

The occasion was the anniversary of "La Légion Française des Combattants". Thirty thousand men had come to Vichy to participate from all parts of France. The programme included a display of folk songs and dances to be given outside the Casino, where a platform had been set up and decorated with the coats-of-arms of the provinces, including Alsace and Lorraine. The Germans protested in an official note to Marshal Pétain insisting on the removal of these two shields. He refused to do so and his decision was soon repeated to the crowd, which gave him a great ovation when he came down to the show. To prove that he had understood the meaning of their demonstration he went direct to the delegations of Alsace and Lorraine and shook hands with them all and even had his photograph taken arm in arm with two girls from these provinces. A copy of this photograph is attached as Annex No.10. Meanwhile, a Légionnaire, not knowing who I was said to me: "Il est malin, le vieux. Il fait semblant de collaborer mais c'est lui qui les aura". Although this is perhaps a rather optimistic opinion, it explains how the spirit of resistance is maintained and why the Marshal still retains a great, if declining popularity, amongst his people.