruse et l'imagination dirigent l'intrépidité. Il faut à la fois tendre des pièges,

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<sup>372</sup> Jean Baptiste Duvergier, *Collection Complète des Lois, op. cit.*, I, p.525. Whilst the law of 16 June did not specifically target 'embauchers', the Directory's law of 13 *brumaire an V* did add corresponding provisions. Following the petitions from the *conseils de guerre*, both *espions* and *embaucheurs* were to be brought and tried before them. This second law, in turn, was reinvoked by the imperial decree of 17 *messidor an XII*. M le Comte Merlin, *Répertoire universel et raisonné de jurisprudence*: (Paris: Chez Garnery, 1812), II, p.533. Indeed, the June law is invoked to this day. In the annex to the *procès-verbal de la séance* of 5 March 1998, *Rapport fait au nom de la commission des Affaires étrangères, de la défense et des forces armées sur le projet de loi, adopté par l'assemblée nationale*, the author of the document, Nicholas About, shows how the principles governing the divulgence of secrets related to the defence of the country are not new. As he states, the Convention's decree of 16 June 1793 already prescribed the death penalty to 'tout Français ou étranger convaincu d'espionnage dans les places fortes et dans les armées.' <https://www.senat.fr/rap/197-337/197-3370.html>

cacher sa marche, tourner les difficultés mêmes du pays contre l'ennemi, avoir des espions sûrs à quelque prix que ce soit.<sup>373</sup>

This practice of deception is, of course, an ancient method of warfare but it is nevertheless revealing to see how it was perceived by the revolutionaries during this period. In one example, the *Commissaire Nationale* from Châlons sur Marne, *citoyen* Westermann, explained how enemy spies tricked the authorities into supplying munitions:

Pour vous convaincre combien l'ennemi est bien servi en espions, je vais vous citer un seul fait. Il fait la formation à un village de rendre leurs armes; la municipalité lui donne vingt fusils; l'ennemi les reçoit & fait sommation d'en rendre encore quatre qu'ils avoient reellement, sinon qu'il mettroit le feu. Les quatres lui furent livrés.<sup>374</sup>

Westermann's example aside, the core of the *représentants'* argument was that the deceptive methods employed by the Republic's enemies should be turned against them. In this, he was prefiguring the war maxims developed by Napoleon who, among others, advocated the interception of communications in order to disrupt the enemy's military plans as well as the auxiliary operations that they conducted behind the lines.<sup>375</sup> In other words, Napoleon's

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<sup>373</sup> Cited in Charles Louis Chassin, *Les Pacifications de l'Ouest, 1794-1801*, 6 vols (Paris: P Dupont, 1896), V, p.74.

<sup>374</sup> Pierre Caron, *Les missions du Conseil exécutif provisoire et de la Commune de Paris dans l'Est et le Nord, août-novembre 1792* (France: A. Costes, 1953), p.56.

<sup>375</sup> According to Napoleon, it was necessary to '...reconnaître lestement les défilés et les gués, s'assurer des guides sûrs, interroger le curé et le maître de poste, avoir rapidement des intelligences avec les habitants, expédier des espions, saisir les lettres de la poste, les traduire, les analyser; répondre enfin à toutes les questions du général en chef, lorsqu'il arrive à la tête de l'armée: telles sont les qualités que doit avoir un bon général d'avant-poste'. *Maximes de guerre et pensées de Napoléon I<sup>er</sup>* (5e éd.) (Paris: Dumaine, 1863), pp.43-44. For Napoleon's use of *renseignement*, see Alain Montarras, *Général Bonaparte et le Renseignement: La période révolutionnaire et la première campagne d'Italie* (Paris: Éditions SPM, 1986). The interception of suspect correspondance by the army did, of course, lead to the discovery of treasonous communications and subsequent arrests. During the *séance* of 24 May 1793, for example, a letter addressed to the *Comité de salut public* was read out purporting to secret communications exchanged between the republican Général Duhamel and the *émigrés*. The report from the *commission nationale* attached to the division of Mauberge concluded that this correspondance 'ne peut convenir à un citoyen ni à un fonctionnaire militaire et caractérise une correspondance incivique et contre-révolutionnaire.' Duhamel and his aide de camp were consequently arrested upon the orders of the commanding officer of the division, General Tourville. Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des*

maxims essentially brought together the two principle branches of *renseignement* - espionage and counter-espionage- albeit implicitly. Indeed, just how these two operations overlapped or merged is further exemplified by *le comité de correspondance secret*, a clandestine bureau that was attached to the *État Major de l'armée du Rhin*. On 6 October 1793, for example, the *représentants* to *l'armée du Rhin* wrote to the *Comité de salut public*, transmitting a copy of 'd'un nouveau plan de conspiration que le hasard et l'activité du bureau de correspondance secrète de l'armée du Rhin ont fait tomber entre leurs mains'. As they continued to explain, this plan is detailed in a letter that was intercepted from a German spy, the translation of which was attached to letter sent by the *représentants*:

Citoyens Représentants, Le bureau de correspondance secrète, attaché à l'État-major de l'armée du Rhin, ayant reçu l'autre jour un avis sur une correspondance aussi criminelle que clandestine, établie entre Brunswick, general prussien, le landgrave de Darmstadt, ci-devant seigneur des terres d'Hanau dans le department du Bas-Rhin, d'un côté, et les anciens employés de celui-ci à Bouxwiller, Strasbourg et autres endroits.<sup>376</sup>

Whilst this spy was apprehended, not all of them were arrested immediately and contained. On 12 August 1793, in a letter to Euloge Schneider, the future *accusateur public* of Strasbourg's *tribunal révolutionnaire*, Alexandre de Beauharnais, the *Commandant en chef de l'armée du Rhin*, revealed the strategy of deliberately not arresting a suspected spy in order to procure further information, a strategy that departed –in this case at least- from de Launay's preference for containment. As he explained to Schneider, the manner in which

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*Actes, op. cit.*, IV, p.307. Paul Emile Foucart, *La Défense Nationale dans le Nord et 1792 à 1802* (Paris: Impr. Lefebvre-Ducrocq, 1893), p.198.

<sup>376</sup> E Mühlenbeck, *Euloge Schneider, 1793* (Alsace: J.H. Heitz, 1896), p.313. Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des Actes, op. cit.*, p.268.

the individual had not only solicited himself but had managed to cross the lines unmolested rendered him suspect:

‘il faut que vous sachiez qu’un des représentants du peuple, Milhaud, m’a prévenu qu’il fallait m’en défier, que ses dispositions généreuses pour faire l’espion sans rétribution l’avaient rendu suspect d’autant qu’il paraît avoir une facilité extrême pour traverser sans danger, et quand il veut, l’armée ennemi. Je ne vous cacheraï pas que les informations prises sur cet homme depuis la lecture de votre journal me donnent à penser que c’est un double espion. Il ne me convient pas de le traiter comme tel, mais il est mon devoir de vous présenter mes soupçons pour vous prier au nom de la patrie de ne rien négliger pour obtenir des renseignements exacts sur son compte.’<sup>377</sup>

In any event, as successors to the *commissaires de la Convention*, the *représentants en mission* thus continued to fulfill an important counter-espionage role, not only in terms of arresting suspected spies but, in acting as *agents de liaison* with the central authorities<sup>378</sup>. In bulletin after bulletin, as reproduced by Aulard, one can find numerous examples of how they propagated the perception that France was abound with spies and that rigorous action had to be taken. In one notable bulletin to the *Comité de salut public* on 3 May 1793, the *représentant* attached to the *armée des Ardennes* highlighted the troubles in Valenciennes, drawing the natural corollary between the absence of order - ie those pockets where there was little security presence - and the surge in espionage activity:

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<sup>377</sup> *ibid*, pp.378-379.

<sup>378</sup> For further reading on the *représentants*, see M Biard, *Missionnaires de la République: Les représentants du peuple en mission (1793-1795)* (Paris: 2002). Bonnal De Ganges, ‘De l’espionnage chez les représentants du peuple (1793-1795)’, *Revue du monde catholique* (1899), 275-285. M Legros, *La Révolution telle qu’elle est, ou Correspondance inédite du Comité de salut public avec les généraux et les représentants du peuple en mission près les armées et dans les départements pendant les années 1793, 1794 et 1795*, 2 vols (Paris: Mame, 1837), Henri Wallon, *Les représentants du peuple en mission et la justice révolutionnaire dans les départements en l’an II (1793-1794)*, 5 vols (Paris: Hachette, 1889-1890).

Il n'y a point d'ordre ni de police dans Valenciennes. Les espions des ennemis ont la faculté de s'y introduire librement. Aussi dit-on qu'ils savent mieux que nos officiers tout ce qui se passe dans notre pays et dans cette ville.'<sup>379</sup>

In the next chapter, a subsection will be devoted to the role of the *représentants en mission* in the overlapping counter-insurgency and counter-espionage operations against the Vendéans but for now, it is worth examining the revolutionaries' efforts to counter irregular warfare in a less well-documented episode.<sup>380</sup>

## V

On 4 February 1793, the eighty-fifth *département*, Les Alpes-Maritimes, was created. To install the new administration, and impose order on a potentially explosive situation, the Convention dispatched the *commissaire en mission*, l'Abbé Grégoire and his colleague, Fagot, to the region. Immediately upon arrival, the two men set about crushing all signs of opposition, focusing particularly on the counter-revolutionary hotbeds, Nice, Monaco and Menton.<sup>381</sup> Enlisting the assistance of the local *comités de surveillance*, Grégoire and Fagot began by creating a consensus of the populace, treating anyone who espoused or surreptitiously demonstrated allegiance to Piedmont as automatically suspect.<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, II, p.585.

<sup>380</sup> For a general history of irregular warfare in France during the eighteenth century, particularly in relation to tactics and operations, see Sandrine Picaud-Monnerat, *La petite guerre aux XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Éditions economica, 2010).

<sup>381</sup> As Gregoire acknowledged, 'L'honorable mission que la Convention nous a confiée nous faisait un devoir d'employer des moyens efficaces pour assurer l'empire des lois, étouffer tous les germes de contre-révolution et faire triompher la liberté dans une contrée où le patriotisme est forcé de soutenir et de livrer des assauts continuels', *Rapport à la Convention. 16 avril 1793*, Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, III, p.279. See also, Joseph Combet, *La Révolution dans le Comté de Nice et la Principauté de Monaco, 1792-1800* (Paris: F Alcan, 1925) and Monique Geoffroy, 'Les municipalités niçoises de 1792 à 1800', *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 13.1 (1976), 73-86.

<sup>382</sup> Grégoire and Fagot issued an *arrête* to the *comités de surveillance de Nice, Menton et autres communes maritimes du département des Alpes-Maritimes* 'requierement lesdites comités de redoubler de surveillance et de zèle, pour maintenir l'ordre et découvrir les hommes suspects qui chercheraient à travailler contre la

Applying the *émigré* laws against them, they made an inventory of their goods and properties, published a list of proscribed names and issued an injunction to the recalcitrant municipalities ordering them to make arrests immediately.<sup>383</sup> Most significantly, for the purpose of discussion, Gregoire mobilized the *gendarmerie* formed of four brigades, two of which were stationed in Nice, one in Menton and one in Puget-Théniers, with the overlapping objective of thwarting both espionage activities and the escalating guerrilla attacks staged by the ‘mountain bandits’ known to history as the *Barbets*. As Grégoire contended, the presence of ‘les aristocrates et les fanatiques’ which infest the *département* ‘nécessitent une force toujours surveillante et répressive, pour contenir leurs intentions perverses et les arrêter dans le manifestation de leurs complots.’<sup>384</sup>

Although it was not until 18 April 1886 that the *gendarmerie* was explicitly charged with conducting counter-espionage operations, the deployment of these ‘unités combattantes’ in the Alpes-Maritimes – and in other *départements* of France- proved a formative experience.<sup>385</sup> In accordance with their prescribed role of surveilling the territory,

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République, soit pour leurs actions, soit par leur principes.’ L Moris (ed.), *Inventaire sommaire des archives départementales antérieures à 1790: Alpes Maritimes* (Imprimerie J. Ventre et Cie, 1924). p.88.

<sup>383</sup> In a *communiqué* to the Convention, the *commissaires* wrote how ‘on espérait nous apitoyer sur le sort des émigrés qui, après avoir fui de leur patrie par lâcheté et par trahison, tentent d’y rentrer avec les mêmes sentiments. Nous avons répondu par une proclamation portant injonction de les arrêter sur le champ.’ *Les Commissaires dans le Mont Blanc et Les Alpes-Maritimes à la Convention, Nice 1er Avril 1793, an II de la République française*. Cited in Jean Tild, *L’abbé Gregoire d’après ses Mémoires Recueillis par Hyppolyte Carnot* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1946), Annexe XIV, p.172. Indeed, the recalcitrance of the municipalities is well evidenced by the following complaint made by Grégoire. As he lamented, ‘aucune mesure n’a été prise par la municipalité pour faire arreter et punir les perturbateurs et les véritables aristocrates.’ L Moris, *Inventaire, op. cit.*, p.49

<sup>384</sup> *ibid*, p.49.

<sup>385</sup> The French historian, Antoine Boulant, characterised this period for the *gendarmerie* as a baptism of fire. Antoine Boulant, ‘Baptême du feu. Naissance des premières unités combattantes [les gendarmes combattants en 1792 et 1793]’, *Armées d’aujourd’hui*, 276 (2002), 66-68. It was not until the law of 1798 that the *gendarmerie* possessed a veritable charter. Title IX prescribed the function to ‘saisir et arreter les émigrés et prêtes deportés qui seront trouvés sur le territoire de la France’. Yet, it was not until 1820 that the *gendarmerie*’s role in capturing spies was first enumerated. According to article 45 of the royal ordinance, they were charged with ‘les arrestations d’embaucheurs, d’espions employés à lever le plan des places et du territoire, ou à se procurer des renseignements sur la force et le mouvement des troupes; la saisie de leur correspondance et de toutes les pièces pouvant donner des indices ou fournir des preuves de crimes et de complots attentatoires à la sûreté intérieure ou extérieure du royaume.’ M Lepec (ed.) *Recueil Général des Lois, Décrets, Ordonnances, etc., depuis le mois de Juin 1789 jusqu’au mois d’Aout 1830* (Paris: 1839), XV, p.233; The law of 18 April 1886 was ratified in September that year with the creation of the carnets A and B, ‘un outil du contre-espionnage’ in Olivier Forcade’s words. Carnet B, which the gendarmes were responsible for maintaining, recorded the names of foreigners suspected of espionage or anti-militarism. Olivier Forcade, ‘Le Carnet B, un outil du contre-espionnage français de 1886 à 1939’, *Politiques du Renseignement*, Sébastien Laurent (ed.), (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires Bordeaux, 2009), pp.207-216.

as formally codified in article III of the *Loi du 28 germinal an VI*, the *gendarmes* were charged with policing the routes, narrowly focusing on the districts between Nice and Menton where the roadside ambushes were mostly set.<sup>386</sup> Yet, the efforts to fight the *Barbets* were not limited to paramilitary confrontations along these routes or mountain passes. Like the Vendéans and Chouans in northwestern France, the success of the *Barbets*' guerrilla tactics relied heavily on the protection, and supply of intelligence, from the local population as well as '*prétendeurs déserteurs qui espionnent les opérations de l'armée de la République*.'<sup>387</sup> Given that the *gendarmerie* could not police the routes and demilitarize the zones as well as conduct house to house searches of the *Barbets*' informants at the same time, it obviously meant that the combined counter-insurgency and counter-espionage operations were conducted both unilaterally and in coordinated sweeps between different organs of the security apparatus. In the heart of the communes this fell on the *comités de surveillance* and municipal authorities whereas along the mountain and coastal routes, jurisdiction was claimed by the *gendarmerie* and units of *l'armée l'italie*. In both situations, in any case, the revolutionaries once again depended on the influx of denunciations with foremost investigation directed at the relatives and acquaintances of those who had taken up arms.<sup>388</sup> As one directive read:

Si vous vous les connaissez, arrêtez aussitôt leurs parents qui leurs parents qui leur donnent surement asile, et ils doivent être considérés et traités comme des suspects et vrais ennemis de la République.<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>386</sup> As article VI reads, 'Le service de la gendarmerie nationale est particulièrement destiné à la sûreté des campagnes et des grandes routes'. *Journal des Débats et Lois du Corps Législatif, Floréal, an VI* (Paris: Chez Baudouin, 1798). For a broader discussion of the *gendarmerie*'s role in the maintenance of order, see Georges Carrot, *Révolution et Maintien de l'Ordre, 1789-1799* (Paris: Veyrier, 1995), p.454.

<sup>387</sup> *Archives Alpes-Maritimes* L962 doss 12, *Note sur de prétendeurs deserteurs qui espionnent les opérations de l'armée de la République*.

<sup>388</sup> As one directive read, 'Il recommande à tous les bons citoyens...se seconder tout leur pouvoir les municipalités et leur fournir tous les renseignements qui pourront les aider à déjouer les perfides manœuvres.'

<sup>389</sup> Cited in Joseph André, *Nice, 1792-1814: L'Invasion révolutionnaire, les Provençaux dirigent Nice, dictature de la Convention des colons marseillais, Nice pillée et martyrisée* (France Europe, 2009), p.367.



In order to suppress the movement known during that period as *Barbetisme*, the *représentants du peuple* issued a decree sanctioning the continuous disarmament of all inhabitants of the mountaneous regions occupied by the *armée de l'Italie* as well as the creation of an *ad hoc* military commission formed by the divisional generals in command of each army column. As article II prescribed, any inhabitant that was taken in arms would be recognised as a *barbet* or *milice*, treated as a ‘rebelle et assassin’, and conveyed before the military commission where they would be judged and summarily executed.<sup>390</sup> Given that the attacks staged by the Barbets were reportedly multiplying each day to the point that they compromised ‘la sureté de l’armée’, the *représentants* concluded that these ‘mesures promptes et efficaces’ had to be taken.<sup>391</sup> The formation of these military commissions is of such crucial importance to our understanding of how punishment was dispensed during the period, especially in relation to espionage, that it will also form a significant section of the following chapter. In terms of the campaign against the Barbets, it just worth noting that, like the civil war in the west, and the repression in the east, these military commissions became an essential apparatus of the revolutionary state, not just in terms of counter-insurgency and counter-espionage but, of course, in punishing indiscipline in the army, of which, as we have seen with desertion, was perceived to be almost the same crime.

## VI

In Paris, meanwhile, the revolutionaries were debating how best to handle the foreign perpetrators of espionage. On 12 August 1792, the same day that de Beauharnais was advocating caution, the deputies in the National Convention voted in favour of arresting all

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<sup>390</sup> *Archives Alpes-Maritimes* L59, *Arrete relative à la répression de Barbetisme* of 17 fructidor an II.

<sup>391</sup> *ibid.*

enemy subjects resident in France since 1789.<sup>392</sup> The justification for the ‘*mesures de sûreté*’ was, of course, the famous ‘English letter’, a probable fabrication that Albert Mathiez had otherwise claimed ‘un espion anglais avait perdu sur les ramparts de Lille.’<sup>393</sup> In essence, the *portefeuille* purportedly revealed the existence of a clandestine network of British paid agents who were planning to stage simultaneous attacks on various strategic points throughout France, notably fortress towns and ports as well as counter-revolutionary hotspots such as La Vendée and Lyon.<sup>394</sup> Moreover, and by no small coincidence, the project was scheduled to take place on the anniversary of the fall of the monarchy. Whilst the provenance of the *portefeuille de correspondance* remains unknown, Olivier Blanc draws a link between its ‘discovery’, and a declaration that was made by a Parisienne to the *Comité de Surveillance du département de Paris on 29 July 1793*. In this declaration, which Blanc reproduces in full, the Parisienne, a teacher of the English language, was approached by two strangers and contracted to translate a letter into French. According to her declaration, the contents of the letter contained a project consisting of:

1. d’incendier en même temps et à l’époque du 10 au 16 août (1793) toutes la villes-frontières, qu’on y recommandait de ne pas épargner l’or et l’argent pour cette entreprise:

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<sup>392</sup> *Mesures de sûreté relatives aux étrangers qui se trouvent en France*. M J H Bénard (ed.), *Recueil général des lois, décrets, ordonnances, etc: depuis le mois de Juin 1789 jusqu’au mois d’août 1830* (Paris: 1840), IV, p.341. The letter reproduced in *Mercure Français, Historique, Politique et Littéraire: 1793* (Paris: 1793) pp.265-66. *Projet de décret sur le mode d’exécution du décret, du 12 août, qui ordonne l’arrestation des gens suspects, présenté à la Convention nationale, au nom du comité de législation, par Ph.-Ant. Merlin (de Douai). Séance du 31 août 1793*. Imprimé par ordre de la Convention nationale. *Décret portant que les étrangers sont domiciles en France avant le 14 juillet 1789 seront mis en état d’arrestation*. Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection Complète des Lois, op.cit., VI*, p.80.

<sup>393</sup> Carla Hesse, ‘La preuve par la lettre : pratiques juridiques au tribunal révolutionnaire de Paris (1793-1794)’, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*. 3 (1996), 629-642 (at pp.640-641). Although the government professed to possess the original copy, no historian has been able to trace its existence in the *Archives nationales*. Albert Mathiez, *La Révolution française: La Terreur* (Paris : A Colin, 1927), III, p.306. Anonymous, *Rapport fait au nom du Comité de Salut Public le 1er août 1793 an II de la République par Barère Imprimé par ordre de la Convention nationale. Texte et nouvelle traduction des lettres et notes anglaises trouvées dans un portefeuille anglais déposé au Comité de Salut Public et depuis aux Archives nationales par décret du dimanche août...* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1793). Carla Hesse, pp.640-641.

<sup>394</sup> Alain Gerard, ‘*Par Principe d’Humanité: La Terreur et la Vendée* (Paris: Fayard, 1999), pp.133-8.

2. de faire hausser l'argent et de baisser (le cours) des assignats....

On nommait d'autres personnes à qui on défendait de communiquer le projet, de peur qu'ils ne le découvrent. Le Duc d'York et Pitt étaient nommés. Celui qui a porté la lettre avait l'air et l'accent allemands. L'autre est connu de la citoyenne Samin.

On observait que l'incendie aurait lieu par l'effet de mèches phosphoriques dont cent ne contenaient qu'un pouce trois quarts de circonférence sur quatre pouces de longueur et chaque membre du parti devait être muni de 100 mèches.<sup>395</sup>

Whilst the authenticity of the declaration remains open to doubt, the French population could be forgiven to have believed in the existence of such a conspiracy. In the days and weeks that both preceded and followed Barère de Vieuzac's spectacular *coup de théâtre*, the nation had witnessed a series of attacks, the causes of which had not been detected. On 7 August 1793, for example, the arsenal at Huningue was set ablaze. Also, arson attacks were staged at Douai, Samur, Chemillé and other military and naval targets throughout the country including the fort du château-neuf at Bayonne. Given their naval manoeuvres, and the habit of believing one's own rhetoric, it was little surprise that the British were a natural object of suspicion. It was in this context that Barère, in his dramatic speech before the *Comité de Salut Public*, had originally demanded the expulsion of all English subjects who were living in France after 14 July 1789. Although he made no mention of the fact, he was advocating a policy that was already being discussed within certain circles of the security apparatus. Just two months earlier, a report of the *Bureau de Surveillance de la Police* claimed how the people of Paris were demanding, 'la déportation de tous les Anglais se trouvant à Paris, et qui, depuis leur arrivéé, n'auraient pas rempli exactement les fonctions de citoyen.'

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<sup>395</sup> Olivier Blanc, *Les Hommes de Londres: Histoire secrète de la Terreur* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1989), p.

Continuing on, the *commissaires de police* themselves argued how ‘cette mesure paraissant la seule efficace pour déconcerter la correspondance de Pitt et de ses agents’.<sup>396</sup> As the report made plain, deportation was presented as a legitimate counter-espionage strategy. Georges Couthon, however, found the measure too exclusive and, according to the developing worldview that all *étrangers* of foreign nationality were actual or potential spies, proposed to target all of them without distinction, a proposal that was steadily gaining widespread support: As he asked rhetorically, ‘croyez-vous que les Autrichens qui sont en France ne sont pas, comme les Anglais, des agents de Pitt? il suffit qu’on respecte les Américains et les Suisses.’<sup>397</sup>

Yet, to certain revolutionaries, deportation seemed a risky proposition in the face of *étrangers* regarded as spies. On 3 August 1793, during debates questioning the applicability of the law, Jean Jacques Bréard opposed the expulsions and argued in favour of mass arrests.<sup>398</sup> As he declared:

Je crois que les étrangers doivent être mis en état d’arrestation: car, ou ces étrangers sont bien intentionnés, ou bien ils ne le sont pas: dans le premier cas ils ne trouvent pas mauvais que vous preniez à leur égard une mesure que demande la sûreté de la nation. Si ce sont des espions, quels ménagements avons-nous à garder avec eux?<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> *Rapport du Bureau de Surveillance*, 15 juin 1793, AN AFIV/1470. This report stands counter to Michael Rapport’s observation that ‘most revolutionaries still believed that the foreigners responsible for the disorders in France were a minority identifiable through the existing system of surveillance and that a general expulsion would be counter-productive.’ Rapport’s judgement, however, is certainly more balanced than the police report whose evident bias should not be accepted as a statement of fact.

<sup>397</sup> *ibid*, p.104.

<sup>398</sup> Among others, the expulsion of foreigners was proposed by Garnier de Saintes who, on 3 August 1793, read out a report on behalf of the *Comité de Sûreté Générale*: ‘Cependant soit que le peuple français ait des traîtres dans son sein à punir, ou des espions soudoyés à chasser (...) il ne confondra point l’homme égaré (...) avec l’intrigant.(...) Purgeons notre territoire de cette dernière classe d’hommes qui le souille et déjà nous aurons joué bien des trahisons.’<sup>398</sup> Sophie Wahnich, *L’impossible Citoyen*, *op. cit.*, p.33.

<sup>399</sup> *Archives Parlementaires*, *op. cit.*, LXX, p.184

According to Wahnich's interpretation, Bréard estimated that all good *étrangers* would show themselves to be 'super-patriots' and voluntarily accept the reasons for their own persecution.<sup>400</sup> This was fanciful at best. The harsh reality was that there was a practical side to detention. Whilst there formerly existed arguments that such pre-emptive measures were economically disruptive and thus counter-productive, the security of the state ultimately overrode these considerations as long as it (or the *patrie*) remained *en danger*.<sup>401</sup> With expulsion, the possibility always existed that the person could slip back across the frontiers undetected. Banishment, in other words, posed greater security risks than containment. With detention, on the other hand, the suspects could theoretically be monitored and controlled. Once they escaped beyond the frontiers, there was simply no way of keeping them under permanent surveillance. Yet, despite widespread agreement on the necessity of the measure, not all authorities were willing to implement it to the letter. As Rapport has shown, the *Observatoire section* in Paris did not arrest all the foreigners registered within its jurisdiction and even showed leniency towards three individuals who posed no danger to national security.<sup>402</sup>

Of the individuals who were arrested that summer, however, was the British spy, Charles Marien Somers. Somers, a former priest and acquaintance of Captain George Monro, had naturally fallen under the law against foreigners and was denounced to the *Comité de Surveillance de la section* of his district. Significantly, given the debate on the merits of detention versus deportation, the revolutionaries had (albeit unwittingly) disrupted the correspondence that had subsisted uninterrupted for six months between him and Britain's foreign minister, Lord Grenville.<sup>403</sup> Although his interrogation by the *commissaires de police*

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<sup>400</sup> Sophie Wahnich, *L'impossible Citoyen*, *op. cit.*, p.35.

