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The Consulate and Militant Revolutionaries: Patterns of Persecution and Survival

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The idea of surviving the French Revolution naturally brings to mind its most violent and repressive phase, the Terror of 1793–94. However, once the National Convention disposed of Robespierre and his acolytes, an ineluctable demand for retribution against Jacobins and *sans-culottes* increasingly overwhelmed national politics. Thermidorian lawmakers responded with attempts at rectification, restitution, and retribution, thus becoming "pioneers of transitional justice."[1] However, they also resorted to scapegoating, political purging, and military courts. None of these efforts satisfied the popular thirst for vengeance. In some parts of France, former victims turned to vigilante violence, including beatings, lynchings, prison massacres, and exemplary murders. As a result, after Thermidor, those individuals most concerned with surviving the French Revolution were increasingly revolutionary militants who had served the regime of the Terror in one capacity or another.

Ultimately, the incoherence of Thermidorian efforts to establish retributive justice on behalf of presumed victims of the Terror led to an amnesty for all acts related to the Revolution. The amnesty of 26 October 1795 released thousands of would-be "terrorists" back into civilian life. Many of these militants soon engaged in political activity deemed subversive of the new, more moderate regime. As a result, many of them continued to face political persecution for years to come,[2] especially following the Jacobin resurgence in the summer of 1799. It is worth asking, therefore, what did it mean for militant revolutionaries themselves to survive the Revolution's final phase from the Brumaire coup d'état of November 1799 to the Life Consulate of August

[1] Howard G. Brown, "Robespierre's Tail: The Possibilities of Justice after the Terror," *Canadian Journal of History* XLV (2010): 503–36.

[2] The amnesty of 4 Brumaire IV did not, however, draw a veil over all prosecutions for pro-revolutionary violence. Most notably, criminal courts were authorized to prosecute individuals accused of perpetrating the prison massacres of September 1792. These prosecutions ultimately proved unsatisfactory, as well. The trials did not include members of the Paris Commune's infamous Surveillance Committee, which had overseen the killings; moreover, jurors in Paris acquitted 36 of 39 defendants on the grounds of not having acted with criminal intent. This verdict did not, however, exonerate them or other suspected *septembriseurs* in the eyes of their neighbors or the police. The government naturally took note of such men and occasionally found opportunities to persecute them anew. The same held true for other, higher profile figures, who had been the targets of Thermidorian prosecution, but escaped punishment due to a lack of evidence or the amnesty of late October 1795. See Sergio Luzzatto, "Comment entrer dans le Directoire? Le problème de l'amnistie," in *La République directoriale: Actes du colloque de Clermont-Ferrand (22–24 mai 1997)*, ed. Pierre Bourdin and Bernard Gainot (Clermont-Ferrand: Société des études robespierristes, 1998), 328–29.

1802? Most militants were quickly forced out of politics during this period, but who among them faced actual physical elimination?

The patterns of persecution and survival in the late French Revolution can be explored by examining the fate of three groups of militant republicans who faced government persecution after 18 Brumaire. These are: 61 deputies excluded from their seats by the law of 19 Brumaire VIII; 49 men ordered into exile by the provisional Consulate a week later; and 130 men ordered deported by Senatorial decree in January 1801. These three groups offer a prosopography of revolutionary militants whose personal notoriety put each man at risk of not surviving the revolution to which he had been profoundly committed. The focus here is on those who actually faced the dangers of deportation, rather than the strategies of those who avoided them.[3]

The Exclusions of the Brumaire Coup d'État

The first group to face government persecution following the change of regime were Jacobin deputies who, despite being excluded from their seats by the law of 19 Brumaire VIII, almost all survived the Consulate. This law framed that day's coup d'état as a pre-emptive strike against a Jacobin plot to seize control of the government.[4] Therefore, in addition to appointing a new three-man executive, the law barred 61 deputies from "the National Representation for the abuses and assaults that they have constantly committed and notably the majority of them during this morning's session." This statement largely explains the inclusion of 54 members of the Council of 500, where a real tumult had occurred when deputies tried physically to expel Bonaparte from their assembly. However, the list also included seven deputies from the Council of Elders. Few of these had particular prominence, but they were clearly known to be hostile to the "brumairians" who had just seized power.[5]

The background of these deputies illustrates the national resurgence of Jacobinism in the late Directory.[6] Three quarters of the deputies excluded from the Council of 500 had been elected in the spring of 1798. Although the bulk of these men (24) were new to national office at the time,

[3] Jeff Horn, *The Making of a Terrorist: Alexandre Roussellin and the French Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), explores the survival tactics of another former terrorist who clearly used his connections to Jacobins in high places.

[4] The elections of 1799 had led to a purge of Directors, dubbed with some exaggeration a "coup d'état." This began the so-called Jacobin Hundred Days when most of the government ministers, hundreds of officials throughout the provinces, and dozens of generals were appointed to positions of power and influence from which they had previously been excluded due to their roles in the regime of 1793–94. Revisionist politicians, led by the Directors Emmanuel Sieyès and Roger Ducos, and abetted by the ministers Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand and Joseph Fouché, managed to reverse the rising tide of Jacobinism in September by closing their central club and defeating the bill to proclaim the fatherland in danger.

[5] The original list did not indicate in which chamber the deputies sat and contains spelling errors; therefore, it is worth noting that the deputies from the Council of Elders were: Pardoux Bordas,* Joseph-Antoine Boisset (not Boissier); Jean-Marie Cittadella,* Pierre Collombel (not Colombel); Jacob-Augustin-Antoine Moreau (dit de Vormes), Yves-Claude Jourdain,* François-Sébastien Letourneux.* An * indicates men appointed to significant state positions under the Empire.

[6] Bernard Gainot, *1799, un nouveau Jacobinisme?* (Paris: ECTHS, 2001), has developed a list of 133 "neo-Jacobins" active at the national level in 1799, which includes 39 deputies recently elected to the Council of 500 and another 16 newly elected to the Council of Elders. Furthermore, he deems ten other members of the 500 and three others in the Elders to be "républicains avancés." Therefore, only a quarter of deputies elected in 1799 belonged clearly on the republican left, which, Gainot underscores, was not a major electoral triumph.

this group also included a significant batch of veteran politicians (14) from earlier legislatures.[7] Most of these veteran lawmakers were not, however, notably radical, otherwise they would not have been repeatedly re-elected. The disbarment list also bore the personal stamp of the Director-cum-Consul Emmanuel Sieyès because it included several deputies who had recently authored an important pamphlet demanding his removal from office.[8] In short, those deputies excluded from future lawmaking as part of the Brumaire coup d'état were not extremists made famous by their activities during the Terror. Rather, they were ardent republicans, often dubbed "neo-Jacobins" by later historians,[9] who had opposed the authoritarianism of the late Directory as well as the machinations of the coup's organizers.

The Decree of 26 Brumaire VIII

The organizers of the coup did not stop at political exclusion. A week later, on 26 Brumaire, the provisional Consulate published a decree ordering 37 men to be deported and another 22 interned on coastal islands. The composition of these groups suggests that the decree was both punitive and preventive. Among those to be deported – the harshest treatment – were four excluded deputies, two of whom had assaulted Bonaparte in the Council of 500 (Hugues Destrem and Barthélemy Aréna), as well as the Jacobin journalist André-Toussaint Marquézy and the fairly obscure Antoine Truc, who was known mainly for advocating the criminal prosecution of former Directors. Alongside these four deputies were an assortment of 33 men who had never served as lawmakers, although most of them were active in Jacobin circles in Paris in 1799. The selection process for this group remains opaque.[10] That said, it reflects a desire to deport men who had been effective in mobilizing opposition to the previous government. Mounting pressure from Jacobins had helped to oust several Directors in the legislative "coup" of 30 Prairial VII (18 June 1799), which had been followed by a publicity campaign demanding their indictment. The provisional Consulate apparently sought to pre-empt further anti-government agitation by deporting the authors of important pamphlets in this campaign.[11] Another prominent group embodied the Cordelier strain of militancy, including former senior officials in the War Ministry in 1793–94 who had resurfaced again in 1799.[12] Some of the smaller fry on the list had a history of political provocation, including former police officials who became agents of the "counter-

[7] Three of these men had served in the National Assembly, five in the Legislative Assembly, and eleven in the National Convention (including all five from the Legislative). Data on these legislative careers comes from Adolphe Robert, Gaston Cougny, and Edgar Bourloton, *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français…* (Paris: Bourloton, 1891), 5 volumes.

[8] Gainot, *1799*, 244. This was supposed to be something like a final act to the "Prairial coup" that had eliminated three Directors in June.

[9] Terminology here is exceptionally fraught. Contemporaries used a wide variety of terms to which historians have added "néo-Jacobin." This appears to have been coined by Alphonse Aulard in the 1890s, although he did not define it. "Néo-Jacobin" captures the emergence of a new group of left-leaning republicans at the national level, especially with the creation of a new club in Paris in the summer of 1799, even though these men were not new to Jacobinism as such. However, here it will only be used as a lens adopted by historians, not as one of contemporary significance.

[10] Jean Destrem, *Les déportations du Consulat et de l'Empire* (Paris: Jeanmaire, 1885), 4, provides the decree as published in the *Bulletin des lois*, but his extensive biographical section has no information on most of those who were not included on other deportation orders, notably that of 14 Nivôse IX.