<sup>401</sup> For a summary of deportation in its historical context see Michael Rapport, *Nationality and Citizenship*, *op. cit.* pp.43-46, J Mathorez, *Les étrangers en France sous l'ancien régime*, 2 vols (Paris: 1919), I, p.137.

<sup>402</sup> Among the three released was an Irish clergyman from Douai and two Piedmontese residents. Mike Rapport, *Nationality and Citizenship*, *op. cit.*, p.195. AN F7/2514 (*Section de l'Observatoire: Délibérations du comité de surveillance (30 mars 1793-12 vendémiaire an III)*).

<sup>403</sup> During their raid of his residence, the police could not find any trace of his correspondence with London. *Procès Verbal de perquisition chez le citoyen Somers du 16 aout 1793* (Pref de Police de Paris, Aa 294, F310). As Hugues Marquis explains, Somers had actually established his Paris-London correspondence through an

did not yield any useful information the case of Somers nevertheless demonstrated how, in a state of emergency, nations are prepared to punish the many just to catch the few. In the Terror that followed, of course, the revolutionaries were prepared to push this maxim to its extremity. Yet, the question as to whether this resort to violence was driven by an irrational fear of spies and conspiracies seems to be misdirected at best. The history of espionage during the revolutionary period is not just limited to the perceived machinations of a few foreign agents like Somers.<sup>404</sup> After all, for all the rhetoric that was propagated about conspiracies, many of which appeared half-baked anyway, the reality was that the revolutionaries were faced with a far greater *practical* challenge in simultaneously waging a war against the allied powers, suppressing the violent insurrections that were flaring up in multiple corners of the country and neutralising the espionage activity that underpinned them both. Indeed, it was the very recognition that the fabric of their state was under existential threat that propelled the revolutionaries on a path towards securitization, firstly with the adoption of emergency measures that immediately followed the storming of the *Tuileries* palace together with the expansion, and attempted centralisation, of the twin structures of surveillance and control. Over the course of the year, the revolutionary state had undergone a profound transformation that, although not quite becoming the pillar of national security that Gensonné and Brissot had envisaged, nevertheless had a far-reaching impact on the development of French counter-espionage, not just legislatively speaking but in the scale in which it mobilised its resources for the coming ‘*guerre aux espions*’.<sup>405</sup>

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intermediary in Calais. To avoid the possibility of the Calais authorities intercepting the despatches, the intermediary hired a boat which conveyed them secretly to Dover. From there, British customs officials would forward the despatches to Lord Grenville at the Foreign Office. Yet, despite the apparent success of this operation, Somers was shot for espionage at Vincennes. Hugues Marquis, ‘L’Espionnage Britannique’, *op. cit.*, p.267.

<sup>404</sup> Hence it is for this reason that, save for a couple of observations, the story of the Baron de Batz will inform so little of the discussion in the next chapter.

<sup>405</sup> Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, XIII, p.465.

### CHAPTER 3

#### ‘War to the death’: 5 September 1793- 28 July 1794<sup>406</sup>

By the time the Revolution entered its most ‘radical’ phase, the perceptions and precepts that determined counter-espionage operations were firmly established. Over the past two years, since the institution of the Constitutional Monarchy, the revolutionaries had formulated a legal framework to punish both foreign and domestic spies, erected parallel structures of control and surveillance, devolved initiative for ground operations to local authorities but with a measure of central oversight and broadly adopted a discriminatory strategy of containment and prevention, all in the interests of national security. Over the course of the Terror, these core principles did not change in any profound sense. Whilst the revolutionaries attempted to impose greater authority from Paris, reorganising their committees and interceding in local operations with increasing frequency, the general thrust of counter-espionage otherwise followed existing patterns.<sup>407</sup> What did change, however, was the sheer aggressiveness with which the revolutionaries pursued and punished their opponents, many of whom were characterised as spies. The reason for this onslaught was, of course, the expansion of the war both at home and abroad. As Olivier Blanc puts it, ‘La terreur s’incriminait moins dans une ‘logique révolutionnaire’ que dans une logique de guerre, guerre sans merci au cours de laquelle l’espionnage a joué un rôle important.’<sup>408</sup> Without detailing this role itself, this chapter will examine how the revolutionaries attempted to neutralise enemy espionage in the dual context of the war and the Terror. It will be shown how these efforts overlapped not only with counter-insurgency operations in La Vendée and other

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<sup>406</sup> *ibid*, XIII, p.465. In a *communiqué* to Joseph le Bon dated 23 *floréal an II* (12 Mai 1794) the *Comité du Salut Public* declared how ‘une guerre à mort est livrée aux espions qui pullulaient dans cette place.’ The role of Le Bon, the controversial, if misunderstood, *représentant en mission* to the Nord and Pas de Calais will be discussed in pages 26-29.

<sup>407</sup> Sutherland explained this assertion of authority by neatly citing the ‘increasing centralisation of police powers’, ‘the reduction of departmental authority’ and the replacement of ‘local initiatives with national directives’. Donald M Sutherland, *The French Revolution and Empire: The Quest for a Civic Order* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), p.185.

<sup>408</sup> Olivier Blanc, *Les Hommes de Londres: Histoire Secrète de la Terreur* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1989), p.9.

danger zones but also in the occupied territories in the Low Countries. As the French Republic projected its power abroad, whether in self-defense or not, so too did it create a fresh set of security challenges. Just as significantly, and for the first time, this chapter will demonstrate how counter-espionage was effectuated not just with the violently repressive measures associated with the Terror but also with the sancturisation of zones and protection of vital national infrastructure.

## I

On 6 September 1793, a day after Terror was declared the ‘ordre du jour’, the revolutionaries issued the *Décret concernant des mesures de sûreté relatives aux Étrangers qui se trouvent en France*.<sup>409</sup> Comprised of sixteen articles, the decree essentially amplified existing legislation, including the Penal Code of 1791, constituting the most punitive legal measure enacted against the foreign perpetration of espionage since the beginning of the Revolution. According to the following articles:

1. Les étrangers nés dans le territoire des puissances avec lesquelles la république française en guerre seront détenus en état d’arrestation dans les maisons de sûreté.
  
9. ceux qui seront convaincus d’espionnage, ou d’avoir ménagé des intelligences, soit avec des puissances étrangères; soit avec des émigrés ou tous autres ennemis de la France, seront punis de mort, et leurs biens déclarés appartenir à la république.

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<sup>409</sup> Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection complète des Lois, op. cit.*, VI, pp.183-184.



11. ceux qui seront découverts sous un déguisement ou travestissement quelconque, ou qui seront supposés d'une nation différente sur le territoire de laquelle ils sont nés, sont punis de mort.

12. les étrangers nés dans les pays avec lesquels le République est en guerre, qui entreraient en France après la publication du present décret, seront déclarés conspirateurs, et comme tels punis de mort.<sup>410</sup>

Whilst the crime of 'espionnage' remained ill-defined- here confusingly distinguished with the act 'd'avoir menagé des intelligences' - the decree nevertheless served as further proof of how the revolutionaries were leveraging the legislative powers of the state in their campaign against wartime spy activity. Indeed, with the enactment of the *loi de Prairal* or *Loi des Suspects* that followed on 17 September 1793, the definition of 'espionnage' probably made little theoretical difference as far as the state's prosecution was concerned. Anyone who invited the slightest whiff of suspicion was to be hauled before the *Tribunal Révolutionnaires* without being afforded the presumption of innocence or having been accorded the right of defence.<sup>411</sup> And, of course, foremost among those 'réputés gens suspects', according to article II of the law, were the *émigrés*. In their formulation, it was not just foreigners but the *émigré* who had now fully evolved into *un espion des brigands couronnés*. Although the

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<sup>410</sup> *ibid*, p.184.

<sup>411</sup> In his study of the 'suspect', as drawn by the motives of arrests in Paris from September 1793 to *thermidor an II*, and found in the alphabetical series containing their individual files (AN/F7/4576- F7/4775), Antoine Boulant identifies five main types: the royalist, the violent suspect, 'the leech of the people', the factious person, the indifferent one. Moreover, the parents of *émigrés* were also considered royalist suspects. As he explains, it is from the members of his family that the *émigré* offspring, supported and encouraged by the princes, received funds or provided intelligence on the political, economic and military situation within France. At the same time, not only did the parents provide pecuniary support but they also guaranteed a safe haven and passage in and out of France (just how is not specified). Antoine Boulant, 'Le suspect parisien en l'an II', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 280, (1990), 187-197 (at p.187). Jean-Louis Matharan explains 'le véritable basculement se produit en 1793 avec « l'évolution d'une lutte contre les ennemis déclarés (par leur engagement) à celle des opposants supposés » Jean-Louis Matharan, article « suspects », in *Dictionnaire historique de la Révolution française*, Paris, PUF, 1989, p. 1004-1008. See also Jean-Louis Matharan, 'Suspects et suspicion à Paris (août 1792 - thermidor an II)', *thèse pour le doctorat nouveau régime*, Paris I, 1985. Jean Louis Matharan, 'Les arrestations de suspects en 1793 et en l'an II. Professions et repression', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 263 (1986), pp. 74-85. Philippe Barlet, 'Suspicion et Terreur dans le District de Chatillon-sur-Indre (31 Juillet 1790-13 Frimaire an IV)', *Annales Historiques De La Révolution Française*, 275 (1989), pp. 26-51. Colin Lucas, *La Structure de la Terreur: l'exemple de Javogues et du département de la Loire* (Université de Saint-Etienne 1990).

article did not equate them specifically with *espions*, the inference was clear. In conceptual terms, the *émigré* was no longer just a traitor to the *patrie* doctrinally speaking but an active royalist agent who often crossed the frontiers illegally into France in order to gather intelligence and/or install ‘des réseaux contre-révolutionnaires’.<sup>412</sup> As Sophie Wahnich expressed it, ‘on est passé du domaine de la théorie politique au domaine de l’action circonstanciée, espionnage, contre-espionnage et subversion intérieure’.<sup>413</sup>

In any case, with the nationalisation of the war, and rising tide of spy-mania, the internment or punishment of foreign subjects marked a major, but not unprecedented step, in the revolutionaries’ quest for securitization.<sup>414</sup> Just a year earlier, in September 1792, the Austrian authorities issued an imperial ordinance in the name of the Roman Emperor Francis II targeting all French nationals, the terms of which were no less punitive.<sup>415</sup> Indeed, the decree ordering the arrest, and seizure of property, of ‘tous les sujets du roi de la Grande-Bretagne’ just one month later, on 9 October 1793, followed the same inherent logic.<sup>416</sup> For all the overblown discourse of the ‘foreign plot’, the fact remained that with the siege of Toulon, and (albeit often unreliable) evidence pointing to further coastal descents, the revolutionaries’ determination to temporarily intern the subjects of the king, and thus contain the perceived threat that they posed behind the lines, was probably actuated as much, if not more, by military expediency than internecine political rivalries. After-all, the debates over

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<sup>412</sup> Antoine Boulant, ‘Le suspect parisien en l’an II’, *op. cit.*, p.195.

<sup>413</sup> Sophie Wahnich, ‘L’étranger dans la lutte des factions’, *Mots, Numéro spécial. Langages. Langue de la Révolution française*, 16 (mars 1988), 111-130 (at p.122).

<sup>414</sup> Of course, the revolutionaries’ internment of enemy subjects had parallels with British wartime policy in 20<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1914 and 1919, for example, the British authorities interned over thirty two thousand German and Austro-Hungarian civilians before the outbreak of WWI over fears of subversion. Chris Northcott, *MI5 at War 1909-1918: How MI5 foiled the Spies of the Kaiser* (East Sussex: Tattered Flag Press, 2015).

<sup>415</sup> *Ordonnance de l’Empereur publiée le 2 septembre 1792 dans l’Autriche antérieure*. ‘1° Il est défendu à tous les ambassadeurs et magistrats de délivrer des passeports aux François pour passer sur terre autrichienne. 2° Il est défendu aux sujets de l’Empereur de commercer avec les François ou de leur envoyer des espèces. 3° Il est ordonné de fermer tous les passages par lesquels on pourroit communiquer avec la France. 4° Tout voyageur françois sera regardé dorénavant comme espion et doit être traité en conséquence.’ Jean Baptiste Louis Kaulek (ed.), *Papiers de Barthélemy: Ambassadeur de France en Suisse 1792-1797, 4 vols* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1886), I, p.289.

<sup>416</sup> *Décret du 18 vendémiaire an II*, Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection complète des Lois, op. cit.*, VI, p.218.

the merits of containment had preceded the denunciation made by Fabre Eglantine. If anything, it was the false rumour that the *représentant en mission* to Toulon, Charles Nicolas Beauvais de Preau, had been hanged by the British authorities that ultimately served as the pretext for a policy which had already been advocated if not staunchly enforced.

Indeed, it was concerns over the lack of patriotic zeal in some communes that also lay behind this series of legislation. The decree of 9 October, as with the *Loi des Suspects*, had the dual intention of also spurring the *comités de surveillance* to action.<sup>417</sup> In Paris, between 160 and 250 British subjects were arrested in a series of early morning *visites domiciliaires*.<sup>418</sup> Whilst most of them had fallen victim to an increasingly discriminatory policy, the revolutionary authorities did nevertheless detain both active and sleeper agents among them including the radical writer, John Hurford Stone, who was seized at his residence on *La rue Helvétius* with his mistress, Héléna Williams.<sup>419</sup> Though few in number, and posing little, if no imminent, threat to the security of the state, it was the very fact that these agents did exist ‘sous le masque de patriote persécutés’ that warranted, in Barère’s words, ‘point d’exception’ to the rule.<sup>420</sup> In rejecting the repeated calls for leniency, he made the argument that, during times of crisis, the security of the Republic justified the temporary

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<sup>417</sup> In Carcassonne, for example, Marcel Rufas demonstrated how ‘les mesures révolutionnaires de septembre et surtout la grande loi des suspects, allaient tirer le comité de sa torpeur.’ Marcel Rufas, ‘Le comité de surveillance et les suspects de Carcassonne’, *op. cit.*, p.240.

<sup>418</sup> Paul Gerbod, ‘Visiteurs et résidents britanniques dans le Paris révolutionnaire de 1789 à 1799’, in *Paris et la révolution*, ed. M. Vovelle (Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 1989), 335-51 (at p.339). See the chapter ‘Prisoners’ in John Goldworth Alger, *Englishmen in the French Revolution* (London: S. Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1889), esp pp.149-156.

<sup>419</sup> Stone was detained seventeen days in the Luxembourg before being released. AN F7/4775 doss 23. This file includes documents relating to the arrest of John Hurford Stone. Stone’s arrest had been prompted following a statement to the police by Citizen Arthur who denounced him as an ‘agent de l’infâme Pitt’ on 8 March 1794.

<sup>420</sup> According to Barère’s assessment, ‘beaucoup d’étrangers sont venus précisément sous le masque de patriote persécutés, afin de mieux nous tromper et par-là s’introduire partout’, *25 vendémiaire an II, Réimpression de l’ancien Moniteur*, XVIII, p.149. Yet, not all suspected British agents were punished as can be seen by the case-file concerning a naval officer known simply on record as Capitaine Wood. He had been appointed by British naval authorities to negotiate the exchange of 1200 prisoners in Saint Malo but, doubting the veracity of his mission, was arrested as a spy by the local *agent national*. Initially, Saint-Just and Robespierre demanded that he should not be accorded the right to account to defend himself. Instead, according to their instructions, ‘il faut l’envoyer à l’échafaud sans l’entendre’. Lejeune, however, protested to the *Comité de salut public* and it was only thanks to the interception of Carnot, who had requested information on his casefile, that Wood was spared his life. Equipped with a passport, secours and protection from a brigade of *gendarmes*, Wood was permitted to return back to Britain where, presumably since we learn nothing more on the case, he arrived unmolested.

suspension of civil liberties, a contentious point that would similarly be made in Britain at the time.<sup>421</sup> Those groups or individuals who were formerly accorded a measure of state protection, such as the students of the English, Scots and Irish Colleges, were now formally stripped of it.<sup>422</sup> Similarly, at Le Havre, where the registered English and Spanish commercial houses were particularly numerous, all the known *étrangers* were promptly rounded up, despite petitions on their behalf, and imprisoned in *l'abbaye de Montivilliers*.<sup>423</sup> Leaving aside this question of civil rights and liberties, the ability for the revolutionaries to conduct ground operations against *l'étrangers* that Autumn was largely dependant on the cooperation and coordination between the *Comités de Surveillance* of each section, the obvious reason being that the movements and activities of the individuals they were tracking were not confined to one fixed point. In his study of the banker Walter Boyd, for example, Albert Mathiez has shown how the members of the *Comité de Surveillance de la Section de Pelletier*, after having issued their arrest warrant, raided his bank to investigate purported financial ties with France's enemies whilst the *comité révolutionnaire de la section du Mont Blanc* pursued his colleague, Ker.<sup>424</sup> Simultaneously, the *Comité de Surveillance de Boulogne*, in conjunction with the municipal police, raided his country home there, lifted the seals of his correspondence whilst all the food and livestock found on the property was confiscated by the commune.<sup>425</sup> Boyd, who had already been denounced and arrested at the

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<sup>421</sup> On the proposed suspension of *habeas corpus*, the Earl of Carnavon wrote, 'A conspiracy clearly proved need not be traced distinctly through all its branches and ramifications; its existence, and the danger to the state from its nature, are sufficient to justify the temporary suspension of that security for our liberty, which by law is our birth-right.' 22 May 1794 (PH 31, col. 595).

<sup>422</sup> AN, F/7/2514 (*Section de l'Observatoire: Comité de Surveillance, procès-verbaux*) 19 vendémiaire an II, among the measures taken by the *comité révolutionnaire de la section de l'Observatoire* against the religious foreigners, including the arrest of the English Benedictine, le 18 vendémiaire an II, AN F7/4753 doss Kellet.

<sup>423</sup> These imprisonments do not appear in the *registres de délibérations* but the many prisoners released at the beginning of year III suggest that they were not few in number. 'Les arrestations se multipliant, il y eut à un moment plus de 200 détenus politiques dans les prisons du Havre.' A. E. Borély, *Histoire de la Ville de Havre: De 1789 à 1813, 2. Partie* (Lyon: Lepelletier, 1885), p.143. Marc Bouloiseau, *Les Comités de Surveillance du Havre-Marat, an II-an III* (Rouen: Imprimerie Albert Lainé, 1936).

<sup>424</sup> Albert Mathiez, 'Quelques Affaires de Commerce et d'Intelligences avec l'ennemi sous la Terreur: Le Banquier Boyd et ses Amis', *Annales Révolutionnaires*, 12. 3 (1920), 218–231 (at pp.224-226). AN, BB/3/72, dossier 14 (*Comité de Surveillance de la Commune de Boulogne près Paris: Procès Verbal de visite et autres chez le C. Boyde*, 28 Vendémiaire 11, 19 October 1793). Ker's 'accomplices', la Baronne de Billens, le marquis and la marquise de Charras and JB Emmanuel Roettiers, were subsequently brought before the *Tribunal révolutionnaire* and executed for 'correspondances et intelligences avec l'ennemi'. *ibid*, p.227.

<sup>425</sup> *ibid*, p.225.

end of June, ‘‘d’être en correspondance avec Pitt et de distribuer à Paris de l’argent pour favoriser la Contre-Révolution’, was forewarned of the raid, supplied with a passport and successfully fled the country before the local authorities in Boulogne had arrived.<sup>426</sup> As the flight of Boyd reveals, the success or failure of the operation was equally contingent on rapid response, a condition that was sometimes hindered by jurisdictional overlap and eighteenth century spatial-tempo constraints.

At the same time that these actions were taken against the British residents, the *comités de surveillance* also took steps to centralise and standardize their security practices. On 31 October 1793, delegates of forty-three of the forty-eight sections of Paris formed a central *comité* reaching the unanimous decision that it will conduct operations against their lists of *suspects* according to the same procedure. A blueprint exists to this day and has been reproduced by Ernest Mellie, an abridgment of which is given below. As the preamble of the decree read, the *commissaires* of each participating section agreed in principle to conduct their *visites domiciliaires* as follows:

‘Que cette visite serait faite les mêmes jours, à la même heure, dans les quarante-huit sections à 3 heures du matin.

7. Sur les prêtres réfractaires

8. Sur les déserteurs, étrangers, Lyonnais, Marseillais, réfugiés depuis les mouvements contre-révolutionnaires qui ont lieu dans les susdites (sic)

9. Sur les signes contre-révolutionnaires

10. Sur le désarmement des hommes présumés suspects.

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<sup>426</sup> *ibid*, p.223.

15. Le Commandant de chaque section sera requis de commander une force armée suffisante pour qu'il y ait un piquet nombreux au quartier de chaque section, et des patrouilles fréquentes circuleront dans les rues.<sup>427</sup>

In applying the powers that were reaffirmed by *loi de prairial*, the *comités de surveillance* seemed to have awakened from their supposed 'torpor' and demonstrated renewed commitment to securitising the revolutionary state against all its enemies, declared or otherwise. In the first place, the law permitted the *comités de surveillance* to acquire more purpose and importance from their former legally prescribed function. Now, with the passage of the law, the *comités* were formally awarded the expanded role which many of them had been clamouring for, and performing anyway, since their inception in March that year. On paper, it authorised them to compile lists of suspects in their section, pursue and issue arrest warrants against their targets, examine and validate their *certificats de civisme* and finally, lift the seals off their correspondence. These expanded powers were subsequently formalised in the decree of 18 *nivôse an II* (January 1794), modifying the existing original decree which had conferred the municipalities with investigating high crimes and preserving the security of the state.<sup>428</sup> Now, both the municipalities and the *comités de surveillance* shared responsibility for this mission. These powers, though intrusive, were not altogether arbitrary, illimited or subject to non-scrutiny. If the *comités*

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<sup>427</sup> Ernest Mellié, *Les Sections de Paris pendant la révolution française (21 mai 1790-19 vendémiaire an IV: Organisation-Fonctionnement)* (Paris: Au siège de la Société, 1898), pp.214-216. Some *comité révolutionnaires*, meanwhile, had already begun the process of centralisation themselves. In the *administration départementale* of Landes, a *comité de police et de sûreté générale* run by Louis Samson Batbedat, vice president of the *département* had already existed before the *comité de surveillance de Dax* was created on 5 *Brumaire an II*, (26 October 1793) by virtue of the decree issued by the *représentants du peuple*, Monestier (du Puy de Dome), Pinet, Cavignac and Dartigoeyte. This *comité* had, according to one historian, already centralised its surveillance procedures and established a list of suspects, made arrests and conducted broader surveillance of the town and district in search for deserters, themselves designated spies as we saw in the previous chapter. Antoine Richard, 'Le Comité de Surveillance et les Suspects de Dax', *Annales Historiques De La Révolution Française*, vol. 7, no. 37, 1930, pp. 24–40.

<sup>428</sup> As the decree states, 'Les municipalités demeurent spécialement chargées concurremment avec les Comités de Surveillance et Révolutionnaire des fonctions de la police de sûreté générale, pour la recherche des crimes attentatoires à la liberté, à l'égalité, etc... à la sûreté intérieure et extérieure de l'État. La municipalité ou le Comité sont chargés d'informer, de décerner au besoin des mandats d'arrêt, mais de faire passer les pièces au Directoire du district chargé de faire passer le tout à l'accusateur public du Tribunal Criminel du département ou du Tribunal révolutionnaire.' Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection complète des lois, op. cit.*, VI, p.473.

made preventative arrests, the motives for them had to be recorded in a register. As the law prescribed, the *Comité de sûreté générale* was to be informed of ‘l’état des personnes qu’ils auront fait arrêter, avec les motifs de leur arrestation, et les papiers qu’ils auront saisis sur elles’.<sup>429</sup> This obligation became even more indispensable following the *loi de ventôse* which conferred the *Comité de sûreté générale* with the responsibility for collating and maintaining centralised files of all suspects identified in France.

The implicit purpose of the law was not just to avoid the abuse of power but also to tighten communications on both a local and central level. Not only were the presidents of each *comité révolutionnaire* required to correspond regularly with the *Comité de sûreté générale*- now formally conferred supreme authority for domestic security- but also, at the end of each month, they were to submit their deliberations and correspondence to the organ which was directly responsible for monitoring their actions on a local level.<sup>430</sup> In Paris, as we have seen, the sections’ *comités révolutionnaires* not only communicated directly with each-other but also with the national *comités* so that ‘la police n’éprouve aucune entrave’.<sup>431</sup> At the same time, the districts, which were immediately responsible for surveillance in the *départements*, was also required to inform the two *comités* of the Convention ie *de sûreté générale and de salut public*, of their operations every ten days. With the *loi de Frimaire* (passed on 4 December 1793) these *comités* had now become the principal centre of power, with the former working in close collaboration with the *Tribunal révolutionnaire* but with the latter retaining its ascendancy on matters concerning the inspection and surveillance of the constituent corps and functionaries (ie des autorités et des agents publics). In turn, however, they were obliged themselves to keep the Convention regularly informed of their

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<sup>429</sup> Jean Desenne (ed.), *Code général français: contenant les lois et actes du Gouvernement* (Paris: Ménard et Desenne, 1819), X, p.130.

<sup>430</sup> As Cadio explains, the law of 17 September was thus not just ‘le texte de base de la législation contre les suspects’ but also ‘par-là même des attributions’ of the *Comité de sûreté générale*. Emilio Cadio, ‘*Le Comité de Sûreté Générale*’, op. cit., p.2. The *comité*’s overall responsibility for the *police générale de la République* (et intérieure) was later reaffirmed by the decree of 7 *fructidor an II* (24 août 1794). These powers would remain in force until its suppression on 4 November 1795.

<sup>431</sup> Cited in Annie Jourdan, ‘La Convention ou l’empire des lois’, *La Révolution française* [En ligne], 3. (2012), p.13.

own activities- something that is evidenced by the publication of their reports- thus ensuring that this hierarchical pyramid is fully maintained. Securitization and centralisation thus went hand in hand.