[11] This included Bernard Metge, François d'Arzier Dubreuil, Victor Bach, and Théodore Lamberté. On their pamphleteering, see Gainot, *1799*, *passim*.

[12] E.g. Didier Jourdeuil, Xavier Audouin, Villain d'Aubigny, Claude Boyer, Guillaume-Simon Marchand.

police" when the Republic moved to the right.[13] The list also included a variety of notorious *terroristes* who had doled out large amounts of "revolutionary justice" (Brutus Magnier at Rennes, André Corchant at Lyon, Jean-Baptiste Clémence at Paris), as well as *septembriseurs* such as Jean Mamin, who bragged about killing the Princesse de Lamballe, and Claude Fournier called "l'Américain," who commanded the escort that massacred its prisoners at Versailles. Newspapers reported the arrest of such men even before the government released its list on 26 Brumaire, reflecting the satisfaction of "respectable folk" in seeing the regime dispose of such well-known perpetrators of revolutionary violence, even if these men were not politically influential in 1799.

Greater concern arose over the 22 men assigned to island prisons along the western coast. This group consisted of leaders of the Jacobin surge in 1799.[14] Some of these men had a long history of militancy, whether as Montagnard deputies in the Convention (Gaspard Lesage-Senault, Michel-Louis Talot), as *babouvistes* (Pierre-Antoine Antonelle, Félix Lepeletier de Saint Fargeau), or as government agents (Félicité Sonthonax, Alexandre-Louis Lachevardière, Jean Tilly). The men in this group were not defined by their penchant for violence so much as by their capacity for political organization. Together they constituted a coherent faction with a strong base in both the legislature and the revived Jacobin club that had formed in Paris that summer. But the new government overplayed its hand by including major lawmakers, men such as Pierre Delbrel and Jean-Baptiste Jourdan (victor of the battle of Fleurus in June 1794) who together had authored the historic conscription law of September 1798, as well as Bernard Stévenotte, editor of the *Journal des hommes libres*, and the famously brave and rhetorically gifted Pierre-Joseph Briot.[15] Moreover, this group of would-be exiles was untainted by the inclusion of so-called *terroristes* or *septembriseurs*. To the contrary, most them had been denounced at one time or another during the Terror for being insufficiently militant, whether as local officials or representatives on mission.[16]

Public Reactions and Government Response

The disbarment and proscription of Brumaire followed an established revolutionary script, one that began with the expulsion of Girondins on 2 June 1793, continued throughout the

[13] This is Gainot's term for men such as Marné and Mourgoing (*1799*, 221–3).
[14] Fifteen of these men were deputies in the Council of 500 at the time of the Brumaire coup (year of election in parentheses): Godefroy-Gédéon-Antoine Bouviers (VI), Pierre-Joseph Briot (VI), François-Antoine Daubermesnil (VI), Honoré Declerck (published as Declerq) (VI), Pierre Delbrel (V), André-Joseph Frison (VI), Louis-Alexandre Gastin (published as Gastaing) (VI), Claude-Marie Groscassand-Dorimond (VI), François Guesdon (VI), Jean-Baptiste Jourdan (VI, VII), Gaspard-Jean-Joseph Lesage-Sénault (VI), Joseph-Clément Poullain-Grandpré (IV, V), Jean-Baptiste Quirot (VI, VII), Bernard Stévenotte (VI), Michel-Louis Talot (IV, VI). *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français*, *passim.* Jean Destrem, *Le dossier d'un déporté de 1804: Hugues Destrem, 1754–1804* (Paris: H. Dangon, 1904), 85–96, indicates that the list in the register of the Consuls for 20 Brumaire VIII was different from that published by newspapers, such as the *Journal des républicains*, or printed in the *Bulletin des lois*, which added Bouvier, Jorry, Jourdan, and Quirot.
[15] *L'Ami des lois*, 5 Frimaire VIII, denied that the list had been prepared by Pierre-François Réal and Joseph Fouché, and pointed the finger at "un homme qui passe pour un sage," an obvious allusion to Sieyès.
[16] Destrem, *Déportations*, *passim*; August Kuscinski, *Dictionnaire des conventionnels* (Paris: Vexin Français, 1916), *passim*.

Convention,[17] and persisted with the Fructidor coup of September 1797.[18] Therefore, nobody would have been surprised by the Consulate's decree excluding 61 Jacobin deputies, or that 19 of these men were included among the 59 republican militants to be deported or interned. However, newspapers soon began to publish opinion pieces that questioned the merits of yet another round of political persecution. Take the staunchly centrist *L'Ami des lois,* for example. It fully supported the Brumaire coup. And yet, in the midst of informing readers about the dozens of arrests that followed, the editor opined that these men "have made enough victims; they must not be able to appear as victims in their turn." In its next issue, *L'Ami des lois* was able to report, with apparent relief,

> The government does not want a reaction. A lot of citizens, previously misled by Jacobinism, but who do not deserve to lose their liberty due to that error, have been released. Of all those arrested, there are barely six still in prison and they will probably all be out soon, so that the Brumaire revolution does not resemble all the others.[19]

The figures were not accurate, but the sentiment was. Influential politicians and leading generals, such as François-Joseph Lefebvre, Joachim Murat, and Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte, had already managed to shield various detainees from the post-coup crackdown. In this atmosphere, Jean-Jacques-Régis de Cambacérès, as Minister of Justice, managed to turn the order for deportation or internment into an order putting these 59 men under surveillance in various municipalities to be determined by the Minister of Police.[20] Such a dramatic change of heart fit with Bonaparte's desire to move beyond factional politics. It may also have been a response to the public learning how much suffering the deportees after Fructidor experienced in Guyana. As a French royalist periodical published in London explained, even "individuals known for their excesses and barbarities" do not deserve to suffer the brutal conditions in which Barbé-Marbois and Laffon-Ladebat continued to languish.[21]

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[17] In the period before 9 Thermidor II, the Convention purged 144 deputies (40 of whom were executed) and in the period after 9 Thermidor it purged 81 deputies (two of whom were deported and six of whom were condemned to death; the rest benefited from the amnesty of 4 Brumaire IV). Mette Harder, "A Second Terror: The Purges of French Revolutionary Legislators after Thermidor," *French Historical Studies* 38 (2015): 33–60; Michel Biard, *La Liberté ou la mort: mourir en député 1792–1795* (Paris: Tallandier, 2015).

[18] The closest parallel to the initial proscriptions of Brumaire was the Fructidor coup d'état of September 1797, which annulled the election of 177 deputies and ordered the deportation of 49 of them. Only 19 deputies were actually deported; eight died there, nine escaped, and two returned to France legally in 1800. Laurent Boscher, *Histoire des prisonniers politiques, 1792–1848: le châtiment des vaincus* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008), 88–89. The law of 19 Fructidor V ordered the deportation of four non-deputies as well, another precursor to the mixed group of men targeted by the law of 26 Brumaire VIII.

[19] *L'Ami des lois*, 26 Brumaire and 27 Brumaire VIII. Newspapers listed many arrests in the immediate wake of the coup d'état. These included deputies not on the Consuls' order, which suggests that the police initially interpreted the original exclusion decree of 19 Brumaire as only the first step of a more sweeping purge.

[20] Consular directive, 4 Frimaire IV, in Destrem, *Déportations*, 6–7. Destrem, *Dossier,* 85–96, explains that the register of the Consuls from 20 Brumaire VIII only prescribed exile, whereas the published decree created a group of actual deportees. Emmanuel de Waresquiel, *Fouché: Les silences de la pieuvre* (Paris: Tallandier, 2014), 275 and 705, claims, on the basis of his later actions in 1815, that Fouché was behind the whole operation, including deliberately composing the list "in the most disparate and absurd manner possible" and offering it to newspaper editors before it was officially released in order to provoke a reaction in favor of moderation. However, Waresquiel's claim is undermined by the disparate nature of the deportation order of 14 Nivôse IX, which was not designed to provoke a backlash in public opinion.

[21] *Paris, Pendant l'Année 1799,* vol. 24 (covers 15 October to 24 December 1799).

Napoleon Bonaparte's efforts to transcend the revolutionary legacy of punitive purges by rescinding the decree of 26 Brumaire VIII served him well. Several of the Jacobin deputies barred from the legislature soon provided important services to the new regime. A personal appeal from Bonaparte to set aside past partisan labels persuaded François-Joseph Beyts to accept the position of Prefect of the Loire-et-Cher in March 1800 and René Deloche-Delisle to become Director of Tax Collection for the Charente.[22] Even more important, the excluded deputy and newly promoted general Jean-Marie Desaix[23] snatched victory from the jaws of defeat at Marengo (14 June 1800). Desaix's death on the battlefield allowed Bonaparte to take credit for the victory and thereby consolidate his position as First Consul. (One wonders whether Desaix would have served Bonaparte had he known that his sacrifice would provide a steppingstone to dictatorship?) In contrast to these few examples, most of the deputies considered politically dangerous, those who had been slated for exile, quickly disappeared from public life. They did so either by choice or official ostracism.[24] Only a few resurfaced as local officials. In short, they survived, but they did not thrive, at least not in their careers. The major exception to this rule was – almost inevitably – a general: within three months, Jourdan became the Consulate's Inspector-General of Infantry and Cavalry.[25]