## II

The role of the *comités révolutionnaires* was not just limited to police actions. In a striking example of how their conduct of counter-espionage operations also overlapped with the general war effort, certain among them were, due to their geographical location, equally vested in surveiling coastal and fort defenses as well as thwarting the counter-revolutionary activities which directly impinged upon them both. From September 1793, for example, the local *comité* at Le Havre acknowledged this dual mission in the following terms:

...’considérant qu’il est investi de tout pouvoir pour rechercher dans toute l’étendue du district la présence de tout complot contre-révolutionnaire, considérant qu’il devient nécessaire et indispensable qu’il soit instruit si les batteries le long des côtes sont en bon état, si elles sont suffisamment garnies de munitions, si le zèle et l’activité des commandants s’étendent sur toutes les parties qui leur sont confiées, si des complots n’y sont point tramés contre la sûreté générale.’<sup>432</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> Cited in Céline Duclos, ‘Les activités et le rôle des comités de surveillance dans le district de Montivilliers’, *Annales de Normandie*, 59<sup>e</sup> année, 1 (2009), 85-108 (at p.91). Similarly, in the adjacent commune, Ingouville, where, from its heights, batteries were placed to ‘pour connaître la position du pays, et voir ou pourraient être placées les batteries, qui regardant et la rade et la ville, seraient destinées à garantir le Havre et de l’approche des ennemis du dehors et des mouvements contre-révolutionnaires des ennemis du dedans’. Marc Antoine Julien, *Une Mission en Vendée 1793* (Paris: Ollendorff, 1893), p.14.



As a strategic maritime town, Le Havre was particularly vulnerable to acts of espionage and sabotage.<sup>433</sup> With foreign ships birthing in the commune, the revolutionaries were taxed with keeping them under constant inspection as well as having to secure the peripheral land and waters surrounding the port from spies gathering intelligence on both naval dispositions and possible breaches to its security. As one report dated 17 September 1793 claimed, ‘Les bateaux pêcheurs dans l’étendue de la côte sont en partie plus anglais que français, et servent parfois eux mêmes d’espions à nos ennemis.’<sup>434</sup> Of course, the effort to create securitised zones was not new in France. In his study of counter-espionage during the reign of Louis XV, Genêt shows how the eighteenth century progressively saw ‘l’émergence de la sanctuarisation des zones stratégiques notamment pour faire pièce à l’espionnage britannique de nos ports.’<sup>435</sup> Yet, following the sieges of Toulon and Dunkirk, where the initial thrust of these allied operations depended on reconnaissance missions, the revolutionaries redoubled its efforts to securitize Le Havre with the local *comité de surveillance* assuming a prominent role. Keeping the *Comité de salut public* regularly informed of its actions, the *comité* appeared to have been especially active, working in close-knit cooperation with the neighbouring *comités de surveillances* at Montivilliers, Harfleur and Ingouville- thus constituting a close network- along with the two *représentants en mission* sent by the National Convention.<sup>436</sup> As Céline Duclos concluded from examining their correspondence,

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<sup>433</sup> Only three years later, the naval captain ‘Sir William Sidney Smith, was captured of the coast of Le Havre with ‘proofs’ that he was planning to set the port ablaze. As the *Ministre de la Marine*, Pléville, was informed, he was the same ‘firebrand and incendiary’ who had successfully destroyed the French naval forces at Toulon by burning ten ships of the line, two frigates and two covettes as well as setting aflame the adjacent mast-house and timber stocks. Carlos de la Huerta, *The Great Conspiracy: Britain’s Secret War against revolutionary France, 1794-1805* (Gloucester: Amberely, 2016), pp.41-43.

<sup>434</sup> *ibid*, p.7.

<sup>435</sup> Stéphane Genêt, *Les Espions des Lumières*, *op. cit.*, p. It would seem that British spies had until managed to evaded this ‘sancturaisation’ by a simple flaw as Hugues Marquis makes clear. With the lines of communication between Somers and Lord Grenville disrupted, the British government recruited a double agent, L’abbé Ferris, to re-establish them. According to Marquis, Duban would rent a neutral vessal using his name aux frais de Anglais but to avoid attracting suspicion, changed port every time he made the crossing. By this simple manoeuver, he made sure that the same boat did not repeatedly return to the port. This seemingly elementary precaution raises the question, as to why the French authorities did not cross check their records with other ports. Hugues Marquis, ‘Espionnage Britannique à la fin’, *op. cit.* pp. 268-269.

<sup>436</sup> In a letter dated 6 October 1793, the *Comité de salut public* not only espoused its approval of the *comité de surveillance*’s actions but encouraged renewed effort. As the letter instructs, ‘le comité, par cette lecture, est invité à redoubler d’efforts pour déjouer les complots de la malveillance’. For further see Céline Duclos, ‘Les activités et le rôle des comités de surveillance’, *op. cit.*, pp.100-104.

these two organs, the *comité d'Havre* and the *représentants* enjoyed 'une véritable collaboration', together concerting wartime measures to fortify the ports' defences, mobilise its eligible citizens into service (ie the national guard) and purge the municipalities and *fonctionnaires publics*, notably those of Saint-Romain de-Colbosc and Saint-Jean-de-la-Neuville, for their perceived *incivisme*.<sup>437</sup> Similar operations were conducted across the *départements* of north-western France where the whole region was threatened by enemy incursions either from land or sea. In Calvados, the local *comité révolutionnaire* joined to the *bureau militaire du département* took combined measures to reinforce the defence of the coast, including petitioning the Convention to supply it with additional munitions.<sup>438</sup> Meanwhile, at Ingouville, the *commandant de la garde nationale* was instructed by the *comité de surveillance* to mobilise fifty able-bodied men and be at its ready disposition 'pour prendre des mesures de sûreté générale'.<sup>439</sup>

Of course, the problem facing the revolutionaries was that the long stretches of France's coastline were, quite simply, impossible to surveil by manpower alone. Unlike defending a controlled site such as a building, coastal (and littoral) surveillance signified constantly patrolling, observing and preventing every 'illicit manoeuvre'. And given the extended coastal and littoral lines, the plentiful supply of manpower was thus essential.<sup>440</sup> In maritime towns during the revolutionary and Napoleonic epoch, these resources were drawn from the *préfecture maritime*, the mayorial office, national guards, municipal police, *gendarmerie*, army, navy and above all, the customs office. The army was deployed to defend the littoral, the navy managed the semaphores (ie signals) and patrolled the waters, paying especial attention to the fishermen. The national guardsmen and gunners manned the

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<sup>437</sup> *ibid*, p.91 & 101. In speaking of this mutual rancour, the *représentant en mission* reported how 'Le comité de surveillance etant mal avec la municipalité, qui a des liaisons très suspectes, et souvent entravé par elle dans la recherche des intelligences avec des mauvais citoyens avec nos ennemis,' Marc Antoine Julien, *Une Mission en Vendée*, *op. cit.*, p.7.

<sup>438</sup> Jeanne Grall, 'Le Comité de Sûreté Générale du Calvados', *op. cit.*, p.199.

<sup>439</sup> Cited in Céline Duclos, *op. cit.*, (at pp.91-92). Duclos quotes the archival source, 5 AD 76, L 5327, *registre de délibérations du comité de surveillance du Havre*, 14 septembre 1793.

<sup>440</sup> Bernard Bodinier, 'Mesures de défense de la révolution et de la nation révolutionnée', *Annales de Normandie*, 46<sup>e</sup> année, 1. (1996), *La Révolution en Haute-Normandie*, 69-80 (at p.78).

forts and batteries. The gendarmerie patrolled the routes in and out of the town whilst customs officers, themselves ‘quasiment militarisée’, were occupied with administering all entries and exits from the port.<sup>441</sup> And invariably, with this multiplicity of state actors, petty conflicts over jurisdiction were generated between rivals.<sup>442</sup>

It was perhaps among these reasons that, as Maurice Hutt points out, the inclemency of the weather presented such ‘a formidable weapon of national defense’.<sup>443</sup> In his article ‘Spies in France’, he describes how *émigré* agents such as the Chevalier de Tinteniac and Noel François Prigent, a native of St Malo, were able to land surreptitiously on the north-western coast of France in order to establish communications with the insurgents in the interior. Moreover, ‘La Correspondance’- as this ‘secret service’ would become known- continued to ‘function with increased regularity’ all through the late summer and autumn months in 1793.<sup>444</sup> Naturally, given its geographical location, St Malo presented an ideal springboard for operations from the Channel Islands. From 1793, it became a kind of depot for the transmission of epistolary correspondence between the princes regrouped beyond the Rhine and the ‘thousands’ of *émigrés* based in Jersey. Despite the failure of La Rouërie’s conspiracy, the core principles of his restoration plan which had been put in place during March 1792 – namely to capture the principle towns of the region through the massive disembarkment of *émigrés* from Jersey and Guernsey- ultimately remained a live if but distant hope. Indeed, such was the climate of suspicion that, despite the political complexity of the region, with its oscillation between patriotism and counter-revolution, the revolutionaries came to know St Malo not just symbolically but strategically as an ‘autre Coblençe’.<sup>445</sup> Not just foreigners or nobles but merchants and tradesmen were progressively

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<sup>441</sup> *ibid*, pp.78-79.

<sup>442</sup> *ibidem*, p.79.

<sup>443</sup> Maurice Hutt, ‘Spies in France, 1793-1808’, *History Today*, 12.3 (1962), 158-167 (at p.160).

<sup>444</sup> *ibid*, p.130. ‘Le fameux Prigent’ was captured by the republican administrators at the end of 1794. Jean Julien Michel Savary, *Guerre des Vendéens et Chouans contre la République française ou Annales des Départemens de l’ouest pendant ces guerres* (Paris: Bauouin Frères, 1825), IV, p.283. The ‘fameux Prigent’ was captured by the republican administrators at the end of 1794.

<sup>445</sup> Yet, in July 1793, the municipality had demanded the departure of noble families from St Malo but the small towns around the port town continued to welcome the *émigrés* in large numbers. Karine Audran,

absorbed into this groundswell of suspicion that enveloped the country since 1792. Although originally protected by their commercial status, the movements of merchants also drew attention from the revolutionary authorities who perceived prolonged or unaccountable absences, especially abroad, to be a cloak for espionage.<sup>446</sup> And quite often, the movements of these merchants were often the subject of denunciations as seemingly was the case with the ship-owner Benjamin Dubois.

Dubois, a native of Normandy, had been arrested at his home in Montmarin on the morning of 15 December 1793 by the *commissaires* François Fénéaux and Coulonghon. Sent by the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* two months earlier, they were mandated with operating a series of preventative arrests in the principal towns of north-western France including St Malo itself.<sup>447</sup> As with so many cases, these arrests were not the product of an undercover sting operation, involving the tailing of a suspect and/or the employment of some elaborate ruse. Instead, they tended to follow the same established, if somewhat prosaic, methods and procedures predating the Terror. Fénéaux and Coulonghon had arrived in their zone of operation – covering Rouen, Quillebeuf, Dinan, Rennes, Vitré, Laval, Bayeux- where they first joined together with the local *Comités de Surveillance* and *Sociétés Populaires* to produce lists of names and addresses, -sometimes in disagreement- of individuals who possessed ‘la certitude des principes contre-révolutionnaires’.<sup>448</sup> According to his case-file, the papers found at his home, together with his status as a ‘noble’, automatically rendered

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‘L'accusation d'émigration des négociants malouins: Une justification abusive de la politique terroriste à Saint-Malo’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 345 (2006), pp 31-53.

<sup>446</sup> In one such case, the parents of a merchant from St Malo, who was inscribed on the list of *émigrés* from year II, were detained for ‘prétendent que leur fils est en Angleterre pour y à prendre le commerce et la langue’. Karine Audran, *L'accusation*, *op. cit.*, p.4. As the *représentant* at Brest declared to the *Comité de salut Public* on 9 *Prairial an II* (28 Mai 1794) the policy was to ‘les faire arrêté comme les autres. Point de communication avec des Anglais, ce sont...des espions’. Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, XIII, p.802.

<sup>447</sup> Barthélémy A. Pocquet du Haut Jussé, ‘Fénéaux et Coulonghon Commissaires du Comité de Sûreté Générale en Bretagne et en Normandie (1793)’, *Annales de Bretagne*, 79.2 (1972), 455-471. Barthélémy A. Pocquet du Haut Jussé, *Terreur et terroristes à Rennes 1790-1795* (Mayenne: Joseph Floch, 1974).

<sup>448</sup> *ibid*, pp.455-456. For a compilation of letters exchanged between St Malo’s *société populaire, comité de surveillance* and the *administrateur du district* on the presence of counter-revolutionaries there see *La doctrine de Robespierre et Couthon, répandue dans la ci-devant Bretagne, par les lettres de Chaumont, Tréhouart, Charles Duval etc. députés par le département d'Ille et Vilaine à la Convention Nationale* (Paris: Les marchands de nouveautés, an III).

Dubois suspect. Fénéaux and Coulognon had paid Dubois two *visites domiciliaires* accompanied by volunteers of the *bataillon de la Somme*. Conducting a search of his private study, they broke the seals in Dubois' presence and finding the contents of his papers compromising, escorted him to a local prison where he remained for a week before being transported by a brigade of the *gendarmérie* to Paris for further interrogation. To formalise the procedure, the local *juge de paix* then compiled an official *procès-verbal* that was subsequently reviewed by the *Comité de sûreté générale* and the *Accusateur Public* who determined that he should be hauled before the *tribunal révolutionnaire*.<sup>449</sup> The most incriminating piece of evidence against Dubois was the discovery of an undated anonymous letter attributed to one of his 'frères'.<sup>450</sup> For the revolutionary authorities, this letter thus served as further proof that a joint Anglo-Royalist descent on their shores was being planned.<sup>451</sup> On the front of his dossier, the *Comité de sûreté générale* inscribed the following *motif d'accusation*: 'prévenu de correspondance contre révolutionnaire et d'intelligence avec un émigré'. If these facts 'proved' to be true, Benjamin Dubois risked the death penalty.<sup>452</sup>

In any case, with multiple threats emanating from both land and sea, perhaps the best that the revolutionaries could do, besides mobilising more men and mounting more coastal defences, was to continue to intercept enemy communications and aggressively pursue all signs of counter-revolutionary opposition, violent or otherwise. By this means, they could,

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<sup>449</sup> The *procès-verbal* contains a 'dossier d'instruction' which can be found under AN W42 doss 2873. *Arrêté du Comité de Sûreté Générale 22ème jour du premier mois de l'an II* (13 octobre 1793), Alexandre Tuetey (ed.), *Répertoire général, op. cit.*, X, 1911, p. 95. Complaining against communicating the motives of arrests, they make the astonishing admission, 'd'ailleurs, les Comités révolutionnaires, composés de sans-culottes, seraient souvent, dans la rédaction des procès-verbaux, des erreurs involontaires dont profiteraient les contre-révolutionnaires pour se rendre la liberté'. *Réimpression du Moniteur, XVIII, 174. Séance du 21 octobre 1793*.

<sup>450</sup> According to one online study, only two people could have been the author of this letter: his half brothers, François Claude ou Claude Jean Alexis Dubois. Gérard Jolivet, 'Benjamin Dubois, un armateur malouin sous la Terreur : une arrestation à haut risque qui finit bien – 25 frimaire-5 fructidor an II', 2015, <http://www.geneabretagne.org/articles/>

<sup>451</sup> Although not written in cipher, the letter supposedly speaks of 'la guerre menée contre « les brigands » des armées royalistes' and more precisely, about the siege of Granville that took place in November 1793 at the time that this letter is dated. More incriminatingly, it also, supposedly, makes an allusion to a planned joint Anglo-Royalist expedition by its otherwise unsubtle reference to 'une descente de Jersey'.

<sup>452</sup> Of his companions, Magon de la Lande was put on the list of *émigrés* and executed 7 *thermidor an II* as 'contre-révolutionnaire'. Magon de la Blinai was executed 1 *thermidor an II* 'comme contre-révolutionnaire et agent des conspirateurs d'Outre-Rhin'. As for Pierre Jacques Grandclos-Meslé, he staged an escape from his home where he was detained under house arrest under orders of the two commissaires before fleeing to England via Guernsey. Benjamin Dubois' dossier is conserved in the *Archives Nationales* AN/W42 doss 2873.

at the very least, develop an idea of the dispositions, strategy and ground tactics of the insurgents as well as the nature of their communications with the foreign powers.<sup>453</sup> For the revolutionaries, there was no doubt, given the mounting body of intelligence, that the insurgents in Brittany and La Vendée were greatly assisted by the presence of spies among the populace. As General Turreau explained in his memoirs, these ‘espions des brigands’, who appeared to be mostly women and young children, acted as scouts for the insurgents, keeping them informed of the republican armies’ formations and movements.<sup>454</sup>

Les rebelles tiraient de tres grandes avantages des dispositions amicales des habitans restés dans la Vendée...ils n’en favorisaient pas moins secrètement leur cause; ils étaient les espions du parti; les femmes, les enfans même étaient des agens fidèles et intelligens qui instruisaient à la minute les chefs des rebelles des moindres mouvemens de l’armée républicaine.<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> In his report on the war of La Vendée dated 24 November 1793, the secret agent Venet, a resident at Lausanne, denounced ‘un corps de 1800 étrangers, Suisses, Allemands, Anglais et autres, qu’ils nomment les invincibles et qui doivent avoir fait des merveilles dans toutes les occasions.’ Cited by Pierre Le Bastard de Villeneuve, ‘L’écho des guerres de Vendée dans la correspondance des agents de la République en Suisse’, *Revue du Souvenir vendéen*, 129 (1979), p.19. About the same time, the *représentants du peuple* attached to the *départemens de l’Ouest* reported the presence of foreign contingents among the ranks of *l’armée catholique et royale* as it marched towards Granville. From their correspondence at the time, many of these volunteer soldiers had wanted to join the Vendean army as much to serve the royal cause as to seek vengeance for the ‘la mort de leurs frères massacrés aux Tuileries’. Czouz-Tornare Alain-Jacques. ‘Les Suisses dans la guerre de Vendée’, *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l’Ouest*, 101.4 (1994), 37-57 ; Emile Gabory, ‘Les Allemands dans les armées républicaines et royalistes pendant les guerres de Vendée’, *Revue du Bas-Poitou* (1919), p. 247. See also the bulletin from the représentant attached to army of la Rochelle to the *Comité de salut public* dated 20 June 1793 concerning ‘une lettre saisie sur un espion annonce que les rebelles attendant des secours au dehors’, Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes, op. cit.*, p.29.

<sup>454</sup> As Turreau recounted, ‘Dans ce pays, tout a combattu contre la République. Les enfans de 13 à 14 ans portent les armes contre nous; des enfans en plus bas âge encore sont les espions des brigands. Beaucoup de ces petits scélérats ont été jugés et condamnés par les commissions militaires’. Cited in Charles Louis Chassin, *La Vendée patriote, 1793-1800* (Paris: J Floch 1973), IV, p.235.

<sup>455</sup> De Louis-Marie Garambouville Turreau, *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de la guerre de la Vendée. Par le général Turreau* (Paris: Baudouin Frères Libraires, 1824), p.33. Otherwise, in the archives of the *département de la Vendée*, one can find the following digitised sources that contain reports from Turreau, among others, concerning the perpetration of espionage by the insurgents. See especially AN AF II 267-5 - *Nantes, Ancenis et Angers, 4-15 juillet 1793: arrêtés et correspondance des représentants du peuple Cavaignac, Gillet et Merlin sur l’arrestation d’un espion présumé des insurgés (plaquette 2249, pièces 54-64)*. AN AF II 277-13 - *Angers, Saumur, Savenay et Avranches, 21 brumaire-3 pluviôse an II : correspondance et arrêtés du représentant du peuple Turreau sur l’espionnage de l’armée vendéenne, (plaquette 2321, pièces 92-102)*. AN AF II 278-29 - *Paris et Nantes, 9-12 septembre 1793: minutes d’arrêtés et de correspondance de représentants du peuple sur l’arrestation du général Tuncq et l’espionnage des armées vendéennes (plaquette 2329, pièces 24-33)*. Similarly, see Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes, op. cit.*, XXVIII, p.449. ‘l’ennemi qui était instruit par ses nombreux espions de tous nos mouvemens.’

Given the undoubted existence of these civilian spies, it was small wonder that the revolutionaries' counter-insurgency operations merged with their counter-espionage efforts. In a number of instances, we can see how these twin operations overlapped. In listing the advantages gained from the service of the cavalry, the republican general, Jean Baptiste Kléber highlights, for example, how:

Les détachements de cavalerie, portés sur toutes les routes intermédiaires, servent à inquiéter l'ennemi sur la direction de nos forces, à empêcher les espions des Brigands de leur porter des renseignements, à établir et entretenir une communication rapide...Empêcher que des espions ou gens vendus au parti des Rebelles n'aillent prévenir l'ennemi de notre marche. Il nous semble que l'on put espérer le plus grands succès de ce concours de moyens.<sup>456</sup>

Kléber staked success in the deployment of the cavalry along circuitous routes as a mean to intercept enemy communications and catch their couriers.<sup>457</sup> In his writings at the time, he also reveals how the republican army had established 'partout des postes de surveillance' and employed their own spies – in accordance with the principles of *renseignement*- to not only pre-empt the rebels' plans but also sow disorder among its ranks.<sup>458</sup> Whilst they were not always well served by their own spies, and sometimes were betrayed by them to the enemy, as Turreau later lamented, their employment nevertheless demonstrates how the lines

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<sup>456</sup> Jean Baptiste Kleber, *Mémoires politiques et militaires, Vendée, 1793-1794* (Paris: Tallandier, 1989), pp.489- 494.

<sup>457</sup> In a report from the prince de Rohan, for example, it was reported how one of his spies had been stopped by 'une patrouille de chasseurs à cheval' and finding his passports 'n'ayant pas paru bons', was arrested, imprisoned but somehow- the details are not given- managed to escape that same night just in time to be a witness to 'l'attaque d'hier matin'. Hugues Marquis, *Espions et agents secrets*, *op. cit.*, 129.

<sup>458</sup> As Kléber writes, 'Ils auraient des espions qui non seulement pourraient prévenir des desseins de l'armée Rebelle, mais qui entretiendraient encore parmi elle l'esprit de désertion qui commence à se manifester', Jean Baptiste Kleber, *Mémoires politiques et militaires*, *op. cit.*, pp.255, 286.

between espionage and counter-espionage were blurred more often than not.<sup>459</sup> The republicans, in other words, used spies for various missions during the Vendéen war, from guiding republican columns into unknown enemy territory, such as the special corps formed by Esprit Antoine Guillou, to intelligence gathering and infiltrating local cells and their hideouts.<sup>460</sup> On 30 *germinal an II* (19 April 1794), for example, the revolutionary general, Jean-Antoine Rossignol, wrote to the *Comité de Salut Public* announcing how he was going to ‘employer, pour les découvrir, l’espionnage, les moyens les plus propres’ to discover ‘leur répaire.’<sup>461</sup> Also, according to the republicans- as indeed the partisans found out for themselves - it was ‘les femmes qui font mieux le métier’.<sup>462</sup> In fact, in the *archives de la Vendée*, one can find several reports either seized or provided by republican spies on the insurgents in the west including lists of their correspondents, the composition of their armies as well as interrogations of captured spies by either the army or municipal authorities.<sup>463</sup> An interrogation of a nineteen year old Vendéen spy has been reproduced in full in appendix IV giving the reader a clear insight into how much testimony could sometimes be extracted from the interrogators.<sup>464</sup> Unfortunately, what is unknown are the prime techniques that were employed during the course of interrogations ie in terms of coercion, seduction or a combination of the two.

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<sup>459</sup> In his memoirs Turreau confides how the republican generals ‘ont voulu aussi avoir des espions du pays: ils ont toujours été trahis ou mal servis par eux: et jamais on n’a pu organiser un espionnage à l’armée de l’ouest De Louis-Marie Garambouville Turreau, *Mémoires, op. cit.*, p.33.

<sup>460</sup> As we learn, Esprit Antoine Guillou, a native of Cholet, was in command of a *corps de Guides* and served as a spy on behalf of republican columns to ‘guider’ the generals and soldiers into unknown territory. *ibid*, p.227-8

<sup>461</sup> Cited in Jean Baptiste Kléber, *Mémoires, op. cit.*, p.535.

<sup>462</sup> See letter from the Representant attached to *l’armée de l’ouest* to the Comité de salut public dated 23 *frimaire an III*. ‘Je me félicite d’avoir pu trouver quelques espions, qui nous sont déjà d’une grande utilité, mais qui le seront encore davantage par la suite; ce sont les femmes qui font mieux le metier.’ Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes, op. cit.*, p.687.

<sup>463</sup> See digitised sources, AN AF II 277-18 - 16 mars 1793-10 *frimaire an II* (30 novembre 1793) : *rappports saisis ou fournis par des espions sur les insurgés de l’Ouest contenant des listes de correspondants vendéens et de prêtres assermentés* (plaquette 2322, pièces 43-58), AN AF II 277-19 - 23 mai 1793-7 *frimaire an II*: *rappports et papiers d’espions contenant des réquisitions d’agents vendéens, des notes d’agents du général Rossignol et deux billets signés de Lescure, La Rochejaquelein et Donissan* (plaquette 2322, pièces 59-73)

<sup>464</sup> AN AF II 277-21 - Rennes et Vitré, 8 *brumaire* (29 October 1793)-6 *frimaire an II* (26 november 1793): *interrogatoire d’un espion vendéen de 19 ans* (plaquette 2322, pièces 79-83).



Similarly, in the northeast of France, the republican army took strict measures to secure the front from spies operating on behalf of the coalition forces. Despite the exaggerated rhetoric that the region ‘abondent les émigrés, les espions, les scélérats qui ont voulu faire de ce pays une nouvelle Vendée’ the revolutionaries had good cause to be worried about the security situation on the entire frontier contiguous with the low countries and (modern day) Germany and Switzerland.<sup>465</sup> The problem was not just the concentration of allied forces along the entire frontier, especially in Flanders, but the existence of spies and informers that had been recruited particularly by the British and Dutch armies to provide auxiliary support. Thanks to Hugues Marquis’ article on the Flanders campaign, much is known about their presence and activities.<sup>466</sup> As he explains, the Dutch army had recruited ‘networks’ of correspondents in the principle towns of France such as Dunkirk and Bergues which not only gathered intelligence on republican dispositions but established their own units to support a planned allied disembarkment.<sup>467</sup> Similarly, during the Flanders campaign, the British command solicited the assistance of the French *émigrés* to compensate for the lack of organised intelligence gathering capabilities of its expeditionary corps.<sup>468</sup> With their knowledge of the adversary’s language, continued ties to their homeland and ideological commitment, they were thus considered to be a particularly useful source of political and military intelligence.<sup>469</sup> As Marquis argues, it was thanks to the *émigrés* who had joined

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<sup>465</sup> Letter of the *Représentant à l’armée du nord* to the *Comité de Salut Public* on 30 September 1793, Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des Actes, op. cit.*, VII, p.159.

<sup>466</sup> Hugues Marquis, ‘Espions et agents secrets pendant la campagne des Flandres (1793-1794)’, *Revue du Nord*, 75.299 (Janvier-mars 1993), 121-132.