A Failed Assassination Attempt Inspires Mass Deportation

The more Bonaparte strengthened his personal power, the more he became the target of plots to assassinate him. When he narrowly escaped being blown up in the rue Nicaise on 3 Nivôse IX (24 December 1800), he immediately blamed *terroristes* and *septembriseurs*.[26] Despite evidence that royalists had planted the bomb, the First Consul proceeded with a major persecution of the political zealots whom he – and many others – blamed for France's descent into mass violence in 1793. Bonaparte used the Senate, the guardian of the new constitutional order, to achieve his ends. The list of 130 names on the *senatus-consultum* of 14 Nivôse IX was prepared by the notorious ex-terrorist Joseph Fouché, Minister of Police, with help from the Prefecture of Police and even the First Consul himself.[27] Several historians have analyzed this list in some detail,

[22] Andrew Roberts, *Napoleon: A Life* (New York: Viking, 2014), 237; *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français*, ii. 393.
[23] Biographical dictionaries indicate that his name was spelled "Dessaix," but most authors have adopted the spelling "Desaix" as used on the Arc de Triomphe.
[24] *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français*, *passim*.
[25] Georges Six, *Dictionnaire biographique des généraux et amiraux de la Révolution et l'Empire*, 2 vols. (Paris: G. Saffroy, 1934), 1: 60–9.
[26] Bonaparte blamed former "terroristes" and "septembriseurs," "wretches who have disgraced the name of Liberty by the crimes they have perpetrated." He wanted "prompt and exemplary" punishment. Even special courts would be too slow. "More drastic vengeance is needed … Blood must flow! … Paris and France will not have peace of mind until they see 100 or 150 villains who cause a general terror killed or deported." Letters from throughout the country blamed republican amnesties, revoked deportations, and misguided clemency. The time had come to punish the "impure horde of anarchists," "these monsters with a human face." Isser Woloch, *Napoleon and His Collaborators: The Making of a Dictatorship* (New York: Norton, 2001), 70–75.
[27] Jean Rigotard, *La police parisienne de Naploéon: la préfecture de police* (Paris: Tallandier, 1990), 73–91; Henri Gaubert, *Conspirateurs au temps de Napoléon 1er* (Paris: Flammarion, 1962), 89–102. First Consul Bonaparte apparently supplied his own list to the Prefect Louis-Nicolas Dubois. G. Lenotre, *Les derniers terroristes* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1932), 23.

usually with a strong bias or predetermined perspective in mind.[28] However, none of them have noticed that 18 men on it had already been ordered deported in Brumaire VIII, then been quickly reprieved, only to be proscribed once again a year later.[29] Putting this fact together with earlier efforts makes it possible to paint a better picture of the kind of militants whose chance of surviving the French Revolution declined sharply following the attack on the rue Nicaise.

The Consulate arrested up to three hundred people in the wake of the Nivôse attack, including a dozen women.[30] Most of them were quickly released. The decision to detain others depended as much on their continued activism as on their roles during the Terror. The yeoman efforts of historians to identify Parisian militants active in year II as well as participants in the Conspiracy of Equals in year IV has made it much easier to identify men on the Consulate's proscription list of year IX than was possible at the time. However, less work has been done on activists in the neighborhood political clubs of Paris in the years VI and VII. Many of these were the same men, but some were not.[31] Moreover, it remains difficult to identify a handful of men ordered deported by the *senatus-consultum*, let alone explain the personal animosity of the police toward them. This uncertainty makes the list seem even more arbitrary. It would be surprising, however, if the individuals otherwise unknown to historians differed significantly from the mix of *septembriseurs*, *sans-culottes*, *hébertistes*, and *babouvistes* who have been identified to date.

Deportation to the Seychelles

Despite historians almost invariably mentioning "130 deportees," only 93 men on the Senate's list actually left France as political prisoners, 70 for the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean in 1801 and 23 for Guyana in South America in 1804. Neither the Seychelles nor Guyana had a climate conducive to European habitation, but these were not chosen either by the Directory or