<sup>467</sup> For examples of how spies supported Dutch regiments during their campaigns see David Gabriel Albert de Gross, *Journal des principales opérations de la campagne de 1794 dans les sept Provinces* (NA, 1795)

<sup>468</sup> Since the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century, the collection of topographical information was gathered in the English army under the direction of the Quarter Master General. It also was responsible for gathering intelligence on enemy forces from the interrogation of deserters or prisoners of war but also the despatch of spies and scouts. As the général Paul Thiébault states, ‘en campagne surout, l’espionnage, autrement dit la partie secrète, forme une tâche essentielle du travail d’un chef d’État-Major’. For more information on these intelligence gathering capabilities, and how they pertained to campaigns of 1794, see H Coutanceau, *La campagne de 1794 à l’armée du Nord, Ire partie: Organisation* (Paris: Chapelot, 1903), I, pp. 234-235.

<sup>469</sup> Following the French conquest of Holland in May 1794, for example, the British army despatched another spy to Amsterdam, known otherwise by the codename ‘M. de L.C’. His mission was ‘d’avoir une connaissance exacte du plan général de la campagne, des forces que la France peut déployer, et des vues du comité de Salut Public et de se procurer les «les moyens d’être informé régulièrement de ce qui se passe dans ledit Comité’. Cited in Hugues Marquis, ‘Espions et agents secrets’, *op.cit.*, p.130. Similarly, royalist corps regularly

ranks with the coalition armies, together with the support of the royalists established in the rear of republican forces, that reports arrived with increasing regularity until a ‘closely knit and extensive network of informers’ –as he characterised it- could be constituted.<sup>470</sup> Yet, there were significant limits to this espionage activity. As the comte de Cunchy, the princes’ emissary at Tournai, confessed, it was far easier to communicate with his province at the beginning of the Revolution than during the winter 1792-1793 when he was at Gand.<sup>471</sup> Moreover, he also regarded it as almost impossible to plant spies, or recruit traitors, in senior positions within the revolutionary armies that enabled them to discover directly its confidential operational plans. On the other hand, he judged it possible to establish spies ‘sur ses flancs et sur ses arrières’.<sup>472</sup> In other words, it was easier to recruit scouts and sow dissent among the rank and file than to penetrate the *État-Major* and its innermost military secrets.<sup>473</sup>

Despite these limitations, the revolutionaries were rightly concerned about the possibility of enemy spies attempting to penetrate their military camps and outposts. On 5 April 1794, for example, Florent Guiot, the *représentant en mission* in the *département du Nord and Pas-de-Calais*, announced the capture and execution in Lille of one Coupeleux, a native of Pont-à-Tressin, ‘qui depuis longtemps servait d’espion à cette frontière aux ennemis de la République’.<sup>474</sup> As the *Mercure de France* reported, this ‘scélérat’ was the ‘chef’ of the military spies operating along the frontier who ‘avait fait égorger, en different termes, plusieurs de nos avant-postes’.<sup>475</sup> In response to these security breaches, the general staff of *l’armée du Nord* were issued instructions to separate their camps from large conurbations favourable to the recruitment of spies. At the same time, they were instructed

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dispatched their spies to different points of the interior of the territories occupied by the republican armies, risking, as Marquis makes clear, ‘doublement leur vie comme espion et comme émigré’. *ibid*, p.129.

<sup>470</sup> Cited in Marquis Hugues, ‘Espions et agents’, *op. cit.*, p.121.

<sup>471</sup> For Le comte de Cunchy see Georges Sangnier, *Les émigrés du Pas-de-Calais pendant la Révolution* (Doullens: 1959), p.79.

<sup>472</sup> Cited in Marquis Hugues, ‘Espions et agents’, *op. cit.*, p.131.

<sup>473</sup> For these subornment plans, Marquis quotes the Letter from Lord Elgin to Lord Grenville, 26 January 1794, BL, Add. Mss. 59129, folio 26 and ‘Projet de diminuer les forces des ennemis et d’augmenter celles de la Grande-Bretagne sur le Continent’ dated 23 September 1794, British Library, Londres (BL), Add. 46711.

<sup>474</sup> *Mercure de France: 1794* (Paris: Bureau de Mercure, 1794), p.376.

<sup>475</sup> *Réimpression de l’ancien Moniteur*, p.183.

to redouble the surveillance of the camps adding that any officer who neglected their guard duty would be treated and judged as a spy as well. As the decree of 22 June 1794 stated:

Le général en chef est instruit qu'il se glisse dans nos camps des hommes suspects à la solde de nos ennemis comme cela ne peut provenir que de la négligence des commandants des avant-postes, le général prévient tous les officiers que lorsqu'un espion sera arrêté dans l'intérieur du camp, le commandant du poste près lequel il aura passé sera arrêté et jugé comme espion...<sup>476</sup>

Whilst the army enhanced its security protocols, parallel measures were put in place to clear France's maritime towns and military strongholds of spies. On 27 and 28 *germinal an II* (16 and 17 April 1794), the revolutionary leadership issued a national decree, prescribing the temporary removal of all ex-nobles and *étrangers* from the communes immediately impacted by the war. According to article IV of the *Décret sur la Répression of Conspirateurs*:

Aucun ex-noble, aucun étranger des pays avec lesquels la République est en guerre, ne peut habiter Paris, ni les places fortes, ni les villes maritimes, pendant la guerre. Tout noble ou étranger dans le cas ci-dessus, qui y serait trouvé dans dix jours, est mis hors la loi.<sup>477</sup>

The *germinal* decree, which was prompted by Saint-Just's survey of the dangers facing the Republic, represented one of the most comprehensive legislative acts designed to purge the nation of its enemies.<sup>478</sup> Within ten days of the decree being promulgated, the nobles and

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<sup>476</sup> Henri Coutanceau, *La campagne de 1794 à l'Armée du Nord* (Paris: R Chapelot, 1903), I, p. 124.

<sup>477</sup> This decree also applied to the generals who were not in service. According to Article XVI, 'Le séjour de Paris, des places fortes, des villes maritimes, est interdit aux généraux qui n'y sont point en activité de service'. *Décret concernant la Répression des Conspirateurs, l'éloignement de Nobles, et la Police générale. 17 Germinal an 2* (6 April 1794)] Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Collection des Lois, op. cit.*, VII, p.172.

<sup>478</sup> From Dumouriez's treason, the insurrections in La Vendée, the Siege of Toulon, revolts in Lyon, Bordeaux, Marseille, the burning of their flotillas and arsenals etc, Saint-Just had cited the series of security threats that

foreigners residing in the targeted areas were compelled to leave or suffer proscription.<sup>479</sup> Those who remained surreptitiously behind were subject to denunciation, as the inhabitants of the Strasbourg had been encouraged to do by the *Directoire du District*.<sup>480</sup> Just as the *émigrés* had discovered for themselves, once they were declared outside of the law, they were no longer afforded the protection of it. Exceptions were, however, accorded to workers employed in the manufacture of munitions in Paris, the *étrangères* who were married to French patriots and conversely, female nobles married to ‘non-nobles’.<sup>481</sup> Equally, foreign workers who ‘vivant du travail de leurs mains’ before the decree was promulgated, children below the age of fifteen years old and senior citizens above the age of sixty were also excluded. As articles IX and X of the decree established, the *Comité de salut public*, as supreme authority over the war effort, retained the right to requisition the *étrangers militaires* and female nobles whom they deemed useful to the Republic.<sup>482</sup> For the individuals who were displaced, they were required to obtain an *ordre de passe* from the local *comités révolutionnaires*, declare where they would be residing and present themselves every day at the municipalités which received them. In turn, the *comités révolutionnaires* and municipalities were required to submit their updated registres to the Convention’s *comités* for inspection and record keeping. By these measures, the revolutionaries tried to maintain a measure of centralised and local control.<sup>483</sup>

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had assailed the Republic since May 1793. Saint-Just, *Rapport sur les personnes incarcérées présenté au nom du Comité de salut public et du Comité de sûreté générale à la Convention nationale à la séance du 8 ventôse an II* (26 février 1794).

<sup>479</sup> Jennifer Heuer, ‘Enemies of the Nation? Nobles, foreigners and the constitution of national citizenship in the French Revolution’, in L. Scales, O. Zimmer (Eds.), *Power and the Nation in European History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 275-294.

<sup>480</sup> *Euloge Schneider, op. cit.*, p.166. Since the year before, of course, the district of Strasbourg had keeping records of the British and Spanish subjects residing there according to standard surveillance procedure. See Arch Dpt du Rhine, 1L 147 N°25 (digitised) *circulaire du 26 nivôse an II*. No.66 *circulaire du même et du même jour aux municipalités et agents nationaux de son ressort concernant la formation de listes des sujets anglais et espagnols et des princes étrangers en guerre avec la République ayant, dans le district, des biens meublés ou immeublés ou des créances, 27 Germinal an I* (March 1793).

<sup>481</sup> Jean Baptiste Duvergier (ed.), *Recueil des Actes, op. cit.*, p.172.

<sup>482</sup> *ibidem*, p.189.

<sup>483</sup> These measures are laid out in articles XI to XIV. *ibid*, p.172.

### III

As so often was the case, the revolutionary leadership was ultimately responding to pressures from below. For months, the *représentants du peuple*, and other militant jacobins, had been either clamouring for such measures to be enacted nationwide and/or had attempted to enforce them unilaterally on a local level. Two months earlier, for example, Saint-Just and Philippe Le Bas, the *représentants du peuple* attached to *l'armée du Nord* had issued orders to arrest and incarcerate 'au secret' all nobles found in the *départements du Pas-de-Calais, du Nord, de la Somme, de l'Aisne* within forty-eight hours.<sup>484</sup> Of course, as we have seen, the revolutionaries had resorted to such preventative, if draconian, measures before the institution of the Terror. On 8 August 1793, the *représentants en mission* to the *département de l'Aisne*, Joseph-Marie Lequinio and Lejeune de L'Indre issued a decree aimed at the 'ennemis de l'intérieur' who were accused of having maintained treasonous communications with the Austrians.<sup>485</sup> In virtue of their extensive powers at the time- powers that were circumscribed following the *Law of Frimaire* - the two *Conventionnels montagnards* enjoined the administrators of the *département* 'de mettre en arrestation sans délai et de faire dans toute l'étendue de leur ressort arrêter les ci-devant nobles, femmes et parens d'émigrés [*sic*] et gens suspects qui peuvent s'y trouver [...]'.<sup>486</sup> Adopting Barère's rhetoric, these measures were justified by the threat of a 'trame perfide' by duplicitous royalists who 'se cachent sous le masque du patriotisme' in order to 'seconder les

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<sup>484</sup> Décret 16 *pluviôse an II*, August Joseph Paris, *La Terreur dans le Pas-de-Calais*, *op. cit.*, p.189. 1L 147, N°29: *ordre du 12 pluviôse an II (31 January 1794) du général Dieche, commandant la division de Strasbourg, pour la poursuite et l'arrestation des contre-révolutionnaires.*

<sup>485</sup> Not just in Aisne but in the Midi and throughout the centre of France, cells were actively setting up *émigré* networks and engaged in espionage activity, including suborning officers, on behalf of the Austrian army. As the *représentants dans l'armée des pyrénées orientales* announced to the *Comité de salut public* on 1 February 1794 (13 *pluviôse an II*) 'Le système de trahison combiné entre nos ennemis extérieurs et les contre-révolutionnaires du Midi se developpe tous les jours...Un espion de marque, qui venait offrir des sommes considerables au Commandant de Mont-Libre et qui a été fusillé à la tête de la division de Puycerda est une preuve que l'ennemi comptait encore sur les trahisons.' Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, X, p.605. Equally convinced of their existence, Joseph Duquesnoy, the *représentant* to *l'armée de la Moselle*, issued a decree prohibiting all communication with the enemy warning that anyone in contravention would be treated as spies and punished as such. *ibid*, V, p.507

<sup>486</sup> AN/AF II 85, dossier 286, pièce 16.

envahisseurs autrichiens'.<sup>487</sup> Lejeune and Lequinio had issued these orders at the moment when the Austrian army was penetrating the *département's* territory. Moreover, they were carried out along with the purging of the *fonctionnaires publics* in both the civil and judiciaries under the surveillance of the members of the *conseil général* of the commune.<sup>488</sup> Just how many nobles were arrested is, due to the unavailability of sources, impossible to establish but the *représentant du peuple en mission*, Roux, and his colleague Lejeune, at the time of presenting his report to the Convention on 31 December 1793 boasted of having arrested 'neuf cents et quelques personnes suspectes [...] parmi lesquelles on distingue un certain Sainte-Foy, un chevalier Saint-Georges, un fils naturel de Capet et le ci-devant comte de Pardieu, ex-constituant [...]'.<sup>489</sup> According to the Laurent Brassart, they were 'particulièrement bien exécutées'. Significantly, they were principally conducted under the direction of the municipalities and units of the National Guard and not, as with the case of Le Havre, by the structures of militant Jacobinism. As Brassart makes clear, neither the *comités de surveillance* nor the *sociétés politiques* were implanted in the department de l'Aisne at this juncture.<sup>490</sup>

Lejeune and Lequinio played an instrumental role in drastically reducing the threat of espionage from their jurisdictions. Indeed, the revolutionary zeal with which they and other militant Jacobins pursued spies is articulated in a bulletin to the Convention dated 16 *germinal an II* in which it was claimed how:

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<sup>487</sup> *Archives Parlementaires*, LXXXIII, *op. cit.*, p.81.

<sup>488</sup> *ibid*, p.82.

<sup>489</sup> *ibid*, LXXXII, p.509. 11 *nivôse an II*.

<sup>490</sup> Laurent Brassart, 'Je resterai passif au milieu de tous les citoyens actifs. Les stratégies politiques de la noblesse picarde non émigrée pendant la Révolution française' in Philippe Bourdin (ed.) *Les Noblesses françaises dans L'Europe de la Révolution* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires Rennes, 2010) p.267.

L'accueil fraternal que leur ont fait la société populaire et tous les patriotes, a déjà produit un bon effet: et dans toute cette partie de la frontière, on poursuit avec un ardeur patriotique tous les traîtres et tous les espions.<sup>491</sup>

Among the most zealous of these patriots was reputedly Joseph Le Bon. In his report, in which he declared 'une guerre à mort aux espions', Le Bon had stressed the central importance of rupturing 'sans pitié' all intelligence with the enemy before announcing how 'trois espions et cinq ci-devant français, devenus échevins autrichiens ont également disparu du sol de la liberté.'<sup>492</sup> Le Bon had been charged by Louis Antoine de Saint-Just with clearing the north-eastern frontier of spies in support of the military effort.<sup>493</sup> As his instructions read, he was 'de se transporter à Cambrai avec un section de son excellent tribunal (criminal d'Arras), pour délivrer la ville de tous les espions qui compromettant sa sécurité'.<sup>494</sup> Indeed, the success with which his efforts were met was lauded by Saint Just who, in a public letter, applauded Le Bon for having 'fait exécuter à Cambrai les espions, et guillotiner toutes les intelligences de l'ennemi.'<sup>495</sup> Citing the testimonies of several prisoners interrogated by the *représentants en mission*, Barère added to the chorus of approval, claiming how Le Bon's measures had the effect of disrupting the enemy's campaign plans:

La police faite à Cambrai depuis deux mois, contre laquelle les journaux étrangers et les émigrés vomissent les imprécations les plus horribles, a fait changer le plan de campagne de nos ennemis. Ce fait est attesté par les rapports de plusieurs prisonniers

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<sup>491</sup> *ibid*, p.97.

<sup>492</sup> A. J. Paris, *La terreur dans le Pas-de-Calais, op. cit.*, II, p.193.

<sup>493</sup> *ibid*, p.193. For Saint Just's Albert Soboul, 'Sur la mission de Saint-Just à l'armée du Rhin (Brumaire an II)', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 26e Année, 136 (Juillet-Septembre 1954), 193-231. Joseph Deschuytter, 'Cambrai sous la Révolution', *Revue du Nord*, 46.183 (Octobre-décembre 1964), 525-543. Herlaut. 'Les missions de Saint-Just à l'armée du Nord. Seconde Mission (30 Avril 1794-28 Juin 1794)', *Revue du Nord*, 28.109 (1946), 1-33.

<sup>494</sup> Cited in Louis Jacob, Joseph Le Bon, 1765-1795: *La Terreur à la Frontière (Nord et Pas-de-Calais)* (Paris: Mellottée, 1934), II, p.362.

<sup>495</sup> Cited in A S Paris, *La Terreur dans la Pas de Calais, op. cit.*, p.279.

interrogés par Guyton Saint-Just et Le Bas ; mais il sera fait, au surplus, un rapport particulier sur cet objet qui tient à la police révolutionnaire et aux opérations d'un représentant républicain et fidèle'.<sup>496</sup>

Le Bon's imposition of Terror in Cambrai demonstrated how one of the best means of neutralizing espionage was through the power of deterrence.<sup>497</sup> This conclusion was similarly reached by Laurent Brassart who, in his study of the nobility in Picardy, argued that the multiple forms of resistance to the Republic from vocal opposition to the running of clandestine counter-revolutionary networks uncontestedly declined with the institution of the Terror and the repressive measures sanctioned by the 'dispositif législatif'. As he concluded, with repression at its height, the best means of opposing the Revolution was not to stay and fight but emigrate.<sup>498</sup> In deploying 'une energie farouche', as Saint-Just had enjoined him to do, Le Bon had applied this 'dispositif législatif' with the gruesome public display of executions, always an effectual method to cause fright and sow panic amongst the more sensitive ranks of the opposition.<sup>499</sup> Having installed the *tribunal révolutionnaire d'Arras* in Cambrai, both military spies and royalist conspirators were tried and judged, with condemned 'aristocrates' delivered to the guillotine whilst 'espions' were placed before a firing squad.<sup>500</sup>

Fortunately, the register of 'jugements rendus', the 'motifs des jugements' and the lois 'citées' (albeit except for cases 173-215) survive for the period 21 *Floréal* - 9 *messidor*

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<sup>496</sup> *ibid*, p.279

<sup>497</sup> As Jean Lambert Tallien made clear, the Terror was, at its core, a system based on the principle of fear, with a society torn between 'those who are afraid, and those who make others afraid'. As he said, this strategy was adopted not so much to 'eliminate the enemies of the Revolution but to break their will to resist', *ibid*, p.617. In another example of how terror was used as a form of punishment and deterrence, the *représentant* of the Loire wrote a long letter to the *Comité de salut public* on 9 March 1794 recounting the recent draconian measures that were taken to displace Cholet in La Vendée of its inhabitants among which were 'thousands' of spies. As he declared, 'Les mesures que nous avons prises les chagrinent beaucoup. Comme nous avons fait évacuer de Cholet et de l'intérieur plus de six mille femmes et enfants qui étaient leurs espions – (nous n'y avons pas mis le feu, mais nous n'y avons rien laissé qui puisse servir à l'ennemi'. Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, XI, p.618.

<sup>498</sup> Laurent Brassart, 'Je resterai passif', *op. cit.*, p.267.

<sup>499</sup> Louis Jacob, *Joseph Le Bon*, *op. cit.*, p.358.

<sup>500</sup> A S Paris, *La Terreur dans le Pas-de-Calais*, *op. cit.*, p.102.



*an II* (10 May - 27 June 1794) as entered by the *greffier* (or court clerk) of the Tribunal named Galand.<sup>501</sup> The register contains the cases of 216 individuals judged by the Tribunal, of which 153 (including twenty-seven females) were sentenced to death, forty five of them for military ‘crimes’ such as abandonment of post, desertion but above all, ‘espionnage’. In the civil cases, thirteen persons were guillotined for having emigrated, corresponded with the *émigrés* or for having accepted public functions during the occupation of the territory by the ‘Satellites des Tyrans’ with a further fourteen persons for having either ‘avili’ (ie debased) circulated *assignats* or for having fabricated false ones. The others were either acquitted or ‘retenu en état d’arrestation par mesure de sûreté’ as with the case of Nicholas Gabelle indicated in the sample table below:

<b>No Noms</b>	<b>Jugements Rendus</b>	<b>Motifs de Jugements</b>	<b>Lois Citées</b>
<b>28 Maximilien Collaux</b>	Condamné à Mort	Convaincu d’espionnage ayant discrédité les assignats	Art. 1er décret 16 juin 1793 ; Art.4, 1re sect. tit.1, 2e partie du code pénal Art. 2 du tit. 2 du décret du 10 mars 1793
<b>41 Augustin Leduc</b>	Condamné à Mort	Espionnage	Art. 1er décret 16 juin 1793 ; Art.4, 1re sect. tit.1, 2e partie du code pénal Art.2 du tit. 2 du décret du 10 mars 1793
<b>46 Michel Chatelain</b>	Condamné à mort Fusillé	Convaincu d’espionnage	Art.1, décret du 7 septembre 1793, Art. 2 du tit. 2 du décret du 10 mars 1793

<sup>501</sup> The register is AN F7/4774/6 and has been reproduced in full in volume 41 of the *Annales du Comité Flamand de France* (Lille: Librairie René Giard, 1936), pp.175-223. In his study of Joseph Le Bon’s mission, Louis Jacob reproduces an inexact list with names misspelt, dates and professions inaccurate. See, for example, ‘Le lendemain, 22 floréal (11 mai), le tribunal prononça huit condamnations. Maximilien Cottaux (56 ans), marchand de filets à Pailencourt, est « convaincu d’espionnage; il a discrédité les assignats ».’ Louis Jacob, *Joseph Le Bon, 1765-1795, op.cit.*, p.412. André Ulrich (ed.), *Recueil de pièces authentiques servant à l’histoire de la Révolution à Strasbourg, ou les actes des représentants du peuple en mission dans le Département du Bas-Rhin sous le règne de la tyrannie, des Comités et Commissions révolutionnaires, de la Propagande et de la Société des Jacobins à Strasbourg* (Strasbourg: Impr. de Dannbach et Ulrich, an III), 2 Vols. See pages 12-19 and 69-74 for a list of arrests during *prairial an II* but of which not one spy was cited. F/7/4551-F/7/4575 *Arrestations, détentions, mises en liberté (série départementale)*. For an analysis of similar judgements rendered at Douai see Bernard Lefebvre, ‘La Terreur et ses victimes dans une ville de la frontière nord. L’exemple de Douai (juin 1793, juillet 1794)’, *Revue du Nord*, 342 (2001/4), 777-800.

<b>64 Nicolas Gabelle</b>	Acquitté: Neanmois retenu en état d'arrestation comme suspect	N'étant point convaincu d'espionnage et d'avoir fourni des vivres aux ennemis	Art. 10, décret des 12 aout et 17 septembre 1793.
<b>72 J.Bte Boniface</b>	Condamné à mort	Convaincu d'espionnage et de correspondance avec l'infâme Cobourg...	Art.74, section 12e, décret 28 mars 1793. Art. 4, 1er sect. tit.1, 2e partie du Code penal, Art. 2, 2e sect. du meme titre. Art 2, décret du 10 mars 1793
<b>78 Benoni Denis</b>	Condamné à mort	Pour avoir correspondu avec les émigrés et leur avoir servi d'espion	Art. 4, 1sect., tit.1, 2e partie du Code pénal, Art.1, décret du 16 juin.
<b>89 André Cocquel</b>	Fusillé	Convaincu d'espionnage et d'avoir favorisé le pillage commis au Catelet par les satellites des tyrans	Art.4, 1 sect., tit.1, 2e partie du Code penal, Art.1, décret du 16 juin.

The *lois citées* show just how far the revolutionaries applied its full legislative arsenal, including its 1791 *Penal Code*, *Loi des Suspects* and *décret* of 16 June 1793, to incriminate and punish its perceived enemies including spies.<sup>502</sup> Whilst these executions were intended to impose both military and political order, it is possible that some were unjustly judged, not least out of distaste for their Catholicism. However, given that the 'motifs de jugement' are condensed into a few words, and that nothing is known about their individual cases, nor the evidence that was collated to convict them, this must remain pure supposition. The fact that a number of accused were acquitted suggests that the revolutionary tribunal in Cambrai was not some kind of indiscriminate killing machine, as characterised at the time, but a legal apparatus of the state calibrated to dispense local punishment as swiftly and severely as possible.<sup>503</sup> With no right of appeal or judicial review, it was undoubtedly

<sup>502</sup> Forrest who argued that, no matter its excesses, the Terror's proceedings were legal with the passage of legislation designed to combat counter-revolutionary activity. Alan Forrest, 'The Local Politics of Repression' in K.M Baker (ed.), *Terror in The French Revolution in Modern Political Culture*, (New York: Pergamon, 1994), IV, 81-98.

<sup>503</sup> In his book on the Terror, David Andress judged that Joseph Le Bon had carried his zeal 'to hunt down counter-revolutionaries to grotesque length'. Just because Le Bon employed revolutionary rhetoric to instil fear did not necessarily mean that the punishments dispensed on the north-east frontier were 'grotesteque' even if

true that these *ad hoc* legal procedures (and laws) against individuals accused of espionage were tinted in favour of the state prosecution – but that did not mean that the *tribunal révolutionnaire* possessed the power to kill wantonly, no matter the miscarriages of justice. Not just at Cambrai but elsewhere in France, cases arose where individuals falsely accused of espionage were acquitted.<sup>504</sup>

Throughout the country, from Brest in the northwest to Nice in the southeast, both military commissions and *tribunaux révolutionnaires* were instituted on a local level, employing diverse language, to dispense punishment of spies and other perceived enemies of the state.<sup>505</sup> On 27 November 1793, for example, the *représentants* to Brest and *l'armée de l'ouest* issued two decrees, one for establishing a *Commission militaire* composed of members taken indistinctly from different corps to judge *délits militaires* committed by 'brigands prisonniers' and 'les espions' and a second, to establish a *Commission militaire et révolutionnaire* at Saint Malo in order to judge 'les actes attentatoires à la liberté'.<sup>506</sup> About the same time, the *représentants du peuple*, Prieur de la Marne, Bourbotte, Turreau formed a commission at Rennes (1 *frimaire an II*- 21 novembre 1793) to punish with equal celerity all counter-revolutionaries. As Article III declared:

Ils jugeront également tous les prisonniers pris les armes à la main sur les brigands en faisant le métier d'espions.<sup>507</sup>

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they may strike some as unpalatable according to today's sensibilities. David Andress, *The Terror*, *op. cit.*, p.278.

<sup>504</sup> See *acquittement de Michel-Victor Brige, ancien capitaine de fédérés, accusé faussement d'espionnage*, *Archives de la guerre de Vendée*, AN BB3/8-3.

<sup>505</sup> For the establishment of the military commission in *département d'Ille-et-Vilaine* in Brittany, see Théodore Lemas, *Les commissions militaires révolutionnaires dans l'Ille-et-Vilaine en 1793-1794* (Fischbacher, 1893)

<sup>506</sup> Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, IX, p.13.

<sup>507</sup> Hippolyte de La Grimaudière, *Documents sur l'histoire de la révolution en Bretagne: la Commission Brutus* (Nantes: Société des Bibliophiles Bretons, 1879). On 15 *floreal*, the commission condemned to death René Sibille, marchand de cassis, faubourg de Nantes, for accusations 'd'être l'espion des chouans'. AN BB3/8-3 (*Sous-série BB3. Tribunaux militaires et criminels*).

Just what constituted an ‘espion’ remained, of course, a local decision. In Lyon, for example, the president and *secrétaire-général* of the sections went so far as to decree that any unregistered person who presented themselves at the gates, during the period of the siege, was to be brought immediately before the *commission militaire* and ‘jugés irrévocablement dans les heures, comme espions, ayant été et venant de l’ennemi’.<sup>508</sup> Whilst most of the condemned are forgotten, some are known to history. On 20 April 1794, for example, the two sisters of Jean Chouan, Perrine and Renée Cottereau, were executed at Laval. At their sentencing, the commission ruled that they were:

convaincues d'avoir servi d'espions à leurs frères, chefs des rassemblements de Brigands, de les avoir alimentés et approvisionnés, enfin d'avoir endossé la cuirasse et participé à leurs massacre.<sup>509</sup>

Naturally, given their intended deterrent effect, these executions were given the widest possible publicity. In Bordeaux, where ‘des espions infestaient les marches et le port’, the walls were placarded with notices informing the town’s inhabitants of the arrests made by the *représentants en mission*, the decrees issued by the national convention and a list of names of the most recent individuals tried by *Commission militaire* and sent to the guillotine.<sup>510</sup> At the same, whilst the members of the *comité de surveillance*, national guard and soldiers of the revolutionary army patrolled the streets, equipped with arrest warrants and orders to conduct *visites domiciliaires*, the roll of tumbrils could be heard, amidst loud cheering, transporting the condemned to the ‘trône des conspirateurs’, as the scaffold was

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<sup>508</sup> Anonymous, *Bulletins du département de Rhone et Loire: du 8 aout au 30 septembre 1793 Imprimés par ordre du Comité general de Surveillance et de Salut Public de Lyon* (Lyon: Charavay frères librairie, 1843), p.11.

<sup>509</sup> A few days later, the brother of Jean Chouan, Pierre Cottereau was also arrested, judged and guillotined, Hervé de Lorgeril, *Deux Généraux vendéens, Nicolas Stofflet, le comte Charles d’Autichamp; Chouans, Jean Cottereau dit “Jean Chouan”*, (Imprimerie Bellanger, 1964) p.121.

<sup>510</sup> Anne de Mathan, *Mémoires de Terreur: l’an II à Bordeaux* (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires Bordeaux, 2002), p.39.

cynically called.<sup>511</sup> Similarly, during the *séance* of 26 *pluviose an II*, the patriotic society of Angoulême agreed to print the contents of their proceedings in order to:

...refroidir l'ardeur militaire de nos jeunes guerriers, livrer nos frontières et nos ports à nos perfides ennemis, faire rentrer les émigrés, ouvrir les prisons aux conspirateurs, aux hommes suspects, notre territoire aux espions de l'ennemi, nos cités aux puissances coalisées, et nos sociétés populaires au parti de l'étranger.<sup>512</sup>

Of course, the punishment of spies was not just determined by these *commission militaires* and *tribunal révolutionnaires*. Several suspected spies were also brought before the short-lived *commissions populaires*. By virtue of the national decree of 23 *ventôse an II* (13 March 1794) and the law of 27 *germinal* (16 April) these had been created 'pour juger promptement les ennemis de la Révolution détenus dans les prisons' not just in Paris but throughout the *départements* of France.<sup>513</sup> The key difference, however, was that the ruling made by the *commissions populaires* was not final. Once they had judged the guilt or innocence of the detainees, their decision was sent to the *tribunal révolutionnaire* for adjudication before the *Comités de salut public et de sûreté générale* appended their signature with approval or not. Through this procedure, the two national *comités*, which had presided over their creation, could ensure that every precaution had been taken so that the suspects were judged promptly but not precipitately.<sup>514</sup> Such was the case with Samuel Baldwyn, an 'agent britannique' as Olivier Blanc has designated him. Baldwyn, a *maître de langues*, was arrested as a British

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<sup>511</sup> *ibidem*, p39.

<sup>512</sup> Hugues Marquis, 'Effort de guerre et de sortie de la Terreur en Charente (1794-1795)' in *Sortir de crise: Les mécanismes de résolution de crises politiques (XVI-XX siècle)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010).

<sup>513</sup> AN/F7/4436/1, vol. 3, pièce 19.

<sup>514</sup> On 2 and 3 *thermidor an II*, two new decrees specified that the accused judged by the *commissions populaires* would immediately be judged once the two great *comités* of the government initialed their decision. See *Recueil des Actes du Comité de Salut public*, XV, p. 316, 334 and AN/F7/4599. On these *commissions populaires*, see the following report of one its members *Rapport au nom de la Commission des Vingt-Un fait le 12 ventôse par Saladin* (Paris: ventôse an III).

citizen and imprisoned in *l'Abbaye*. He was subsequently released in February 1794 following pressure exerted by certain members of the Paris Commune and *club des Cordeliers* but was reincarcerated in *germinal an II*, summoned to appear before one of the *commissions populaires* and convicted of espionnage. The *tribunal révolutionnaire* in Paris sanctioned his sentence but, in a twist of fate, and for reasons still unaccountable today, Baldwyn had managed to escape the guillotine.

#### IV

In relation to securitization, the month of April 1794 was especially noteworthy, first with the re-organization of the *Comité de sûreté générale*. Following the regulation of 20 *germinal an II* (9 April 1794), the *comité's* activities were compartmentalised with the creation of several departmental units including a *bureau central* as well as a *secretariat general* established near the hall where its *séances* were convened. At the same time, its surveillance operations was divided into four regions (*département de Paris*, Nord et Est, Midi, Ouest) with strict security protocols also introduced to guard the integrity of its proceedings but not the personal safety of its members.<sup>515</sup> This restructure went hand in hand

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<sup>515</sup> The *secrétariat général* could be considered the essential cog of the *Comité de sûreté générale*. Its two general secretaries, Lauchet et Bourguignon were obliged to be present in their office during the *séances* of the *comité* and alone, with the *secrétaire principal* of each region, were authorized to enter its *salle des séances*. A *huissier* was also charged with keeping a *registre* in which it inscribed the names of the persons wanting to communicate with the *comité*. The *comité* also deployed *agents d'exécution*, attached to the *secretariat générale*, who were openly charged with applying its decisions. These included issuing arrest warrants, conducting raids and interrogations and ordering prison transfers to the *Conciergerie* and *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*. It also recruited several other auxiliary agents, not from the *comités de surveillance*, who paid their own 'indicateurs', a few of whom seldomly appeared on its documents, and remunerated by the secret funds put at the *comité's* disposition. Jacques Aubert, *L'état et sa police, op. cit.*, p.19. Émilie Cadio, 'Le Comité de sûreté générale (1792-1795)', *op.cit.*, pp.6-10. Jacques Aubert et al, *L'état et sa police en France, 1789-1914* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1979) p.17.

with the broader process of administrative and political centralisation that the revolutionary state underwent. Having vanquished their rivals, with Georges Danton at their head, the triumphant leaders began to reconstitute the central organs of government with the six major ministries of state, including war and foreign affairs, replaced by twelve *commissions exécutives* reporting directly to the *Comité de salut public*. One of the key changes was, of course, the creation of the *bureau de surveillance administrative et de police générale*, otherwise known by the abbreviation, *le Bureau de police*.<sup>516</sup> With Saint-Just and Robespierre increasingly suspicious (and disparaging) of the *Comité de sûreté générale*, the *Bureau de police* was deliberately formed to counter-balance its influence with Robespierre superintending its operations whilst Saint-Just was away on mission.<sup>517</sup>

In terms of the development of counter-espionage, it is difficult to argue definitively either way whether these structural changes had any major short-term impact, at least in relation to immediate ground operations. In the first place, during the first few months of its existence, the *Bureau de Police* remained, in Robespierre's words, 'faiblement organisé'. Moreover, though his work remains a solitary effort, Arne Ording has shown that the number of decisions taken by the *bureau de police* were 'très inférieur' to those issued by the *Comité de sûreté générale* during the same period.<sup>518</sup> Yet, this is not to say that the *Bureau de Police* was not *directly* engaged in counter-espionage activities. There is evidence to suggest that it was, at the very least, involved in domestic surveillance which may- but probably did not have - 'le caractère d'un espionnage organisé' and which may possibly have overlapped with the direct arrest of individuals for conspiratorial crimes.<sup>519</sup> During the *séance* of 28 *floreal*

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<sup>516</sup> The function of the first of these twelve commissions, *la Commission des Administrations civiles, police et tribunaux* was to preside over all matters related to justice and policing. Created by the Convention on 12 *germinal an II*, it replaced the *Ministère de la Justice* and 'une partie de bureaux du Ministère de l'Intérieur' and was partly inspired by the *Rapport sur la police générale* drafted and delivered by Saint-Just. *Archives Parlementaires, op. cit.*, LXXXVIII, p. 613. *Rapport sur la police générale*, 26 *germinal an II*.

<sup>517</sup> Marisa Linton, *Choosing Terror: Virtue, Friendship, and Authenticity in the French Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.235.

<sup>518</sup> Arne Ording, *Le Bureau de police du Comité de salut public. Étude sur la Terreur* (Oslo: 1930). Except by the publication by this Norwegian historian, there has been, to this day, no single, detailed study of the *Bureau de Police*.

<sup>519</sup> Arne Ording, *Le Bureau de Police, op. cit.*, p.149.

*an II* (17 May), for example, the *Comité de salut public* charged Claude Guerin with the domestic surveillance of Paris, a mission which he was not permitted to disclose to anyone and which he retained even after the fall of Robespierre. Moreover, every day, he was required to present a detailed report from his agents ‘sur les intrigants, les voleurs, les conspirateurs, dont il aura découvert les manœuvres et les refuges.’<sup>520</sup> However, of the reports that Guerin did submit to the *Bureau de police*, featuring the feebly transparent codename G+++++, one can find, in Ording’s estimation, ‘rien de sensationnel’.<sup>521</sup> As the latter informs us, they essentially contained denunciations on a range of subjects, from financial speculation on the *assignats*, the existence of illegal gambling dens, the *civisme* of certain deputies but, in a couple of instances, the discovery of ‘correspondance en chiffres secrets avec les émigrés.’<sup>522</sup>

Indeed, in an undated document submitted to the *Comité de salut public*, which can now be found among Robespierre’s papers, one can learn more about the mission objectives of these ‘secret agents’. Whether or not the author is Guerin or one of his agents is unknown- the document is unsigned- it nevertheless returns to this theme of overlap, in which the lines between domestic surveillance activities blurred with counter-espionage operations. Titled, ‘Observations soumises aux Lumières patriotiques et Démocratiquement Républicaines du Comité du Salut Public’, it reveals in detail, the mission of the *comité*’s own appointed agents which, besides reporting on the proverbial *esprit public*, was to ‘dérober les intrigants et les cabaleurs et de découvrir les trames ourdies dans les ténèbres contre la Révolution’. Moreover, although it did not entirely specify, the ‘bien public’ demanded that they employ

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<sup>520</sup> Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des Actes, op. cit., supplement*, I, p.139.

<sup>521</sup> The reports of *Bureau de surveillance administrative et de police generale* for the period between 4 *floreal* to 10 *thermidor* can indeed be found under AN/F7/4437, F7/3821, F7/3822. Ording assures us that they total 3777 articles. To be sure, they are bountiful, although this author cannot verify the precise number or many of the reports’ contents except to say that they do contain several denunciations of non pertinence to this discussion.

<sup>522</sup> Arne Ording, *Le Bureau de Police, op. cit.*, p.149.



‘les mêmes moyens et précautions pour découvrir les ennemis secrets de la République et les faux-patriotes.’<sup>523</sup>

None of this is to say that, for the first months of its existence, the *Bureau de Police* was anything but the personal fiefdom of Robespierre and Saint-Just. In terms of daily operations, there is little existing evidence to suggest that it played a major part in preserving national security against counter-revolutionary threats. In fact, it was not until *messidor an II*, when the *Bureau de Police* began to grow in size and steadily extend its influence, that it not only risked becoming ‘une police parallèle’ and veritable rival to the *Comité de sûreté générale* but also a mortal threat to the lives of its members.<sup>524</sup> It was at this point that they, and certain *représentants en mission*, recognised that the *Bureau de Police* could potentially conduct enquiries into themselves, a fear that was not assuaged by Robespierre when he alluded to a new list of proscription on 8 *Thermidor an II*. Perhaps, an example in which the structural changes mentioned before had a bearing on counter-espionage efforts, albeit in the short term, was with the creation of the *commission des administrations civiles*. On 18 June 1794 (30 *prairial an II*), just over a week after the revolutionaries modified the judicial procedures concerning the trial of counter-revolutionary suspects, Robespierre formally awarded Martial Jean Armand Herman, a former judge, and *commissaire des administrations civiles, police et tribunaux*, with special powers to interrogate all suspects sent to Paris following the receipt of denunciations made against them.<sup>525</sup> Moreover, Herman

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<sup>523</sup> AN F7/4433 doss 43. Reproduced in Georges Michon (ed.), *Correspondance de Maximilien et Augustin Robespierre* (Paris: Librairie Nizet et Bastard, 1941), II, pp.159-163.

<sup>524</sup> Michel Eude, ‘Le Comité de sûreté générale’, *op.cit.*, p.302. Henri Calvet, *Un instrument de la terreur à Paris: le Comité de salut public ou de surveillance du département de Paris (8 juin 1793-21 messidor an II)* Published PhD Thesis, (Librairie Nizet et Bastard, 1941). Michel Eude identifies two affairs which exposed the acute rivalries between the *Comités de salut public* and *de sûreté générale*: the report of Vadier on the Catherine Théot affair (27 *prairial an II*), and the arrest ordered by the *Comité de salut public* of all the members of the *comité révolutionnaire de la section de l’Indivisibilité* (7 *messidor an II*, 25 June 1794). Michel Eude, ‘Points de vue sur l’affaire Catherine Théot’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 198 (1969). *Georges Lefebvre pour le dixième anniversaire de sa mort*. 606-629.

<sup>525</sup> Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, XIV, p.375. In Paris during the Terror, the number of trials increased dramatically especially with the centralisation of counter-revolutionary trials. From March 1793 to 10 June 1794, 2277 defendants were judged with 1216 sentenced to death. For the seven intervening weeks between the promulgation of the decree of 22 *prairial an II* and 9 *thermidor*, however, 1784 sentences were pronounced with 1409 of them carrying the death penalty. Delphine Dubois, Régis Lapasin, ‘Le renforcement de la Terreur par le décret du 22 *prairial*’, *Histoire par l’image* [en ligne], consulted 24 September

was provisionally designated an interrogation centre at the *maison des Quatre-nations* to discharge this function as well as authorised to freely correspond with the *comités révolutionnaires* of any commune in order to procure and share intelligence relative to the individuals whom he was now empowered to interrogate.<sup>526</sup> Weeks earlier, Herman had been charged with interrogating and verifying the claims of Benjamin Vaughan, a former member of Parliament, who had supposedly fled England after having been implicated in the trial for treason of John Hurford Stone's brother, William. Vaughan had assumed the pseudonym, Jean Martin, presumably to evade arrest as an Englishman, but was arrested in Passy, a commune situated in the *département de la Haute-Savoie*, where he was living discreetly in retirement. From his local cell, Vaughan was subsequently transferred to Paris, incarcerated at Carmes prison and interrogated by Herman.<sup>527</sup>

In a striking example of how the identification of an unregistered foreigner was near impossible to verify, given the inaccessibility of international records, not to mention the wholly uncooperative spirit subsisting between France and Britain at the time, Herman solicited the assistance of his colleague, Buchot, the *commissaire des relations extérieures*, asking him:

...de faire rechercher, sur les gazettes de Londres depuis le 17 mai dernier, s'il y est question de Benjamin Vaughan, membre de la Chambre des Communes de la Grande-Bretagne, et de me faire donner des extraits traduits de ce qui pourrait se trouver relatif à cet individu. Je te prie de faire cette recherche de suite.<sup>528</sup>

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2020. Also see Patrice Gueniffey, *La politique de la Terreur: Essai sur la violence révolutionnaire* (Paris: Fayard, 2000).

<sup>526</sup> *ibid.*, p.375.

<sup>527</sup> Mathiez suggests Vaughan was transferred from Passy. Albert Mathiez, *Conspiration de l'Étranger* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1927), p.262. It seems, however, that he was actually transferred from Cherbourg. In a bulletin dated 30 May 1794, *Le Comité de salut public* ordered the *l'agent national du district* of Cherbourg, in the *département de la Manche*, to remove him from his prison and transfer him to Paris, forbidding him to communicate with anyone along the way. Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil, op. cit., supplément*, I, p.186.

<sup>528</sup> Cited in Albert Mathiez, *La Conspiration, op. cit.*, p.263.

Meanwhile, that same day, Herman was charged by the *Comité de salut public* to interrogate Vaughan a second time. From the outcome of his interrogation, for which he was extracted from the *prison des Carmes*, the commission presented two reports to Robespierre who concluded that the prisoner posed no security threat and ultimately qualified as a revolutionary sympathiser and *de facto* political refugee (in today's parlance). Allocated a passport, and released from prison upon orders from the *Comité de salut public*, Vaughan was transported to the Swiss border late June by agents charged by the *commission des relations extérieures* with assuring its execution.<sup>529</sup>

Despite the leniency accorded to Vaughan, accusations later surfaced that Vaughan was actually an 'agent de Pitt' who had either manipulated, or had arrived at an understanding with, Robespierre. In his memoirs, Bertrand Barère - hardly an impartial observer- claimed that the Englishman had been despatched to France by the British government, under false pretences, on a secret diplomatic mission to gain territorial advantage over the Republic. As Barère characterised it:

Voilà un espion de haut parage qui commence pour proposer le démembrement de la France, la fédération de l'Allemagne, enfin l'abandon de la Belgique et de la limite du Rhin....<sup>530</sup>

This interpretation of events was subsequently accepted by the French historian, Olivier Blanc who, in his book on the activities of British spies during the Terror, wrote how Barère, knowing of his true identity, had even 'aidé l'espion anglais Benjamin Vaughan à passer l'étranger sous le prétexte d'une mission en Suisse.'<sup>531</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter, the

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<sup>529</sup> Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil, op. cit., supplement*, I, p.540.

<sup>530</sup> Bertrand Barère, *Mémoires de B. Barère: Membre de la Constituante, de la Convention, du Comité de Salut Public* (Paris: Jules Labitte, 1842), II, p.232.

<sup>531</sup> Olivier Blanc, *Les Hommes de Londres, op. cit.*, p. ?

case of Vaughan neatly shows how the motives of foreigners like him were now (almost) universally suspected of being disingenuous at best and counter-revolutionary at worst.<sup>532</sup> In his famous *rapport sur les faction de l'étranger*, Saint Just expounded at length on the theory that, foreign (ie mostly British) agents habitually assumed a guise of false patriotism - or in Vaughan's case, false victimhood - in order to perpetrate espionage in France. As he declared, 'Si Pitt venait en France espionner le gouvernement, il prendrait les formes d'un honnête homme pour n'y être reconnu.'<sup>533</sup> Saint-Just was, of course, re-treading familiar ground. Since the beginning of the revolution, any machination, even the attempted assassination of Collot d'Herbois and Robespierre on 4 *prairial an II*, was attributed to either the gold or 'poignards de Pitt'.<sup>534</sup> Equally, Saint-Just instructed his listeners on the 'signes certains' that could be discerned to distinguish true French patriots from the treacherous public functionaries and politicians whose corruption and avarice had enticed them into the dastardly 'foreign plot'.<sup>535</sup> This message was repeated by Georges-Auguste Couthon on 8 *prairial* (27 May 1794), four days after the assassination attempt, but with the added counsel that his fellows deputies should not welcome anyone into their homes unless their 'good

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<sup>532</sup> Barère, *Rapport et décret sur les manœuvres des ennemis du bien public, 16 ventôse an II*, in Archives Parlementaires, LXXXVI, p. 126.

<sup>533</sup> Auguste Amic, Étienne Mouttet, *Choix des discours et des rapports les plus remarquables prononcés dans nos Assemblées parlementaires avec ... le résumé des discussions les plus importantes et des notices biographiques sur les principaux orateurs dont les discours sont reproduits dans cet ouvrage*, (Paris: Mairet et Fournier, 1841), II, p.439. Convention nationale. *Rapport sur les factions de l'étranger, et sur la conjuration ourdie par elles dans la République française pour détruire le gouvernement republicain par la corruption et affamer Paris, fait à la Convention nationale, le 23 ventôse l'an II... / par Saint-Just, au nom du Comité de Salut public...* (Paris: Impri. Nationale, 1794). In a curious overstatement, Sophie Wahnich argued how, with the report of 23 *ventôse*, the members of the *Comité de salut public* 'analysent la stratégie effective de l'adversaire en employant tour à tour la définition générique de « l'étranger » et sa définition conceptuelle'. Sophie Wahnich, 'L'étranger dans la lutte des factions', *op. cit.*, p.122. For more on the historical enmity against the English, see S Wahnich, M Belissa, 'Le Crime des Anglais: trahir le droit', *Annales Historiques de la Révolution française*, LXVII (1995), 233- 248

<sup>534</sup> Amiral de Lestapis, 'Admiral et l'attentat Manqué (4 Prairial an II)', *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 31.157 (1959), 209–226. Alphonse Dunoyer, 'Un episode de la Conspiration de l'Etranger sous la Terreur', *Ed de la Revue des Idées*, Paris (1907). For a dispassionate analysis of the existence of this plot see Norman Hampson, *The Life and Opinions of Maximilien Robespierre* (London: Duckworth, 1974), pp. 201-23.

<sup>535</sup> Of course, these 'signes certains' were not entirely dissimilar from those invoked by the denunciators of Louis XVI's ministers, notably unsanctioned contacts with *l'étranger* and the dispatch of suspect diplomatic agents.

intentions' had been amply demonstrated.<sup>536</sup> Just what this elementary precaution was is open to debate.

## V

In any case, the assassination attempt served as a pretext to conjure up the old fears of a foreign plot. Despite originally denounced in November the preceding year, Barère nevertheless reminded everyone that the Baron de Batz still remained at large.<sup>537</sup> Given that the 'conspiracy de Batz' has been the subject of several works, of varying academic rigour, it is unnecessary to recount its history except to examine some of the methods that the revolutionaries adopted in their pursuit of him and his accomplices.<sup>538</sup> On 22 April 1794, just over a fortnight following the execution of Georges Danton, the members of the *Comité de surveillance et de sûreté générale*, including Amar and Vadier, sent a co-signed letter to the *accusateur public du tribunal révolutionnaire*, Antoine Fouquier-Tinville, enjoining him to 'redoubler d'efforts pour découvrir l'infâme Batz.' In their instructions, they added:

Souviens-toi , dans tes interrogatoires , que ses relations s'étendent par tout, et jusques dans les maisons d 'arrêt...Ne néglige , dans tes interrogatoires , aucun indice; n' épargne aucune promesse pécuniaire ou autre; demande-nous la liberté de tout détenu qui promettra de le découvrir ou de le livrer mort ou vif, ainsi que de

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<sup>536</sup> *ibidem*, p.249.

<sup>537</sup> A de Lestapis, 'Admiral et l'attentat Manqué, *op. cit.*, pp.209-210.

<sup>538</sup> For the Baron de Batz, see Baron de Batz, *La Vie et les conspirations de Jean, baron de Batz, 1754-1793, - Les conspirations et la fin de Jean, Baron de Batz, 1793-1822* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1910-1911), René Batz, *Études sur la contre-Révolution: La vie et les conspirations de Jean, baron de Batz* (Paris: C. Lévy, 1908), Charles de Batz-Trenquelléon, *Un aventurier gascon, le vrai baron de Batz, rectifications historiques* (Librairie Feret et fils de Bordeaux et Librairie L. Mulo de Paris, 1908), Laurence Motoret, 'De l'influence de l'espionnage sur le comportement des familles : le baron de Batz ', *Sigila*, n°30 (2012), Marina Grey, *Le Baron de Batz, le d'Artagnan de la Révolution* (Paris: Librairie académique Perrin, 1991), Munro Price, 'The Foreign Plot' and the French Revolution: A Reappraisal', in Barry Coward, Julian Swann (eds.), *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe: From the Waldensians to the French Revolution* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp.255-269.

ceux par qui on pourrait l'atteindre, en semettant, à leur insu, sur leurs pas; répète qu'il est hors la loi, que sa tête est à prix...<sup>539</sup>

This letter is striking for its own admission. Far from applying coercive interrogation techniques, it would appear that, so desperate were the revolutionaries to apprehend de Batz, that they were prepared to concede the liberty of his accomplices should they either deliver him dead or alive (although it seems that they preferred that he be captured alive for the reward of 360,000 francs). This promise of a pecuniary reward, which is hardly the stuff of tradecraft, obviously had the adverse effect in some cases by feeding the venality of government agents and encouraging the wildest inventions by informers. In one colourful description, an observer describes how the method of arrest by these agents was conducted:

The insolence of the agents, too, is beyond belief, and is but little counterbalanced even by their venality....When a prisoner is arrested it's supposed to be the rule that a complete inventorium of his personal property, and especially of all arms and valuables found him on the time, be forwarded to the Police Committee, who forward a copy of it to the Tribunal, before the trial. But, as a matter of fact, not one-tenth of such articles is ever registered; and the plunder pays toll first to the *agent of the arrest*, then to Vadier and Héron, or some such other arch-spy.<sup>540</sup>

Such was the case with Batz's own property. When his house at Charonne was added to the list of *émigrés* and placed under seal, the Mayor of Belleville accused the officiating commissioners of misappropriating a number of his valued possessions, an accusation which

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<sup>539</sup> This letter which has often been reproduced, but whose source is never quoted in full, can actually be found under AN/W389 doss 904. It is misquoted in Georges Lenotre, *Un Conspirateur royaliste pendant la Terreur: Le Baron de Batz, 1792-1795, d'après des documents inédits* (Paris: Perrin et Cie, 1896), p.234.