[28] The most detailed sources are Destrem, *Déportations*, (supplemented by his *Dossier d'un déporté*); Lenotre, *Derniers terroristes*; Richard Cobb, "Note sur la répression contre le personnel sans-culottes de 1795 à 1801," *Annales de la Révolution française* 134 (1954): 23–59; and Raymonde Monnier, "De l'an III à l'an IX, Les derniers sans-culottes. Résistance et répression à Paris sous le Directoire et au début du Consulat" *Annales de la Révolution française* 257 (1984): 386–406. However, Jean Destrem, as a descendant of one of the leading deportees, uses extracts from police records to vilify the Napoleonic regime for its treatment of the deportees and the suffering of their families; in contrast, Lenotre relies on the anonymous but highly partisan *Dictionnaire de jacobins vivans* (1799) to disparage most of the victims. Cobb emphasizes the continuity of repression, making the Parisian police akin to the chief of police in the film *Casablanca* who orders his men to "Round up the usual suspects," whereas Monnier presents a host of numbers that can be difficult to interpret (for example, providing statistics on a combined corpus of denunciations, banishments, and deportations in year IX), but which emphasize the importance of continuing activism under the Directory over roles held in 1793–94. Such different perspectives serve to enrich our understanding; for example, whereas Lenotre emphasizes the number of former police agents on the list, Cobb demonstrates that there were just as many former members of the *armée révolutionnaire* (seven of each).

[29] These were: André Corchant, Hugues Destrem, Claude-Antoine Fiquet, Claude Fournier dit "l'Américain," Charles-Théodore Gabriel, Giraud, Charles de Hesse, Didier Jourdeuil, Théodore Lamberthé, René-François Lebois, Félix Lepeletier, Joseph Maignan, Jean Mamin, Guillaume-Simon Marchand, André-Toussaint Marquézy, Guillaume-Gilles-Anne Massard, Étienne Michel, Jean-Baptiste Vanneck.

[30] Lenotre, *Derniers terroristes*, 15. Destrem, *Dossier*, 109–10, states that the Prefecture de Police kept a daily list that ran to 178 names, but without giving a date for it.

[31] Monnier, "De l'an III à l'an IX," 403, claims that three quarters of the former revolutionaries who were deported or banished from Paris in year IX had continued to be neighborhood activists in Paris under the Directory, 24 as Babouvistes and 33 alongside "néo-Jacobins" (including 19 electors in year VI). Any possible overlap in these categories is not mentioned.

the Consulate to serve as a form of slow, deliberate death. In fact, the prisoners of 1801 were transported from Paris to La Rochelle in two convoys of large coaches, rather than caged wagons, as had been the case for the *babouvistes* and *fructidorisés* deported in 1797. Moreover, Bonaparte personally prescribed lenient, even generous, treatment of the deportees in order to avoid arousing sympathy for them.[32] Bonaparte's instructions helped to ensure a much higher survival rate than was typical for lengthy sea voyages at the time. After all, the Seychelles were more than 17,000 kilometers from the coast of France and no route could be entirely direct.

The first batch of deportees consisted of 37 men put on board *La Flèche*, which departed France on 14 February 1801. The ship needed to make several stops for repairs en route and so did not arrive at Mahé, the main harbor in the Seychelles archipelago, until six months later, on 25 August. In the meantime, one deportee (Delrue) had died and been buried on La Réunion. A second ship, *La Chiffonne*, with 32 deportees aboard, left La Rochelle on 13 April, unintentionally traversed the Atlantic, fought off two Portuguese vessels along the coast of Brazil and an English one near Mozambique, before arriving at Mahé on 11 July (weeks ahead of its sister ship). One of its political prisoners (Richon) died immediately upon arrival. Thus, together the two ships delivered a total of 68 new French residents to the colony in the summer of 1801.[33]

This doubling of the population of Europeans at Mahé would ordinarily have been welcomed by the Europeans already living there. However, news from the metropole presented the new colonists as feared terrorists and violent anarchists, butchers of men and drinkers of blood. In response, the white residents of Mahé, mainly a refreshment station for slave traders, soon posed as big a problem for the deportees as the island's rocky soil and vertiginous mountains.[34] Despite being over 1,300 kilometers away, the military commander of the Isle de France – an almost inevitable stop for any escapees trying to return to France – decided to reduce the risk to the region by sending a ship to relocate some of the deportees to an even more isolated island. Eight months after the deportees' arrival, therefore, the governor of Mahé invited 30 white residents, together with one-hundred armed slaves, to round them up. Then, acting as a sort of popular tribunal, the governor and his white allies selected 33 of the most dangerous deportees to be transferred to the island of Anjouan in the Comoros archipelago.[35] Whether the deportees saw in this a mirror image of the "revolutionary justice" they had meted out remains a mystery, but the transfer to Anjouan proved tantamount to a death sentence.

The *Bélier* delivered its human cargo, this time white men, to the Islamic ruler of Anjouan, Sultan Saïd Abdallah, on 1 April 1802. French authorities promised the Sultan that it would be a

[32] He specified that shipboard travel combine guarded quarters with opportunities for fresh air and exercise, daily rations with extra wine and liqueur, separate eating areas for groups of seven, daily health reports, and even shelter in the case of combat with enemy vessels. Neither rigor nor severity, not even personal insults, were permitted. Lenotre, *Derniers terroristes*, 55–58.