<sup>540</sup> Raoul Hesden, *The Journal of a Spy in Paris during the Reign of Terror, January-July 1794* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1896), p.151. While the original manuscript of this publication is not to be found, and could quite equally be a work of historical fiction, it nevertheless does make persuasive evidence as being authored by a genuine observer.

they did not deny on the grounds that ‘n’étant pas payés, il fallait bien que leur restât quelque chose’.<sup>541</sup>

The promise of a pardon, in exchange for information, was also recommended by the *Comité de salut public*. In a letter dated 20 *prairial an II*, they authorised Fouquier-Tinville to interrogate Batz’s secretary, Michel Devaux, and offer him from the scaffold if he disclosed the fugitive’s whereabouts.<sup>542</sup> Failing the allure of a bribe, the revolutionaries recommended that a different stratagem to discover de Batz’s whereabouts be adopted. Interestingly, given their (over)reliance on denunciations, the members of the *Comité de sûreté générale* did not credit the possibility that the presumed accomplices would give him up unlike such turncoats (or ‘des renégats’) as Francois Chabot, the deputy of Loi-et-Cher and former member of the *Comité de sûreté général* was deemed.<sup>543</sup> As they concluded, after unsuccessful questioning, his accomplices preferred ‘leur honneur à leur tête’, such was their commitment to the cause.<sup>544</sup> Indeed, for all the excesses of the Terror, it is striking, but no less the case, that the revolutionaries did not appear to resort to physical torture. No evidence has yet been presented that suggests that they applied thumbscrews etc, an interrogation ‘technique’ that Napoleon’s imperial police did not shy from using when searching for Georges Cadoudal, General Charles Pichegru and their accomplices a decade later. Instead, having spared no promises, as the instructions to Fouquier-Tinville made clear, the *Comité de sûreté générale* recommended gathering all of de Batz’s suspected accomplices together and planting prison *mouches* among them. In this way, it may be possible to extract some corroborating leads from their inevitable discussions together. As they wrote:

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<sup>541</sup> *ibid*, p.21. AN/F7 3688/2.

<sup>542</sup> ‘Tu es autorisé à offrir pardon à Devaux s’il indique où est caché Batz; tu enverras tout de suite au Comité l’interrogatoire, et tu viendras ce soir’. Cited in Charles Lacretelle, *Histoire de la Convention Nationale, 1824-1825, 3 Vols* (Paris: chez Treuttel et Wuertz, 1825), II, p.453. A transcript of Devaux’s interrogation is also found in the *pièces justificatives*, pp.454-456.

<sup>543</sup> Implicated with the Baron de Batz, and suspected of being an Austrian spy and financial speculator, Chabot was condemned to death in the company of Georges Danton, Camille Desmoulins and Herault de Séchelles. Norman Hampson, ‘François Chabot and His Plot’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 26 (1976), pp.1-14.

<sup>544</sup> *ibid*, p.454.

...si un interrogatoire ne présentait aucune chance de leur arracher leur secret, peut-être arriverait-on à un résultat en les réunissant dans la même prison ; on verrait bien alors s'ils se connaissaient ; des espions habilement mêlés aux détenus surprendraient quelque conversation, quelque correspondance, quelque signe qui pourrait mettre la police sur la piste du baron de Batz. La concordance des dates et des faits est ici significative....Les membres du Gouvernement, on le voit, ne dédaignaient pas de s'aboucher directement avec un geôlier : ils dressèrent avec lui la liste de tous les détenus qui, disséminés dans les diverses maisons d'arrêt de Paris, pouvaient avoir eu, de près ou de loin, avant leur arrestation, des accointances avec le baron de Batz, et auxquels on allait tendre le piège de les réunir dans la même prison pour les mieux espionner.<sup>545</sup>

The grouping together of suspected conspirators actually departs from standard security protocols that would normally prescribe their separation. The obvious reason is that prison authorities prefer to avoid mutual contamination and the risk of further conspiracies being hatched. It was for this reason that many political prisoners were imprisoned *au secret*, away from public access and in isolation from one-another. Prison separation, in other words, was (and remains) a preventative measure taken to minimize risk.<sup>546</sup> The stratagem obviously did not work, nor did the proposed measure to stop every carriage, on all the routes, in order to intercept first, 'toutes les correspondances qui partent de Paris' and second, 'toutes les correspondances qui arrivent à Paris', the same day and for one time only. As the (unknown) proponent of this measure declared, 'La Nécessité' demanded its implementation.<sup>547</sup> In reality,

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<sup>545</sup> *ibid*, p.236. Lenotre cites AF/II/273 as the source but a thorough consultation of this series has failed to uncover this document. Given the language that is employed and faith in the integrity, if not necessarily the academic rigour of the historian, there is no reason to doubt its existence.

<sup>546</sup> See, for example, Shane Bryans (ed.), *Handbook on Dynamic Security and Prison Intelligence* (New York: United Nations, 2015), p.20.

<sup>547</sup> Georges Lenotre, *Un Conspirateur royaliste, op. cit.*, p.211. AN AFii 60



for all the obsession (and historical interest) about the Baron de Batz and his small clique of followers, his pursuit hardly constituted a national security priority. Besides the propaganda coup that would probably have been gained for publicising his capture, it ultimately made little difference to la *sûreté de l'état* either way. Moreover, for all the criticisms levelled against the revolutionaries for supposedly failing to apprehend the 'right men', the fact that he was running scared is sufficient proof that the security measures which the revolutionaries put in place- from the presence of armed patrols, the conduct of house to house searches, the deployment of roadblocks, not to mention the spectre of the tumbrils and guillotine- together achieved its deterrent effect.<sup>548</sup>

The Baron de Batz was not the only fugitive to elude the authorities. For three months, between September and December 1793, the former *ministre des affaires étrangères*, Lebrun, had successfully evaded capture following the denunciation made against him by one of his assistants, Louis Antoine Pio.<sup>549</sup> Faced with imminent danger, and beseeched by his friends and confidants to flee, Lebrun had managed to evade the surveillance of the gendarmes, dodge the police hot on his heels, and seek refuge in different 'safehouses' across Paris. On Christmas Eve, after having been betrayed by his hostess, he was finally arrested in 'la maison dite Dharcourt' on the *rue de l'Égalité*, formerly called *rue de Condé*. That same evening, he was incarcerated in the *Conciergerie* prison, immediately tried (with Pio acting as a prosecution witness) and three days later, on 27 December 1793, was executed.<sup>550</sup>

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<sup>548</sup> Hampson even goes so far to suggest that Baron de Batz was being protected by certain members of the *Comité de sûreté générale*, perhaps a sure recipe for his evasion of capture. Norman Hampson, 'François Chabot', op. cit., p.13.

<sup>549</sup> AN/W305 doss 365, *Dossier d'accusation contre Lebrun-Tondu*. 'Qu'en effet, il est notoire que Lebrun appelé au ministère par les Brissotins, les Girondistes, les Rolandistes tout puissants, à l'époque de sa nomination était pour ainsi dire l'âme du parti d'Orléans qu'il voulait mettre sur le trône, soit personnellement soit par un de ses fils, que pour faire appuyer ce parti par l'Angleterre, Lebrun, ministre des Affaires étrangères, n'a pas craint de laisser entrevoir au machiavel Pitt, l'espoir d'un démembrement de la France au profit du fils du tyran anglais.' See also, Suzanne Tassier, 'Aux origines de la Première Coalition: le Ministre Le Brun Tondu' *Revue du Nord*, 36.142 (1954), 263-272.

<sup>550</sup> The circumstances relative to the arrest and trial of Lebrun, as well as the *Acte d'Accusation* against him of 7 nivôse an I, are also found in the same dossier.

Of course, the denunciation levelled against him was full of inventions.<sup>551</sup> Essentially, it claimed the existence of an elaborate counter-revolutionary network within the *Ministère des Affaires étrangères* that tied together the different disgraced political factions (Girondins on one side, Orléanistes and Fayetteistes on the other). Lebrun was thus rendered suspect, a situation that was further endangered by accusations that he also protected supposedly enemy agents such as the Marquis de Chauvelin and the Baron de Mackau.<sup>552</sup> None of this made much sense but then, during these dangerous times, that was not really the point. As Virginie Martin argues persuasively, the accusations pointed at Lebrun had little to do with verifiable facts and everything to do with power.<sup>553</sup> At stake was not so much whether the overall security of the *Ministère des Affaires étrangères* had been compromised by foreign influence –although this always remained an underlying concern–but which of the splintered factions would attain supreme control not just of diplomatic correspondence but the direction of French foreign policy now that the monarchy had fallen and a political vacuum had been created.

## VI

Measures were nevertheless taken to securitize the ministry and protect it from infiltration. On 26 *frimaire an II* (16 December 1793), François-Louis-Michel Chemin Deforgues, its new minister, issued an edict outlining the new precautions that were to be introduced. In the preamble, he conceded that ‘dans les bureaux des indiscretions qui pourraient compromettre les intérêts de la République’ had been committed, an obvious

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<sup>551</sup> According to Virginie Martin, Louis Antoine Pio was a ‘sorte de dénonciateur professionnel’ who owed his career to spreading calumnies. Virginie Martin, ‘La Révolution française ou « l’ère du soupçon »’, *op. cit.*, p.137.

<sup>552</sup> *ibidem*, p.137. AN/F7/4644 doss 2, *Dénonciation contre Chauvelin de Pio au comité de surveillance de la section des Piques, 30 brumaire an II* (20 November 1793), AN, F7/4774/<sup>28</sup> doss 3, *Dénonciation du citoyen Cranvin au citoyen Arthur, section des Piques, 22 brumaire an II* (12 November 1793) et *Tableau de dénonciation contre Mackau, comité de surveillance de la section Le Pelletier*

<sup>553</sup> As she expressed it, diplomacy had become ‘un enjeu évident de pouvoir’. Virginie Martin, *op.cit.*, p.137.

allusion to the failings (and supposed perfidy) of his predecessor. As the first four articles set out:

« Art. 1. — Aucun employé du département des Affaires étrangères ne pourra, sous peine de destitution, s'entretenir des affaires politiques du département avec un individu quelconque qui ne sera pas membre de cette administration.

« Art. 2. — Aucun commis subalterne d'une division ne pourra communiquer à un commis d'une autre division les détails qui concernent son bureau.

« Art. 3. — Les chefs de bureau seront tenus de ne permettre l'entrée des bureaux d'expédition à aucun étranger et de dénoncer au ministre les commis qui, au mépris du règlement existant, auront accueilli des étrangers, de même que les garçons de bureau qui les auront introduits.

« Art. 4. — Tout commis ou garçon de bureau convaincu d'avoir communiqué des papiers ou des informations de la correspondance pour en tirer un avantage personnel ou pécuniaire sera dénoncé aux tribunaux<sup>554</sup>

These measures were designed to restrict, as far as feasible, any communications and access with the outside, especially with *étrangers*, and prohibit the unauthorised exchange of information within the ministry's walls. The purpose of these precautions, in other words, was to protect diplomatic secrets, especially those that could compromise the security of the Republic.<sup>555</sup> Months before, during the *séance* of 20 July 1793, the Montagnard deputy,

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<sup>554</sup> Frédéric Masson, *Le département des Affaires étrangères pendant la Révolution (1787-1804)* (Paris: Ed Plon et Cie, 1887), p.287.

<sup>555</sup> Lebrun was not the only employee to be arrested for his supposed loyalty to the Girondins. On 1 October 1793, the *Comité de Surveillance de la section du Mail* was asked to explain the motives for the arrest of one

Philippe Rühl, also cautioned the Convention about the possibility of spies breaching the ministry's security. As he told the Convention, 'il nous importe de connaître quels sont les espions qui nous entourent'.<sup>556</sup> Rühl's concern was twofold. First, he was concerned about the possibility of France's overseas diplomats being contaminated by their contact with foreign powers. It was for this reason that he demanded that an assessment be made about 'leur civisme et leurs talents'.<sup>557</sup> At the same time, he complained about the number of agents that the *Conseil Exécutif* had despatched throughout the country adding how their deployment was 'inutile' and contrary to the interests of the Republic.<sup>558</sup> With domestic surveillance missions being conducted on multiple fronts, sometimes in tandem but often in conflict, the inevitable result, as Rühl implied, was that it would create a general air of mutual mistrust, a situation that clearly befell France's diplomatic corps. Not only did diplomatic agents habitually spy on each other, sometimes out of competition for the same post, but also moles were surreptitiously planted within the ministry itself.<sup>559</sup> Moreover, in an assertive demonstration of its authority, the *Comité de salut public*, reserved the right to monitor the activities of its diplomatic agents, even legitimising, with the decree of 13 *prairial an II* (1 Juin 1794), the use of 'un espion officiel' for this purpose.<sup>560</sup> According to the decree, each commission was required to nominate a vetted citizen who, each day, was to report on the

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of the ministry's employees, Jean Baptiste Charles Joly. As the *comité* explained, the arrest of Joly had been ordered by the *département de Police à la Mairie*. 'Quant à l'emploi qu'il occupe dans votre Département, il est étonnant qu'il y soit encore, car il n'a point de certificat de civisme, ou, s'il en a un, ce certificat est nul, car il n'a point été visé à notre comité, condition indispensable. En résumant, nous pensons que Joly est un intrigant d'autant plus dangereux qu'il a quelques talents, de l'audace, du jargon et des poumons. Il ne cherche qu'à faire son profit personnel de la Révolution, et il se vendra toujours à celui qui le payera. Vos secrets seraient très-hasardés dans de si mauvaises mains Il faut, quand il aura obtenu sa liberté, qu'il retourne à son premier métier de tailleur, où il sera bien moins à craindre que dans les fonctions publiques.' *ibid*, p.250. Pierre Serna, 'Pistes de recherches: du secret de la monarchie à la république des secrets', *Secret et République (1795-1840)*, Bernard Gainot, Pierre Serna (eds.) (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise-Pascal, 2004), pp. 13-37.  
<sup>556</sup> *Réimpression Moniteur Universel, op. cit.*, XVII, p.299.

<sup>557</sup> *ibid*, p.299.

<sup>558</sup> *ibid*, p.299. It perhaps did not help their cause that at the centre of this 'nuée d'espions, agents révolutionnaires et delegues du conseil exécutif' which Lebrun had 'lachaît sur la France' was Ysabeau, the head of the Bureau central and reputedly one of the 'bourreaux' of the Revolution. Frédéric Masson, *Le département des Affaires, op. cit.*, p.253.

<sup>559</sup> In one *acte d'accusation*, for example, it was revealed that the former *chef du sixième bureau*, Mendouze, had been planted by the former mayor of Paris, Pétion 'comme espion et comme son agent principal dans le département des Affaires Etrangères'. *ibid*, p.255.

<sup>560</sup> According to articles XII and XIII, the 'Comité de salut public se reserve le droit d'envoyer des agents, surveille ceux auxquels le MAEs, anterieurement, à donné des missions.'

punctuality and behaviour of every employee in their departments. In other words, this individual was to act as a *de facto* police spy over the employees, a function for which he was remunerated with an annual salary of 2,400 livres.<sup>561</sup>

With such a proliferation of agents, it was little wonder that no one felt safe and everyone was perceived to be a potential threat.<sup>562</sup> This general level of insecurity further deteriorated with the passage of the *loi du 22 prairial an II* (10 June 1794) which now accorded every citizen with the 'droit' to seize and bring before the magistrates anyone perceived to be a counter-revolutionary.<sup>563</sup> Invariably, given the climate of suspicion, the law triggered a spate of arbitrary arrests by simple individuals who now found themselves endowed with powers to judge for themselves who was an enemy of the state. This incendiary situation was already aggravated by the fact that denunciations had increasingly become the *acte d'accusation* itself. Under the Terror, denunciation was no longer conceived as the initial basis of a police enquiry in cases involving conspirational crimes but, as Lebrun found out for himself, a valid substitute for material evidence.<sup>564</sup> According to article II of the decree of 5 April 1793:

l'accusateur public près dudit tribunal est autorisé à faire arrêter, poursuivre et juger tous prévenus desdits crimes, sur la dénonciation des autorités constituées ou des citoyens.<sup>565</sup>

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<sup>561</sup> Frédéric Masson, *op. cit.*, p.318.

<sup>562</sup> For the state of paranoia and insecurity before 9 *Thermidor an II*, see E Ducoudray 'Le main de l'étranger' en l'an II: Fantôme populaire et paranoïa gouvernemental' and Olivier Blanc, 'Aux origines du IX Thermidor', in *Mélanges*, Michel Vovelle (ed.) (Paris: Société des Etudes Robespierriennes' 1997).

<sup>563</sup> Michel Eude, 'La loi de Prairial', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 254 (1983), 544-559, p.545. According to article IX, 'tout le citoyen a le droit de saisir et de traduire devant les magistrats les conspirateurs et les contre-révolutionnaires. Il est tenu de les dénoncer dès qu'il les connaît. ' Jean-François Fayard, 'Annexe VII - Loi du 22 prairial (10 juin 1794)', *La Justice révolutionnaire. Chronique de la Terreur*, sous la direction de Fayard Jean-François (Robert Laffont (programme ReLIRE), 1987), pp. 294-297.

<sup>564</sup> Virginie Martin, 'La Révolution française ou « l'ère du soupçon »', *op. cit.*, p.135.

<sup>565</sup> *Archives Parlementaires*, LXI, p. 337. *Décret relatif à la poursuite des crimes de conspiration et des délits nationaux par le tribunal extraordinaire.*

Equipped with a special bureau specifically charged with receiving and reviewing the dispositions of ‘voluntary’ denunciators, the *tribunal révolutionnaire* had already been hard at work before the *loi du prairial* overloaded it with more spurious cases. Among the many individuals who fell victim to this ‘ordre du jour’ was the celebrated German adventurer, the Baron de Trenck. Trenck had been residing in Paris since 1788 and had engaged in the Revolution.<sup>566</sup> In 1794, during the height of the Terror, he suddenly found himself the object of suspicion and was denounced as a spy working for the King of Prussia. Incarcerated in the prison de Daint-Lazare in the company of the poets Jean-Antoine Roucher and André-Marie Chénier, he was brought before the *Tribunal révolutionnaire* on 5 *thermidor an II* (23 July 1794), condemned to death for espionage and transferred to *la Conciergerie* where he passed his final hours. Two days later, at the age of sixty eight years old, Trenck was executed.

Trenck’s execution took place three days before the Terror officially ended.<sup>567</sup> Nor did it matter. His fate was sealed once the revolutionaries had embarked upon their quest to purge the nation of foreign spies. As Trenck and countless others had discovered, Joseph Le Bon had not issued an idle threat when he, in unison with other militant Jacobins, declared ‘guerre aux espions’. Moreover, after almost ten months of the Terror, there was no simply conceivable possibility that the climate of hysteria would simply dissipate overnight with the fall of one man, even if it was Robespierre. For real and imagined spies, in other words, 9 *thermidor* did not spell a day of deliverance. As we know, the historical *journée* did not usher in a change in the system of government but a switch in leadership. Also, the principal structures of surveillance and control that were implemented before September 1793 remained largely intact in the ensuing months. Equally, the arrest warrants that had been

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<sup>566</sup> Jacques Berchtold, ‘Énergie des « récits d’évasion » au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle’, *Les Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques*, 39 (2007), 183-203.

<sup>567</sup> His dossier is AN/W431 doss 969. See also Alexandre Tuetey (ed.), *Répertoire générale, op. cit.*, VIII, p.32. AN/C238, n°248.

issued the day before for several staff in the reconstituted *Ministère des Affaires étrangères*, were not revoked. In fact, it would appear that the *Comité de sûreté générale* were still eager to enforce them and continued purging the diplomatic corps of suspects and undersirables.<sup>568</sup> Elsewhere in France, despite the tumultuous events that took place in Paris, counter-espionage operations continued unabated, with the *représentants en mission* (with some more zealous than others) still propagating the perception that the nation was abound with spies surreptitiously supporting the allied war effort.<sup>569</sup> Not only had the Terror created a momentum of its own but with the war raging on, the realities of the military situation did not change simply because there occurred a change in political leadership in the capital. Counter-espionage, in other words, still remained a matter of national and transnational security. In La Vendée and Brittany, for example, the pursuit of spies continued to overlap with counter-insurgency operations. As the civil war continued to spread, despite occasional lulls in activity, the local revolutionary authorities were hard pressed to disrupt communications between the insurgents and the *émigrés* exiled in the Channel Islands.<sup>570</sup> In the Low Countries, where the republican armies were occupying large swathes of territories, the *comités de surveillance*, with their expanded remit, were preoccupied with neutralising acts of enemy sabotage and espionage, both of which were judged to be counter-revolutionary in nature. Furthermore, even though French power had been projected abroad, the perceptions and practices that governed their security policies there were not entirely

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<sup>568</sup> Frédéric Masson, *Le département des Affaires*, *op. cit.*, p.320. On 12 *brumaire an III* (2 November 1795) one of the employees at the ministry, Otto, was suddenly arrested, conducted to Luxembourg where he was incarcerated *au secret*. The seals of his papers were lifted upon special orders of Merlin de Douai, the Minister of Justice, implicating him in a conspiracy. According to the *acte d'accusation* he was suspected of having maintained illicit communications with a 'agent secret à Londres' cloaked under the guise of 'une correspondance mercantile'. In his defence, Otto responded that correspondence with secret agents was always cloaked by using 'les phrases commerciales.'

<sup>569</sup> In the south, for example, a *Représentant* attached to *l'armée des Pyrénées Occidentales* reported to the *Comité de salut public*: 'l'ennemi qui était instruit par ses nombreux espions de tous nos mouvements'. 24 *vendémiaire an III* (15 October 1794), Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des Actes*, *op. cit.*, XVII, p.449.

<sup>570</sup> As the *représentant* in le Morbihan complained to the *Comité de salut public* on 18 November 1794, 'Les fuyards, et les émissaires de la Vendée, qui viennent y formenter la guerre civile, les communications suivies qui existent entre les côtes du nord de la ci-devant Bretagne et l'Angleterre ou les isles de Jersey et de Guernsey...On nous attaque avec des transfuges et des espions. Alphonse Aulard (ed.), *Recueil des actes*, *op. cit.*, XVIII, p.218.

dissimilar to the ones adopted in the maritime towns, military strongholds and other vulnerable areas within the interior itself.<sup>571</sup> To protect military installations, for example, securitized zones were created. At the same time, in order to search for, and punish, the authors of counter-revolutionary crimes, as Antoine Renglet informs us, the *comités de surveillance* continued to work in conjunction with the *représentants en mission* and the *tribunaux révolutionnaires*, all of which were now subordinated to the *Comité de salut public*. To gather intelligence on opponents of the French regime, they drew on the same channels, principally the use of secret agents, the control of correspondence entering and exiting the occupied territories and, of course, the steady stream of denunciations. Also, to dispense punishment, they applied their legislative arsenal, creating, in turn, additional provisions to address some of the new conditions in which they were operating.<sup>572</sup> All of this is to say that the Terror may have ended in *Thermidor an II* but the security situation remained in a state of flux with counter-espionage continuing to play an integral role in both the defence and preservation of the revolutionary state.

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<sup>571</sup> Antoine Renglet, 'Les comités de surveillance et l'occupation du Brabant, (1794-1795)', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 368 (2012), 105-128 (pp.110-113). Alternatively, for a comprehensive study of the *comités de surveillance*'s activities in Belgian occupied territory, see Antoine Renglet, *Une police d'occupation? Les comités de surveillance du Brabant sous la seconde occupation française (1794-1795)* (Bruxelles: Archives générales du Royaume, 2011).

<sup>572</sup> On 27 *thermidor an II* (14 août 1794), for example, the revolutionary authorities issued a decree to expand on their definition on what constitutes *délits d'émigration*. According to article VI, 'Tous les individus déportés de France, en vertu des lois de la république, qui se trouveraient encore dans l'étendue de la Belgique et des autres parties du territoire conquis, [...] seront définitivement réputés émigrés et traités comme tels'. Meanwhile, article VII prescribed the death penalty to 'Tous absents du pays évacué par l'ennemi, qui l'ont quitté ou le quitteraient pour porter les armes contre la république, ou favoriser de quelque manière que ce soit des projets de contrerévolution...'. *Arrêté des représentants du peuple pres les armées du Nord et de Sambre-et-Meuse, du 27 thermidor an II*. Pasinomie, *Collection des lois, décrets, arrêtés et règlements généraux qui peuvent être invoqués Belgique, 1e série* (Bruxelles: 1884), VI, p.xxiv.





## CONCLUSION

In July 2019, exactly two and a quarter centuries after the Terror officially ended, *La Direction générale de la sécurité intérieure*, otherwise known by its acronym *DGSI*, opened its mission statement with the following declaration:

Plus que jamais, la menace de l'espionnage étranger sur notre territoire demeure prégnante. Elle est de nature à fragiliser profondément nos équilibres institutionnels, à saper notre indépendance nationale et à piller nos richesses.<sup>573</sup>

Recalling the rhetoric of the revolutionary period, with its emotive use of terms such as 'pregnant' and 'pillaging', the author(s) of the document continued with expounding on the role of the DGSI citing how it is in charge:

(d') une mission de sécurité qui vise à protéger les intérêts nationaux et les institutions contre les actions de renseignement, d'ingérence et d'influence inspirées, engagées ou soutenues par des puissances ou organisations étrangères.<sup>574</sup>

According to its view, these 'grandes puissances' conduct clandestine operations in French territory with the purpose of collecting sensitive information relative to national security and interfering in certain 'processus décisionnels'.<sup>575</sup> Reading the mission statement, one is immediately struck by certain similitudes with the revolutionary period, not just in terms of perceptions and rhetoric but also the central role that counter-espionage plays in neutralising the threats that are posed to the nation's institutions and fundamental interests. As the

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<sup>573</sup> According to the website, the statement was published on 5 July 2019. <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Le-ministere/DGSI/Missions/Le-contre-espionnage>

<sup>574</sup> *ibid*

<sup>575</sup> With some certitude, we can assume that these 'grand puissances' refer principally to China and the Russian Federation.

document makes plain, counter-espionage essentially combines preventative action with active surveillance and control, in this instance, of the intrusive activities of foreign intelligence agencies who are either hostile to, or in competition with, France and its position within the 'international plan'. It involves uncovering their strategies and pre-empting their measures as well as regularly keeping the various French authorities implicated in state security (from the police and *gendarmerie*, border patrols, customs etc) informed of the operations that it was conducting. In this sense, the purpose of counter-espionage has little changed in the course of its long evolution. Its aim, as they say, remains not just to neutralise the activities of foreign agents within the interior but also to prevent the theft of state secrets and protect vital national infrastructure from being infiltrated and compromised. Yet, whilst these missions lie at the core of France's counter-espionage strategy today, as they do in all nation-states, the conditions that determine their conduct have, quite obviously, no corollary or bearing with the security problems which the revolutionaries were beset with during the period in discussion.<sup>576</sup>

In attempting to chart the development of French counter-espionage during the early revolutionary period, this thesis has presupposed that the term itself was not in use until the late nineteenth century and therefore, the revolutionaries did not possess - or perhaps more accurately - did not share our conceptual understanding of it.<sup>577</sup> It is for this reason that retracing its activities, especially from a fixed point during the French Revolution, presents no easy task. With the transfer of sovereignty from the person of the king, however, the interesting possibility does arise to approach counter-espionage through the broader prism of *la sûreté de l'état*, or more specifically, national security, as enshrined in the constitution of 1791 and enumerated in various articles in the Penal Code enacted in September that same

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<sup>576</sup> This same reasoning could probably apply to any major period in French history but of course, this is beyond the scope of discussion.

<sup>577</sup> The closest use, as this thesis has revealed, can be found with the title of the pamphlet 'Contr'Espion' seen on p. However, as a reading of its contents show, the author is only concerned with offering instructions on both the employment of cipher and techniques of decryption and not the measures to neutralise spies on the ground or protect state institutions.

year. Yet, as we have seen, the constitution did not banish the concept of monarchical sovereignty entirely, and with the continued existence of the royal executive, the security of the nation-state- as some revolutionaries perceived it- was continuously being undermined by not just the functionaries staffing its institutions but also the presence of the Revolution's most intransigent opponents, the *émigrés*, who had mostly sought refuge beyond the Rhine.<sup>578</sup> Not everyone, of course, had reconciled themselves to the institution of the Constitutional Monarchy, let alone the prospect of a republican regime. Indeed, despite the existence of *pur* royalists among both the *émigré* communities and within France itself, some of whom were openly brandishing swords and boasting loudly of the coming Restoration, not everyone was convinced that these rebels posed much of a threat either. As Tackett has demonstrated, the fears of conspiracies were largely periodic during the first years of the Revolution with some deputies to the Legislative Assembly even doubting their existence.<sup>579</sup> It was perhaps for this reason, as well as concerted efforts to reach a political consensus among some revolutionaries, that the response to, and measures taken to quash, these real or imagined conspiracies were scarcely robust during the first six or so months of the Constitutional Monarchy.

Yet, with signs pointing to the build up of *émigré* formations and royalist collusion with the foreign powers, the vociferous voices in the assembly and press denouncing their existence not only grew louder but more credible. As the year 1792 progressed, and evidence mounted that agents within the interior were actively engaged in auxiliary operations, such as procuring munitions, recruiting volunteers and suborning army officers, the warnings of outspoken deputies such as Brissot could no longer be dismissed as mere alarmist. Gradually, opinion gained ground that these *émigrés*, supported by their domestic correspondents and foreign hosts, were not just an annoying irritant but, potentially, a danger to the existence of

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<sup>578</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, 'Conspiracism, Secrecy and Security in Restoration France: Denouncing the Jesuit Menace.' *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, 38. 1 (143), (2013), 107–128.

<sup>579</sup> Timothy Tackett, *The Coming of the Terror* *op. cit.*, p.138.

the revolutionary state. As the officer corps continued to disintegrate, and further waves of emigration took place, the reality finally sank in that an implacable enemy had amassed on their borders. Even so, the measures taken to combat the counter-revolutionary threat from both within and without the interior, appear to have been slow and indecisive. Despite the enactment of the 1791 penal code, and increasingly severe legislative measures taken against the *émigrés*, there is little evidence to suggest that the revolutionaries took anything but small, tentative steps to escalate a response during the period of the constitutional monarchy. With the formation of the Legislative Assembly's *Comité de surveillance*, for example, the revolutionaries made an attempt to extend their capability to monitor the population *en masse* and at the same, encourage both the inflow of denunciations and self-policing of local communities. The trouble, of course, was that this also encouraged vigilante behavior with National Guardsmen and other bands of volunteers, essentially acting as self-arbiters of justice, staging punitive expeditions into villages killing supposed royalist conspirators, sometimes sanctioned by local administrators and other times, censored by them.<sup>580</sup> Similar acts of vigilantism took place in the fortress towns in Lille and Douai, where rumours of an impending attack sowed alarm among the local inhabitants and incited mob violence against supposed spies in their midst. Indeed, it was only when the prospect of war became a stark reality that we begin to see small rumblings of *l'espionnite*. Until mid 1792, there actually appeared few mentions in public or political discourse pertaining to the existence of spies or practice of espionage within France. Even the drafters of the penal code, as formerly argued, failed to create provisions for it, albeit only by inference. Instead, the conception of espionage was never fully defined, even with the creation of the military penal code in 1793, and continued to be conflated with acts of conspiracy, treason, subversion, *incivisme*, *malveillance* and other forms of opposition or non-compliance including desertion from the

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<sup>580</sup> The recruitment of local volunteers to self-police their communities during revolutionary times was not particular to France. In the United States of America, civilian colonists, called the Minutemen, formed companies and trained themselves in weaponry and military tactics.

army.<sup>581</sup> None of this made much theoretical sense, of course, but it did conveniently serve a purpose in not only dealing with opponents but in also helping to bind large swathes of France's populace to the Revolution itself. The fear and loathing of spies is as old as the term *espion* itself and with hostilities breaking out, and the *patrie* declared *en danger*, the revolutionaries were apt to propagate the message that the source of these troubles was the omnipresence of foreign and domestic agents working surreptitiously with the monarchy to undermine the security of the state and the safety of its citizens.

By invoking the message that the nation faced an existential crisis the revolutionaries were able to justify the series of restrictive emergency measures that they enacted just hours following the storming of the *Tuileries* on 10 August 1792. As this thesis has attempted to argue, these emergency measures formed part of a broader process that has recently become to be known as 'securitization'. Just as the great wave of royalist purges swept the nation, the revolutionaries took steps to expand and restructure the apparatus of the state with the attempted creation of strong central organs such as the *Comité de sûreté générale* and *Comité de salut public*. At the same time, given the practical advantage of having themselves conduct ground operations in their own jurisdiction, the revolutionaries devolved responsibility for the 'fonctions de sûreté générale', including the investigation of high crimes, to the *départements*, districts and municipalities whilst simultaneously imposing a measure of oversight. Of course, already across France, in fortress towns like Lille and Douai, measures had been taken independently by local authorities to reinforce their security protocols and control the influx of refugees and returning soldiers, some of whom were suspected of being contaminated by contact with the enemy. As is so common during times of war and upheaval, the fear of a fifth column had largely determined their actions to stop, interrogate and arrest suspect individuals. None of these actions, however, pointed to a

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<sup>581</sup> In French occupied territory, any infraction was treated by the authorities as counterrevolutionary in nature, from attacks on the symbols of the Republic, the maintenance of suspect correspondence with foreigners, acts of sabotage or espionage and any demonstration of attachment to the Austrian regime.

coordinated or consistent response. With the reforms decreed by the Convention, the revolutionaries sought to redress this problem by not only attempting to tighten communications on a local and central level but also to impose a degree of uniformity throughout the country. Whilst far from complete, this formation of a national security system, as proposed by Gensonné and Brissot, could not have been possible as long as a weakened royal executive pursued its *de facto* position of non-compliance. But with the deposition of the monarchy, and the country beset by war and disorder, the conditions had seemingly been met for the revolutionary state to under the process.

Yet, the security challenges facing the nation were of such enormity that they could scarcely have been met by these structural reforms alone. They also required the consensus, vigilance and revolutionary zeal of the local populace to surveil and denounce the enemies hiding within. One of the products of this vigilant spirit was, of course, the famous *comités révolutionnaires* that were spontaneously forming in all corners of the country. As the months progressed, the Revolution witnessed, as Geoffrey Cubitt expresses it, the ‘escalating development of a security culture’ that was not just manufactured from above but also guided from below.<sup>582</sup> Moreover, this ‘security culture’, as he argued, was ‘grounded in an almost delirious vision of conspiracy.’<sup>583</sup> This thesis, on account of the limited word count, and concerns over derivation, has made no effort to account for the existence of these conspiracies. The fact that it only takes collusion in secret to form a conspiracy is sufficient proof to be certain of their existence. In other words, it is not important – at least as far as this discussion is concerned- whether these conspiracies posed an existential threat or even if they existed, but whether the revolutionaries believed them to be true, of which there is little doubt. The historical interest here is to examine how far the perception of their existence determined the development of counter-espionage during the early revolutionary years that

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<sup>582</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, ‘Conspiracism, Secrecy and Security’, op. cit., p.113.

<sup>583</sup> *ibidem*

form the focus of this discussion. Just as the Revolution witnessed the development of a ‘security culture’, manifested by the formation of the *sociétés populaires*, *comités révolutionnaires* and *comités de surveillance*, so too did it witness French counter-espionage develop correspondingly in scope and practice. To be sure, some of the precepts, perceptions and practices that determined the conduct of counter-espionage did predate the Revolution, as the introduction has demonstrated, but it is no less a fact that the unprecedented security challenges, engendered by war and insurrection etc, led not just to the expansion of counter-espionage but the formation of parallel structures, like the *comités de surveillance*, which discharged some of its operations. As we have seen, they owed their formal existence to the belief that foreigners in France were perpetrating espionage related crimes. Without arguing the merits in favour or against the revolutionaries’ increasingly discriminatory policies (including, most controversially, the arrest of British subjects in October), the undoubted fact remains that the measures against them, both legislatively and operationally, were designed to root out spies. Therefore, just as the counter-revolution played a determinant role in the development of counter-espionage so, conversely, did the development of revolutionary ‘doctrine and action’.<sup>584</sup>

This duality is no better explained than by the role that espionage played in support of the allied war effort. For all the inflated discourse about foreign plots and the machinations of secrets agents, especially British sponsored ones, it is the contention of this thesis that the real challenge lay in neutralizing the influence that these military spies, most of whom were French and not foreign, exerted over the direction of the war.<sup>585</sup> As far as the

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<sup>584</sup> To paraphrase the title of the work by Jacques Godechot, *La Contre-révolution, doctrine et action*, *op. cit.*

<sup>585</sup> According to Hugues Marquis, with whom this author is in agreement, it was only from the end of 1794, after this thesis terminates, that the British government began to form ‘centres of action’ and lay the groundwork in the interior for the restoration of the Bourbons. From this point, British espionage activities appear to have been ‘an essential element in its war effort’ both in terms of subversion and intelligence gathering. Beforehand, it limited its activities to learning more about the political factions, royalist prospects etc See Marquis Hugues, *Les Agents de l’Ennemi*, *op. cit.* p. iv. In his study of the ‘Channel Island Correspondence’ that subsisted between the British authorities, the émigrés and the insurgents, Alfred Cobban, meanwhile concludes that ‘the best possibility of effective cooperation with the royalists of the West to overthrow the Republic had already been lost in 1793.’ Moreover, he adds, ‘Possibly even then it was only a faint hope.’ Alfred Cobban, *The Beginnings of the Channel Island Correspondence*, *op. cit.* p.160.



interrelated counter-revolution and war effort was concerned, this is obviously seen with the recruitment of traitors -a key function of espionage- and the supply of intelligence to the Austrians and Dutch armies on republican dispositions etc. Similarly, it has been shown how spies were perceived to have played a significant role in supporting the insurgency in the west, with women and children acting as the partisans' eyes and ears. To neutralize these multiple threats of espionage, the *représentants en mission*, attached to the republican armies, played a central role, overseeing the *comités de surveillance*, compiling lists of suspects, investigating and interrogating them and perhaps most importantly, establishing both military commissions and *tribunaux révolutionnaires* to enforce the penal codes and other series of legislative measures that were enacted to punish spies, traitors, deserters, counter-revolutionaries, émigrés, all of whom were either treated synonymously at various points. The evident success that some of these *représentants* enjoyed in reducing, if not clearing, their zones of spies is most amply demonstrated with Joseph le Bon whose imposition of the Terror at Cambrai was lauded by Saint-Just for its perceived deterrent effect. To be sure, the sight of a spy hanging from a tree, executed before a firing squad or decapitated by the guillotine before his head was paraded before a crowd, undoubtedly induced a number of fellow spies to think twice. Indeed, demonstrated deterrence became one of the key strategies employed by the revolutionaries to thwart espionage and its related crimes. This shift in dispositive happened gradually, however. To be sure, during the Terror, the revolutionaries pursuit and punishment of spies took a far more aggressive turn. Not for nothing did Joseph Le Bon declare 'guerre aux espions'. Yet, it should not be forgotten that most of the legislative measures that were cited to execute spies were, to recall, enacted *before* the Terror was instituted and the *Loi des Suspects* passed. Already by then, the onus on priority had shifted perceptibly from an essentially defensive and preventative position, to a strategy of containment (through mass arrests, for example) and onwards to deterrence through punishment.

Just how far this shift was the product of design is, on the other hand, less easy to determine. As this thesis has attempted to show, ultimately there did not exist a single body which possessed supreme authority for counter-espionage. Whilst the *Comité de sûreté générale* retained its supremacy over the direction of domestic security, particularly following the passage of the *Loi des Suspects*, the *Comité de salut public*, meanwhile, continued to exert its authority over the war effort. And, as we have just seen, espionage and its suppression played a key auxiliary role. Today, in modern day France, counter-espionage is the exclusive preserve of the domestic security service which, itself is a single branch of the French intelligence community.<sup>586</sup> It is a professionalised service which has evolved originally from the *Sixième Bureau* over the course of more than a hundred and fifty years. During the revolutionary period, no such service existed. For all its pretensions of power and expertise, the *Comité de sûreté générale* was still seen by Robespierre and Danton as a ‘fief of low-life policemen’ run by André Amar and Marc Guillaume Vadier and was never conceived, or ever attained, despite its reorganisation, the status of a professional, *agence de renseignement clandestine*, a contradiction itself given the publicity of its persons and proceedings.<sup>587</sup> Moreover, whilst orders were invariably passed down, very often, ground operations were the product of local initiative. Indeed, despite the centralizing tendencies of the revolutionaries, which became ever more pronounced during the Terror, it remains

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<sup>586</sup> In an interesting side-point, the UK’s national security strategy reveals striking similitudes between the revolutionaries’ counter espionage operations and today’s efforts to combat terrorism. The following is an excerpt from a text that has been reproduced from the original. It explains how the strategy is based on four principals otherwise known as CONTEST. The first three are:

i) Pursue: stopping terrorist attacks. ‘This includes: covert intelligence and police work to detect and disrupt the current terrorist threat, continuing to work to strengthen our legal framework to ensure successful prosecutions of terrorist crimes through our criminal justice system or, where appropriate, deportations; proscription of terrorist groups and exclusion of dangerous individuals; information-sharing with our allies and partners to support counter-terrorist operations overseas’.

ii) Protect: ‘strengthening our protection against attack improve the protection of our critical infrastructure’.

iii) Prepare: ‘mitigating the impact of attacks, Prepare includes: work to improve resilience at national, regional and local – people’s surveillance level – with the Government, the police and emergency services operating in partnership with the private sector, local government’. Cabinet Office, *The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom: Security in an independent world* (London: 2008). [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228539/7291.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228539/7291.pdf)

<sup>587</sup> Simon Schama, *Citizens, op. cit.*, p.701.

undoubtedly true that they still encouraged this initiative, albeit up to a point. Equally, the revolutionaries appeared to have been susceptible to pressure exerted on them, as demonstrated following the creation of the military penal code whose provisions the army generals had professed a vehement dissatisfaction with. This is all to say that, until July 1794, when this thesis terminates, the decisions over counter-espionage operations were mostly reached on the ground with the multiple organs of the state – ie the *représentants en mission, comités de surveillance*, army and paramilitary forces, *juges de paix*, municipalities etc, all discharging their functions in co-operation (despite inevitable jurisdictional rivalry), sometimes receiving orders from the Convention’s *comités*, other times just applying the succession of laws and decrees passed down to them. Of course, with hindsight, given the ‘complex interdependence of the threats, risks and drivers of insecurity’ that characterized these early years of Revolution, Brissot and Gensonne were undoubtedly right to advocate the creation of a single overarching strategy and institution that governed national security. But, of course, it is easy to have the benefit of hindsight. In today’s world, such national security administrations do exist but even they are beset with interdepartmental rivalries that can lead to tragic outcomes.<sup>588</sup> In fact, given the unprecedented security environment in which they operated, not to mention the inherent instability of the state, it is no small achievement that the revolutionaries managed to reduce, if not neutralize, many of the espionage threats that they faced. Ultimately, it is not our place to judge whether the measures that they took were ‘draconian’ or ‘illiberal’, at least as they related to espionage and espionage related crimes. These were extraordinary times calling for extraordinary measures. And in the process, despite all the political vicissitudes, a security dispositive did emerge that transcended these conditions that not only was adopted by the successive

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<sup>588</sup> Without running the risk of digression, it should be remembered that one of the attributed causes for the terrorist attacks on 9/11 was the jurisdictional rivalry between the CIA and FBI that essentially prevented any meaningful exchange of intelligence prior to that event. See Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Towers: AL Qaeda’s road to 9/11* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014).

regimes but continued to have an impact on the long term development of French counter-espionage practice.

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<http://www.sgdsn.gouv.fr/missions/proteger-le-secret-de-la-defense-et-de-la-securite-nationale/>

[https://archives.metz.fr/4DCGI/Web\\_RegistreChangePage/ILUMP27204](https://archives.metz.fr/4DCGI/Web_RegistreChangePage/ILUMP27204)

[http://www.cndp.fr/crdp-reims/fileadmin/documents/preac/patrimoine\\_archives\\_epernay/Dossier\\_2009-2010.pdf](http://www.cndp.fr/crdp-reims/fileadmin/documents/preac/patrimoine_archives_epernay/Dossier_2009-2010.pdf)

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<https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Le-ministere/DGSI/Missions/Le-contre-espionnage>

## APPENDICES

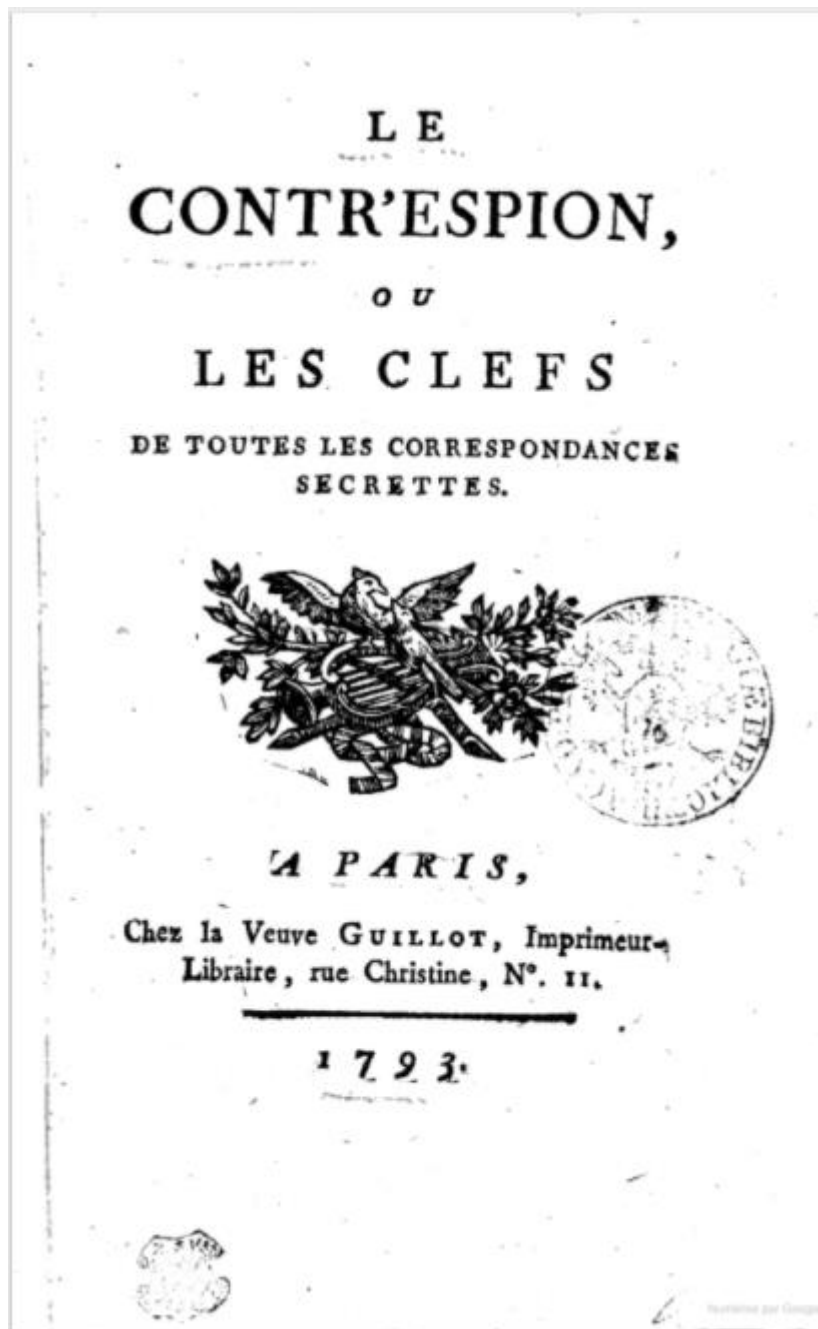


Figure 1 : Pamphlet by unknown author, otherwise credited to a 'Dlandol', providing instructions on how to encrypt or decipher sensitive information. Note the rare use of the term 'CONTR'ESPION'.

TABLE A CHIFFRER.

<p><b>A.</b> Alliés.....lui Amiral.....quand Arriver.....être Armistice.....car Attraper.....pourquoi Attendre.....ame Avenir.....2</p> <p><b>B.</b> Balance.....3 Baron.....oui Bâton.....amen Bavarois.....canal Bois.....et</p> <p><b>C.</b> Camp.....7 Canon.....bon Cavalerie...doit Célestiel...9</p> <p><b>D.</b> Définitif...mais Demander...si Deux.....voir Descendre...loi Divisions...non Dix.....art</p>	<p><b>E.</b> Empereur...est Entre.....tôt Événement...demande</p> <p><b>F.</b> Faux.....8 Fomenter...jamais Fureur.....demain</p> <p><b>G.</b> Général.....6 Gloire.....104 Gouverneur...selon</p> <p><b>H.</b> Hommes.....tard Honneur....gagné</p> <p><b>I.</b> Ici.....il Inventeur...hier</p> <p><b>L.</b> Levé.....eux Lignes.....nous Louvoyer...côte</p> <p><b>M.</b> Maréchal...cerf Manœuvre...panpan Mille.....âne</p>	<p><b>N.</b> Nieper.....crac Nommer.....quart Nouvelle...sort Nuds.....rien</p> <p><b>O.</b> Opération...sot Ordre.....ni Ostracisme...x</p> <p><b>P.</b> Partis.....&amp;c Peur.....y Publication...z</p> <p><b>Q.</b> Quartiers...mi Querelle....re Quand.....bleu</p> <p><b>R.</b> Ravin.....grand Renfort...son Risquer....bas Ruiner.....sol</p> <p><b>S.</b> Sottise.....verd Statuer.....or Surseoir...sou Survénir...froid</p>	<p><b>T.</b> Terrain.....fier Trois.....var Tuer.....fa</p> <p><b>U.</b> Union.....vienne</p> <p><b>V.</b> Venir.....ut Vivres.....choix Volontaires...bois Voyage.....gand</p> <p><i>Mots perdus.</i> Assez Après Beaucoup Beauté Bien Carré Dîner Du Hors Honnir Les Loterie Mers Noires Port Vif</p>
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TABLE A DÉCHIFFRER.

<p><b>A.</b> Ame.....attendre Amen.....bâton Ane.....mille Après..... Art.....dix Assez.....</p> <p><b>B.</b> Bas.....risquer Beaucoup... Beauté..... Bien..... Eleu.....quand Bois.....volontaires Bon.....canon</p> <p><b>C.</b> Canal.....bavarois Car.....armistice Carré..... Cerf.....maréchal 104.....gloire Côte.....louvoyer Crac.....Nieper Choix.....vivres</p> <p><b>D.</b> Demain.....fureur Demande...événement 2.....avenir Dîner.....</p>	<p>Doit.....cavalerie Du.....</p> <p><b>E.</b> Est.....empereur Et.....bois Etre.....arriver Eux.....levée</p> <p><b>F.</b> Fa.....tuer Fier.....terrain Froid.....survenit</p> <p><b>G.</b> Gagné.....honneur Gand.....voyage Grand.....ravin</p> <p><b>H.</b> Hier.....inventeur Honnir..... Hors..... Huit.....faux</p> <p><b>I.</b> Il.....ici</p> <p><b>J.</b> Jamais.....fomenter</p> <p><b>L.</b> Les..... Loi.....descendre Loterie..... Lui.....alliés</p>	<p><b>M.</b> Mais.....définitif Mers..... Mi.....quartiers</p> <p><b>N.</b> Neuf.....conseil Ni.....ordre Noir..... Non.....divisions Nous.....lignes</p> <p><b>O.</b> Or.....statuer Oui.....baron</p> <p><b>P.</b> Panpan.....manœuvre Port..... Pourquoi...attraper</p> <p><b>Q.</b> Quand.....amiral Quart.....nommer</p> <p><b>R.</b> Re.....querelle Rien.....nuds</p> <p><b>S.</b> Selon.....gouverneur 7.....camp Si.....demander 6.....général</p>	<p>Sol.....ruiner Son.....renfort Sort.....nouvelle Sot.....opération Sou.....surseoir</p> <p><b>T.</b> Tard.....hommes 3.....balance Tôt.....entre</p> <p><b>U.</b> Ut.....venir</p> <p><b>V.</b> Var.....3 Verd.....sottise Vienne.....union Vif..... Vedir.....2</p> <p><b>X.</b> X.....ostracisme</p> <p><b>Y.</b> Y.....peur</p> <p><b>Z.</b> Z.....publication &amp;c. &amp;c.....partis</p>
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Figure 2 : Excerpts from Contr'Espion pamphlet giving examples of codes employed for protecting or uncovering state secrets.