[33] In addition to Lenotre, *Derniers terroristes*; and Boscher, *Prisonniers politiques*, see Georges Boulinier, Anne-Marie Slezec, and Casimir Slezec, "Des Seychelles aux Comores: les déportés de Nivôse an IX dans l'océan Indien," in *Révolution française et océan Indien, prémices, paroxysmes, héritages*, ed. Claude Wanquet et Benoît Jullien (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996), 195–206.

[34] Boscher, *Prisonniers politiques*, 99–101.

[35] Destrem, *Déportations*, 102–108. See also Victor Barrucand, *La vie véritable du citoyen Rossignol, vainqueur de la Bastille et Général en chef des armées de la république dans la guerre de Vendée (1759–1802)* (Paris: Plon, 1896), 342–76.

brief stay, just until a ship could be sent to collect them, which was supposed to be soon. In exchange, the Sultan received a sizable cache of gunpowder weapons, as well as a promise from the prisoners, made by the former *sans-culottes* general Jean-Antoine Rossignol, to provide military service if needed. Though manifestly unhappy about their options, these militant revolutionaries and extreme democrats decided that their survival depended on defending a slave-trading sultan whom they regarded as half savage and all tyrant. But it never came to that. Instead, 21 of the 33 double deportees to Anjouan died between 26 April and 20 May. Few epidemics have been so selectively deadly; therefore, some scholars have argued that these men were deliberately poisoned.[36] The remaining dozen deportees, convinced that their lives were at risk if they remained on Anjouan, found ways to flee the island. The first eight took large canoes to nearby Grande Comore, then fled to Zanzibar, Mozambique, or British India. In the autumn of 1803, after eighteen months of harrowing adventures, three of these men made it back to France, where they were placed under police surveillance.[37]

Deportation to Guyana

Being put under surveillance did not eliminate the possibility of still being deported or imprisoned. Even well after the failed assassination of Bonaparte, the police continued to track down as many men listed in the *senatus-consultum* as they could find. Once arrested, such men spent months either locked in state prisons, such as the Fort de Joux and the Fort de Ham, or interned on the Ile d'Oléron. By early 1804, the government decided to deport another batch of prisoners, this time to Cayenne, Guyana. Of the 40 deportees who left the Ile de Ré on the *Cybèle* on 28 February 1804, 23 were on the proscription list of 14 Nivôse IX. Another 16 represented diverse political enemies, including four *babouvistes* and a group of army officers involved in the so-called "libels plot" against the Life Consulate. The Consulate claimed that these men were being deported as an act of clemency because an actual trial would have yielded death sentences.[38] That did not mean, of course, that their lives were no longer seriously at risk. Guyana was notoriously unhealthy – hence its nickname as "the dry guillotine." Although a fair number escaped, few of them made it back to France. On the other hand, eight deportees on the

[36] Among them, François Mitterrand, whose position is rejected, but not refuted in Boulinier, Slezec, and Slezec, "Des Seychelles aux Comores," 195–206.

[37] These were Pierre Vauversin (clerk at a grain warehouse), J.-B. Antoine Lefranc (architect), and Charles Saulnois (often spelled Sonnois). Boulinier, Slezec, and Slezec "Des Seychelles aux Comores," provides a helpful discussion of the publishing history of a "journal" kept by Lefranc, which, in its various forms, has provided most of the known information on the deportees' experiences. At least four other men escaped from Mahé itself: Jean-Nicholas Lesueur (police agent for the Committee of General Security), the Linage brothers, Jean-Pierre and Christophe (metalworkers), and Jean-Nicholas-Paul Tréhant (print worker and police inspector). The conquest of Mahé by Britain led to the repatriation of five other deportees in 1811, all of whom were put under police surveillance: Jean-François Barbier (former priest and War Ministry clerk), Philippe-Valérie-Hugo Chateauneuf (school teacher), Jacquot-Villeneuve (former member of the Commune de Paris and police agent), Jean-Joseph Nicolas Niquille (rentier and former agent of the Commune de Paris), Jean-Martin Vacret or Vacray (stocking worker). Twenty-nine others chose to remain there under the British regime, most in a barracks-style compound. Boscher, *Prisonnier*s *politiques*, 108; Lenotre, *Derniers terroristes*, 180–81. Thus, only 8 of 70 deportees to the Seychelles (11%) returned to live out the remainder of their lives in France.

[38] Destrem, *Déportation*, 209. Four other men were supposed to be on board at the same time; however, two escaped from Oléron shortly before departure (Eustache-Louis-Joseph Toulotte and François Perrault), one died (Jean-Baptiste Georget), and another was pardoned (Brigadier-general Edouard-François Simon, chief of Bernadotte's general staff and part of the "libels plot" against the Life Consulate). The fortieth deportee had an ordinary felony conviction.

Cybèle, including four from the list of 1801, were repatriated to France after the British conquered Cayenne in 1809. All of these returnees found themselves in prison briefly, then confined to specific communes under police surveillance.[39] Most of the rest of the deportees died in Guyana, usually of a tropical disease.

The Consulate's treatment of ardent revolutionaries clearly posed a risk to their survival well after Brumaire. The initial repressive impulse that accompanied the coup d'état was checked by an effort to escape the pull of revolutionary factionalism. Nevertheless, the decree of 26 Brumaire VIII reveals that the police and politicians thought it dangerous to tolerate certain men whose previous actions had earned them, not unjustly, the appellation "terrorist." But just who, among many known militants, belonged in this category was never well established. Not only did the new regime incorporate many Jacobins (albeit only a few deputies who had opposed the Brumaire coup), it also made use of ex-terrorists, Fouché being the most outstanding example. The former terrorist representative on mission at Lyon is surely responsible for Pierre-Mathieu Parein not being on any Consular proscription lists. Parein had been commander of the Parisian *armée révolutionnaire* at Lyon, as well as head of the "Commission extraordinaire," which condemned almost 1,700 people to death, but it was a lesser member of the commission, André Corchant, who was deported to the Indian Ocean and died in Zanzibar. In contrast, Parein remained in Paris where he survived as a police informant with the shameless cover of providing poor relief to deportees' families.[40] In this context, it is hard to see what was distinctive about the 18 individuals who were twice ordered deported (26 Brumaire VIII and 14 Nivôse IX) compared to the 19 individuals, who, once reprieved, were not targeted the second time. How many of them owed their survival to well-placed fellow militants and how many just to keeping their heads down after Brumaire?

It is hard not to conclude that both the police and the governments they served could be utterly arbitrary. Thus, surviving their persecution may not be explicable as part of a clear pattern. On the other hand, a close study of the Consulate's proscription targets reveals many political activists who had escaped earlier efforts to prosecute them. These included beneficiaries of the amnesty of late 1795, perhaps the most prominent being the men linked to Jean-Nicholas Pache, the *éminence grise* of the Cordeliers-Hébertiste faction of 1793-94.[41] It also included other

[39] This group remains somewhat vague. Hugues Destrem (deputy in the Council of 500) and Étienne Michel (member of the Commune and official for political police) escaped to the Barbados together; whereas Destrem died on the island of Saint-Barthélemy, Étienne Michel managed to return to France in early 1805. Jean Leymery (medical doctor) escaped to New York, then arrived back in France after 1805. Those on the list of 14 nivôse IX who repatriated after the British conquered Cayenne were: André-Antoine-Côme Bailly (connected to the Chevalier plot against Bonaparte), Jean-Michel Brisevin (woodworker, elector in the Quinze-Vingts), Joseph Chateau (birdcatcher, acquitted as *septembriseur*), Jean-Pierre Carretté (former soldier, wigmaker), and Claude Fournier dit "l'Américain" (National Guard commander and *septembriseur*). These five deportees from the list of 14 Nivôse IX were accompanied back by three other deportees not on the list: Juste Moroy (deported in February 1804), Jean-Isaac Sabatier (former general; on the list of 26 Brumaire VIII; deported for seditious speech in the Haute-Garonne), and Jean-Baptiste Vintergnier (deported for threats against the First Consul made at Reims).

[40] Lenotre, *Derniers terroristes*, 154.

[41] Among many other sources, including the documents published by Adrien Sée, *Le procés Pache* (Paris: 1911), see Michel Eude, "Commune robespierriste: l'arrestation de Pache et la nomination de l'agent national Payen," *Annales historique de la Révolution française* 68 (1935): 132–61. The co-accused in this trial included the following men either from the list of 26 Brumaire VIII or the list of 14 Nivôse IX: Xavier Audouin, Vilain d'Aubigny, Jean-Baptiste Clémence, Didier Jourdeuil, Guillaume Marchand, and Jean-Antoine Rossignol.

"extremist" escapees from the grasp of justice such as those acquitted in the trials of *septembriseurs* in 1796 and *babouvistes* in 1797. Such men were neither forgotten nor forgiven. In other words, the Consulate's deportation order of January 1801 served as more than the new regime's prophylactic against militants on the republican left or as a steppingstone to dictatorship. It was also a form of retributive justice, undertaken at least partly on behalf of the thousands of French men and women who had not survived the years 1792–94. In this sense, it allowed many actual or supposed "terrorists" to avoid significant further persecution from the state, if not from their neighbors. They survived because others paid the ultimate price.

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