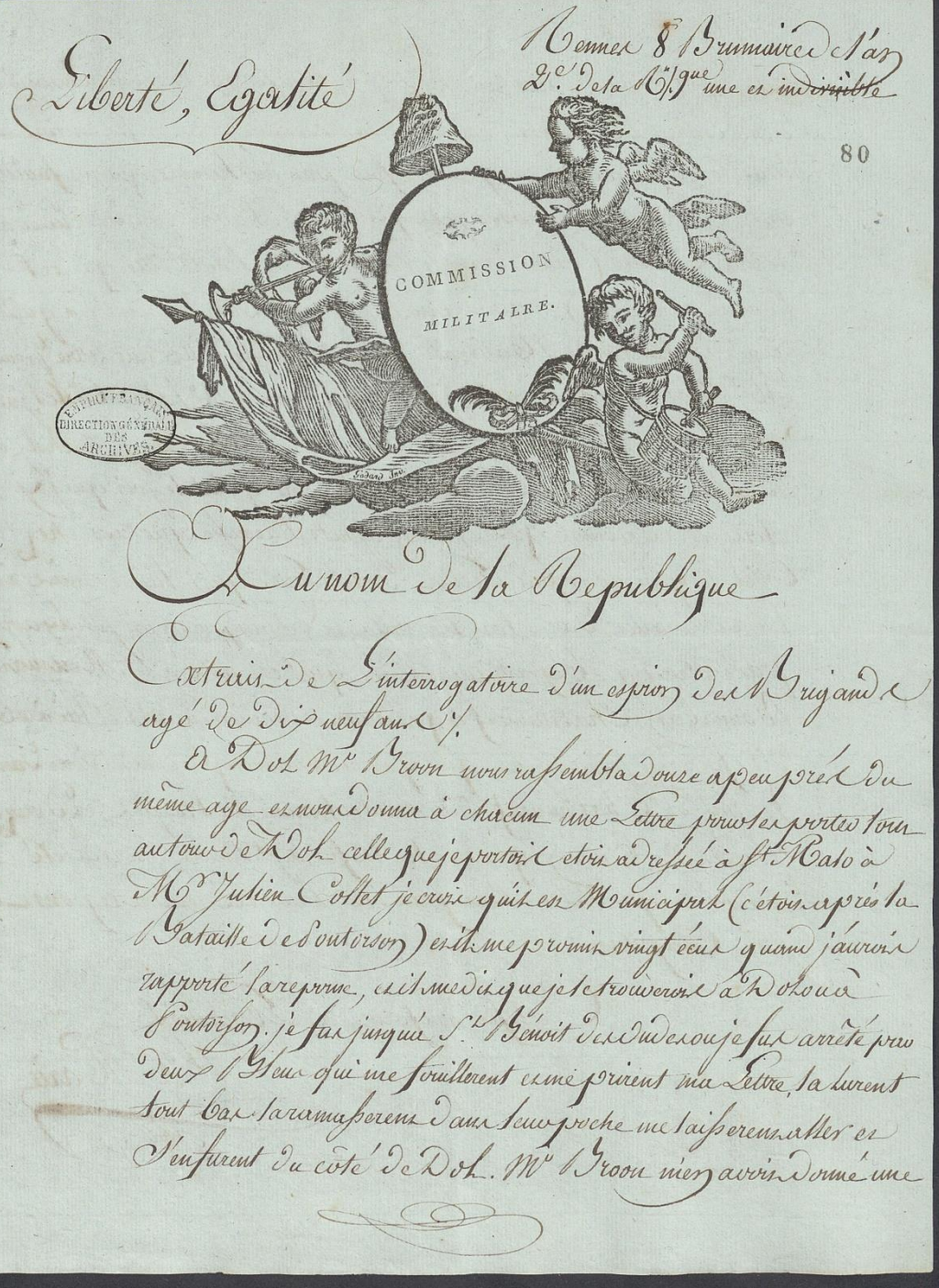


Figure 3 : Report by a local military commission on the capture of a 19 year old 'espion des Brigands' operating in La Vendée.

Autre 7<sup>e</sup> Mur. M<sup>r</sup> Picot au si de St. Nalo qui en commandant.  
 De la garde Nationale ils ne me la trouveront pas. je suis encore une  
 lieue et je suis arrêté une seconde fois par un homme qui me fouilla  
 mais qui ne me la trouva pas parce que j'en avais cachée en deux ans  
 de ma Culotte (c'étoit dans le Village de la Haute Ville que cet  
 homme m'arrêta) mais incontinent rendu à St. Nalo j'ai remis à Guillon  
 Serg<sup>t</sup> de la garde Nationale de cette même Ville une lettre pour  
 M<sup>r</sup> Picot et le lendemain j'en ai remis une à M<sup>r</sup> Julien Cottet, j'avais  
 soupe et couché chez Guillon aubergiste dans l'ancien St. Michel. et  
 M<sup>r</sup> Picot Marchand dans la grande rue y vint le soir que j'y  
 étois il me donna quinze sols. ajoute l'accusé qu'étant chez  
 Cottet et après avoir pris lecture de la Lettre qu'il lui avoit écrite, il  
 lui dit d'aller dans tous les villages voisins pour voir s'il n'y avoit  
 point de troupes Républicaines et qu'il en alla à St. Menouard  
 Bonmaban, Chateaufort et dans ces derniers endroits il lui a été  
 dit par de jeunes gens qu'il y avoit beaucoup de munitions dans  
 le fort de Chateaufort d'environ cent hommes de troupes, et douze  
 pièces de Canon que de la il fut à St. Pierre. ou il a été  
 arrêté et que s'il ne l'eût pas été il en eût rendu réponse à  
 son Capitaine

Certifié conforme à l'Original

J. D. Marie  
 J. P. adjoint

District de Fontenay

Saint Etienne le 28 Brumaire 1793. 2<sup>e</sup> Rép  
faise

Citoyens



il ne parait certain que par votre mandat avec secret et certitude  
car il s'agit d'un homme d'un grand mérite à Fontenay. in le temps de la

Sus lequel nous a été exposé par le citoyen Vincent Lebrun  
unui d'un passe port pour se rendre à Saint Etienne sur  
L'objet de Savoir et Recueillir des informations sur la conduite  
des Brigands.

L'on a entendu dire à cinq prêtres Logés chez le receveur  
de L'inscription la nuit du 23. au 24. a leur retour de  
grauville, que L'intention étoit de se rendre à Laval ange et  
Chollet pour y déposer un nombre prodigieux de gens inutiles, comme  
femmes, vieillards, enfants, malades et blessés, même paysans Luyres  
dans ces villes, pour recommencer au printemps avec une nouvelle  
ardeur, se joindre à L'armée de charrette pour porter un coup  
sur Paris.

Suisant les rapports généraux et sui vant leur prompt passage  
depuis en raison du premier, il paroit que leur armée est  
diminée d'un tiers et que sus lequel reste il y a une infinité prodigieuse  
de blessés.

L'on a entendu dire à des personnes distinguées <sup>namy</sup> ~~par~~ eux  
L'on voit que votre intention est de faire entrer L'anglais en  
France point d'aligner dit il, il nous trahiroit, un Roy & cela  
ce qu'il nous faut

~~tout~~ tout c'est bien vrai mais pas trop de confiance  
car suisant d'autres rapports les drapeaux sont aussi secrets qu'on  
peut l'être, et les soldats Brigands ne savent jamais de quel  
côté ils vont que au moment du départ. Salut et fraternité

D. L'Orjès  
L'Orjès

Figure 4 : Declaration of the captured spy made in year II revealing, among other things, the dispositions of La Vendée army.



Citoyens reprisant



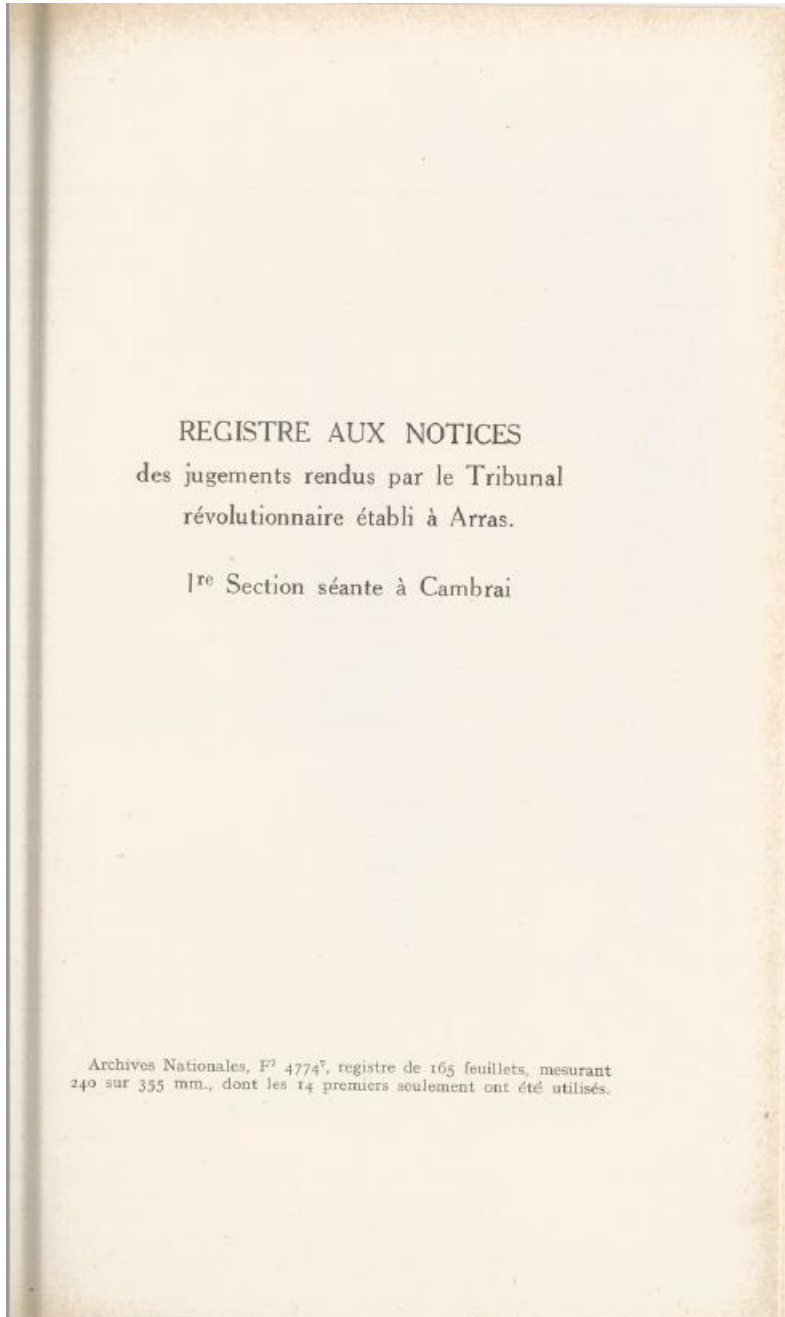
Samedi y dernier étant à fougeres en l'la  
 mais on grande rüe, sur les deux heures.  
 en demye de l'après midy, il arriva environ  
 deux cent cavaliers, faisant l'ire Louis ij.  
~~avec~~ une vingtaine se portèrent à la cure,  
 en disant nous allons exterminer le curé, mais  
 il avoit pris la fuite. Le soir il arriva  
 environ 500 brigands, et le dimanche au  
 matin il arriva toute l'armée par pelotons  
 elle peut consister à 30000 hommes tout en  
 cavalerie qu'en infanterie. Tous armés, on  
 fit battre la caisse et on ordonna à la troupe  
 de venir à la cathédrale St adre à l'eglise de  
 St Leonard ou on chantoit une messe, sur  
 le midy la caisse fut battue en disant  
 que la troupe devoit venir à la même eglise  
 sur les trois heures, ou les commandants  
 se rendroient avec les drapeaux pour  
 y faire chanter un Te Deum. lequel fut  
 fait et le drapeau blanc marchant

à la tête avec plusieurs commandants  
 dont en autre etoit Le cy devant Duc  
 de la Trémouille, à peine qu'on se  
 d'autre des deus d'ins-jas autres  
 es noms. toute la troupe en marche currie  
 sans ester en ranc, tous les soldats  
 sont armés de fusil et de sabre, cependant  
 il y a plusieurs soldats qui n'ont point  
 de sabre. leur artille est de pièces de  
 18. 2. de 12 & 6. ou 7 et beaucoup de  
 4. il y en a aussi 6 de huit le total peut  
 estre de 36 à la suite de l'armée. Les  
 soldats sont très extenués et armés de  
 vermine, ils n'ont point de pain, ils se  
 font que de ce pain qui leur  
 vient. il y en a une grande multitude  
 qui est malade de dysenterie car les qui par  
 logé il y en avait 10 de plus et qui  
 arrivent la dysenterie. il y avait à l'origine  
 le dimanche et le lendemain ils partent  
 les uns après les autres le long du jour

leurs routes disant plusieurs etoit  
 d'aller à l'île, mais de commandant la  
 troupe dit-on qu'il les empêche de  
 aller et les fait aller à d'autres lieux.  
 Le porteur sur l'île et d'autres lieux.  
 Cependant plusieurs disent qu'on s'en  
 au main, quelques officiers disent  
 qu'ils devraient le porteur sur l'île  
 au lieu d'aller à l'île, mais ils disent  
 qu'au printemps prochain ils s'embarqueront  
 de la Bretagne.  
 Dans cette armée il y a plus de 2000  
 femmes dont quelques officiers disent  
 qu'ils n'ont rien aimé à prendre grand  
 soin pour les embarquer. ils disent  
 aussi qu'ils n'ont rien aimé à prendre grand  
 soin pour les embarquer. ils disent  
 de l'armée, des soldats disent qu'ils  
 arrivent facile plus de 200 hommes  
 cachés dans les cars et qu'on s'en  
 ils s'embarquent aussi 3 cents d'armes qu'ils  
 arrivent à l'île, et avant ils leurs  
 disent, allons confesse toi

le leunday toutes Orises qui estoient sur  
des charrettes parties sortirent de plus en  
les autres furent plus a l'hospitat -  
dont ils sortirent le soir tres tard -  
et même 2 charrettes ne sortirent de  
fourges que le mardy matin,  
Voilla Citoyens suprasantans ce  
que j'ai pu vous

c. c. l.  
de g.



**Figure 5 : Register of judgements rendered by the famous revolutionary tribunal in Arras including for both military spies and ‘conspirators’.**

N°	DATES DES JUGEMENTS	NOMS ET PRÉNOMS DES MIS EN JUGEMENT	QUALITÉ	ÂGE	LIEUX DE NAISSANCE			LIEUX DE RÉSIDENCE			JUGEMENTS RENDUS	MOTIFS DES JUGEMENTS	LOIX CITÉES
					COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENT	COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENT*			
1	21 Floréal	Jean-Népomucène Evrard		33	Paris	Paris	Paris				Fusillé condamné à mort	Convaincu d'avoir abandonné son poste en présence de l'ennemi et compromis le salut de la colonne.	Article 4 première section, titre premier, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 2, titre 2 de la loi du 10 mars 1793.
2	id.	Charles Deulet	6 <sup>e</sup> bat. de Soissons		Lisiez (?)	L'Aigle					acquitté	N'étant pas convaincu d'avoir contribué à la déroute, etc...	
3	id.	Charles Le Comte	id.		N.-D. du Bois	id.					id.		
4	id.	Jean Terrier	id.		Sapre-André	id.					id.		
5	id.	Mich.-Fr. Lacroix	id.		Fontenay	Alençon					id.		
6	id.	François Poyet	id.		Margival	Soissons					id.		
7	id.	Pierre Malet	id.		Fontenay	Alençon					id.		
8	id.	P.-Fr. Domary (?)	id.		S <sup>t</sup> -Quantin	S <sup>t</sup> -Quantin					id.		
9	id.	Jean Corbin	id.		Sercotte	Orléans	Loiret				id.		
10	id.	Pierre Debais	id.		Boit-Queroir?	Evreux					id.		
11	id.	René Salés	id.		Couterne	Domfront					id.		
12	id.	Henri Troussel	id.		S <sup>t</sup> -Marie	Alençon					id.		
13	id.	Louis Pelletier	id.		S <sup>t</sup> -Julien	Mortagne					id.		
14	id.	Jacques Loison	id.		St-Marie	Alençon					id.		
15	id.	François Dupont	id.		Carrouge	id.					id.		
16	id.	Henri Jim	7 <sup>e</sup> de l'Yonne		?	Mortagne					acquitté	N'étant pas le complice d'Evrard.	
17	id.	Jacques d'Étain	id.		Besuy	Pontaudemer					id.		
18	id.	Pierre d'Étain	id.		Beusseville	id.					id.		
19	id.	Jean Châtelain	id.		S <sup>t</sup> -Mery	Bouzac					id.		
20	id.	Quentin Bernard	id.		S <sup>t</sup> -Florentin	S <sup>t</sup> -Florentin					id.		
21	id.	Pierre Baudoux	id.		Beusseville	Pontaudemer					id.		
22	id.	René Chepis	id.								id.		
23	id.	Augustin Broutin	officier public	47	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	id.	Cambrai	Nord	acquitté	N'étant pas complice des royalistes.	
24	id.	Augustine Dupuis	femme Déchy, marchande	47	Cambrai	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	condamnée à mort	Ayant conservé précieusement les bustes de Capet et sa femme, au bas desquels étaient écrits ces mots : <i>Vive le roi, vive la reine.</i>	Décret du 4 décembre 1792. Art. 4 1 <sup>re</sup> section, titre premier 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 2 du titre 2 de la loi du 10 mars 1793.
25	id.	Marie-Caroline-Eug. d'Heunneville	veuve Monaldy		Cambrai	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	condamnée à mort	Ayant discrédité les assignats.	Art. 4 du décret du 5 septembre 1793. Art. 1 <sup>er</sup> du dit décret. — Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> section titre 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 11 décret 10 mars 1793.

Histoire.

12

N°	DATES DES JUGEMENTS	NOMS ET PRÉNOMS DES MIS EN JUGEMENT	QUALITÉ	ÂGE	LIEUX DE NAISSANCE			LIEUX DE RÉSIDENCE			JUGEMENTS RENDUS	MOTIFS DES JUGEMENTS	LOIS CITÉES
					COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENTS	COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENTS			
26	21 Floréal	Antoine Gilles	ci-devant procureur à Arras	69	Laventie	Béthune	Pas-de-Calais	Arras	Arras	Pas-de-Calais	condamné à mort	Ayant dans une lettre écrite à la veuve Monsidy en date du 12 janvier 1792 dit que la Révolution était une calamité, etc...	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.
27	id.	Aubert Viennet Damien	marchand	62	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	id.	Ayant discrédité les assignats.	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets. Art. 2 de la 2 <sup>e</sup> section du Code pénal.
28	22 Floréal	Maximilien Collaux	marchand de filets	36	Pailencourt	Cambrai	Nord	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	id.	Convaincu d'espionnage, ayant discrédité les assignats.	Art. 1 <sup>er</sup> décret 16 juin 1793. Art. 4, 3 <sup>o</sup> sect. tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du code pénal. Art. 2 du tit. 2 du décret du 10 mars 1793.
29	id.	François Laurent	apothicaire	58	Landrecies		Nord	Landrecies		Nord	id.	Pour avoir correspondu avec les brigands couronnés.	Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> sect., tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 2, décret 10 mars 1793.
30	id.	Françoise Leclercq	id.	52	id.		id.	id.		id.	id.	Complice de son mari.	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.
31	id.	Pierre-Jos. Laderrière	mulquinaire	42	Avesnes-l.-Sec	Cambrai	id.	Avesnes-l.-S.	Cambrai	id.	id.	Pour avoir accepté des fonctions publiques à Avesnes-le-Sec lors de l'invasion de cette commune par les satellites des tyrans.	Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> section, tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 2 du titre 2 du décret du 10 mars 1793.
32	id.	André Cachet	meunier	28	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	Complice de Laderrière.	Même article et même décret.
33	id.	André Jos. Lefebvre	arpenteur	62	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.
34	id.	Boniface Jacquemart	maréchal	39	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.
35	id.	Desvignes			id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.
36	23 Floreal	La veuve Priston	marchande	48	Cambrai	id.	id.	Cambrai	id.	id.	id.	Pour avoir approuvé l'émigration de l'un de ses fils et ayant précieusement conservé des correspondances contre révolutionnaires, etc...	Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> section, titre 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 2, même titre, 2 <sup>e</sup> sect. dudit Code. Art. 2, titre 2, décret 10 mars 1793.

N°	DATES DES JUGEMENTS	NOMS ET PRÉNOMS DES MIS EN JUGEMENT	QUALITÉ	ÂGE	LIEUX DE NAISSANCE			LIEUX DE RÉSIDENCE			JUGEMENTS RENDUS	MOTIFS DES JUGEMENTS	LOIX CITÉES
					COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENT	COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENT			
37	23 Floréal	Louis Maladière	Cant[onnier] 3 <sup>e</sup> v[olontaire] n[ationaux]	25	Bar-s.-Seine						acquitté	N'étant pas convaincu de vol et de pillage et notamment d'avoir tué un cochon dans la commune d'Avesnes-le-Sec pour l'emporter.	
38	id.	Albert Hulot	Commis au district	30							id.	N'étant pas convaincu d'avoir par ses menaces cherché à avilir et dissoudre la société populaire de Cambrai.	
39	id.	Berclael	cy-devant marquis de la Wastine	60	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	condamné à mort	Pour avoir fait émigrer ses deux fils, préciusement conservé des titres féodaux pros-crits par les lois.	Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> section, titre 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 2 du même titre, 2 <sup>e</sup> section dudit Code.
40	id.	Marguerite Bonnefonds	Femme du dit	52	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	Convaincue de complicité.	Mêmes décrets et mêmes articles.
41	id.	Augustin Leduc	mulquinier	58	S <sup>t</sup> -Aubert	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	Convaincu d'espionnage.	Art. 1, décret du 16 juin 1793. Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> sect., tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 2, titre 2, décret du 10 mars 1793.
42	id.	Louis Moreau	id.	21	Denain	Valenciennes	id.	Denain	Valencien.	id.	id.	Convaincu de complicité.	Mêmes articles et même décret.
43	id.	Ferdinand Lamand	tisserand	32	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	Mêmes articles et même décret.
44	24 Floréal	Pierre Jos. Bruneau	cy-devant avocat	32	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	id.	Ayant avili les assignats et la représentation nationale.	Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> section, tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. Art. 1 du décret du 5 septembre 1793. Art. 4 du dit décret. Art. 2, titre 2, décret du 10 mars 1793.
45	24 Floréal	Jacques Jos. Fontaine	domestique du dit	54	Preux-au-Sar	Quesnoy	Nord	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	id.	Complice du dit Bruneau.	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.

N°	DATES DES JUGEMENTS	NOMS ET PRÉNOMS DES MIS EN JUGEMENT	QUALITÉ	AGE	LIEUX DE NAISSANCE			LIEUX DE RÉSIDENCE			JUGEMENTS RENDUS JUGEMENTS	MOTIFS DES JUGEMENTS	LOIS CITÉES
					COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENTS	COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENTS			
46	24 Floréal	Michel Chatejain	Fabricant de toilette		Saulzoir						condamné à mort Fusillé	Convaincu d'espionnage.	Art. 4, décret du 7 septembre 1793. Art. 2, titre 2, décret 10 mars 1793.
47	id.	Philippe-Jacques Téliard	id		id.						Fusillé. Id.	id.	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.
48	id.	Noel Jos. Pouré	laboureur		id.						Fusillé. Id.	id.	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.
49	25 Floréal	Franç.-Dominique Tranchant	ex.bénéficiaire	68	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	Cambrai	Cambrai	Nord	condamné à mort	Pour avoir conservé très précieusement une multitude d'écrits fanatiques et royalistes et cherché à avilir et disconcrer la représentation nationale.	Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> section, titre 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. — Art. 2, 2 <sup>e</sup> section dudit Code. Art. 1, décret 23 Ventose. Art. 2, tit. 2, décret 10 mars 1790.
50	id.	Euphrosine Tranchant	Nièce dudit	45	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	Complice du dit Tranchant.	Mêmes décrets et mêmes articles.
51	26 Floréal	Henri Simonin	Dragon au 10 <sup>e</sup> rég.	23	Neuilly-sur-Aube		H <sup>te</sup> -Marne	Attaché	à l'armée	du Nord	acquitté	N'ayant commis l'homicide envers un bouvier de l'armée mort des suites d'un coup de bâton que par la nécessité de sa propre défense.	
52	id.	Lazare Bertrand	Capitaine [du] 3 <sup>e</sup> volontaires nation.	26	Auxerre	Auxerre	Yonne	Attaché	à l'armée	du Nord	fusillé	Pour avoir abandonné son poste pour ne songer qu'à sa propre sûreté.	Art. 2, 2 <sup>e</sup> quest. du Code spécial militaire du 12 mai 1793. — Art. 2, tit. 2, loi du 20 mars.
53	id.	Charlot-Habertine Jos. Pierron	Femme J.-Pierre Leroi	41	Arras	Arras	Pas-de-Calais	Belonne-court	Cambrai	Nord	condamné à mort	Ayant enterré ou fait enterrer des titres féodaux etc...	Art. 4, 1 <sup>re</sup> section, tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. — Art. 5, décret 20 Nivose. Art. 2, tit. 2, décret du 20 mars.
54	id.	J <sup>e</sup> -Henri-Jos. Leroy	son fils	12	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	id.	acquitté	N'étant pas convaincu d'être l'auteur de bris de scellés, etc...	



N°	DATES DES JUGEMENTS	NOMS ET PRÉNOMS DES MIS EN JUGEMENT	QUALITÉ	AGE	LIEUX DE NAISSANCE			LIEUX DE RÉSIDENCE			JUGEMENTS RENDUS	MOTIFS DES JUGEMENTS	LOIS CITÉES
					COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENT	COMMUNES	DISTRICTS	DÉPARTEMENT			
66	29 Floréal	Nicolas Morisse	ci-devant boulanger	58	Square	S <sup>t</sup> -Quentin	L'Aisne	Lille	Lille	Nord	acquitté	N'étant pas convaincu d'espionnage.	
67	1 Prairial	Adrien Boucly	moulinier	26				Après	Valencien.	Nord	condanné à mort	Pour avoir correspondu avec les ennemis et leur avoir fourni des secours en vivres et en fourrages, de plus convaincu d'espionnage.	Art. 4, 1 <sup>er</sup> sect., tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. — Art. 2, tit. 2, décret du 10 mars 1793.
68	id.	Antoine Jos. Tressca	rentier	65				au Fai	Quessnoy	Nord	id.	Pour avoir logé, nourri et procuré toutes sortes de secours aux satellites des tyrans.	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.
69	id.	Armand-Franç.-Jos. Delebarre	cultivateur					J. Lesdins	Cambrai	Nord	id.	Pour correspondance avec les émigrés, et avoir fait ou fait faire plusieurs convois pour les Autrichiens.	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.
70	id.	Jean-Franç. Gérard	chirurgien	55	Nancy	Nancy		Inchy	id.	id.	id.	Convaincu d'espionnage et ayant eu des intelligences avec les ennemis.	Art. 4, décret 16 juil. 1793. — Art. 2, tit. 2, décret du 10 mars 1793.
71	id.	J.-B <sup>t</sup> Dumont	vivandier	39				Abancourt	id.	id.	id.	Convaincu d'espionnage etc...	Mêmes articles et mêmes décrets.
72	id.	J.-B <sup>t</sup> Boniface	cultivateur	34				Tun	id.	id.	acquitté	N'étant pas convaincu de propos contre-révolutionnaires tendants à décourager les troupes françaises.	
73	6 id.	Toussaint Lagrange	sergent au 7 <sup>e</sup> de l'Yonne	22	Etive	Tonnerre	L'Yonne	En garnison à Bouchain		Nord	acquitté	N'étant pas convaincu d'émigration.	
74	6 id.	Albert Dhémin	cond. d'artillerie	27				Sotin	Valenc. <sup>**</sup>	Nord	condanné à mort	Ayant avili les assignats, ayant dit qu'il falloit un roi etc...	Décret 4 déc. 1793. — Article 1 et 4 décret 15 sept. 1793. — Art. 2, décret du 10 mars 1793.
75	6 id.	Caroline Locquet	fermière					Saulzoir	id.	id.	id.	Convaincu d'espionnage et de correspondance avec l'infante Cobourg...	Art. 74, section 12 <sup>e</sup> , décret 28 mars 1793. — Art. 4, 1 <sup>er</sup> sect., tit. 1, 2 <sup>e</sup> partie du Code pénal. — Art. 2, 2 <sup>e</sup> sect. du même titre. — Art. 2, décret du 10 mars 1793.



