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XII. Support of the United Nations by the French in North Africa

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Statement by the President Including Declaration by Admiral Darlan

Since November 8th people of North Africa have accomplished much in support of the war effort of the United Nations, and in doing so have definitely allied themselves on the side of liberalism against all for which the Axis stands in government. I am informed in this connection by General Eisenhower that Admiral Darlan has made the following declaration:

“French Africa with the Allies must make the maximum military effort for the defeat of Germany and Italy. This will be accomplished by the unity of all citizens, regardless of their political or religious opinions, in an orderly and cohesive fashion.

“At last liberated from German and Italian restrictions, the French authorities in Africa will adjust the situation which has existed in accordance with French national traditions. Once France and the French Empire is free from the Axis yoke, the French people themselves will decide freely the form of government and national policy they desire.

“In actual accomplishment the high commissioner has already granted full and complete amnesty to all against whom any action had been taken because of sympathy to the Allies. Certain of these have been given important posts in the High Commissariat. He has restored to their proper ranks and emoluments all Army officers who had been suspended from office because of rendering aid to the Allies. He is now organizing a body of representative private citizens to work with him in an advisory and

consultative capacity in carrying on official business. Prisoners and internees of the United Nations were promptly released and their travel to seaboard expedited.

“The High Commissioner has begun the restoration of rights to those persons from whom these had previously been taken because of race. Measures have been taken to stop immediately whatever persecution of the Jews may have resulted from the laws passed in France under German pressure. His announced purpose is to give just treatment to all elements making up the complex North African population to the end that all can dwell and work together under laws insuring mutual tolerance and respect for rights.

“There is little industrial development in North Africa and Vichy laws prejudicial to labor unions had little or no application and all reports show no serious problem here. Censorship of the press and radio in which Allied authorities participate is only that which is necessary for the security of military operation.

“On the practical military side, General Giraud has conducted the most active participation of the Armed Forces of North and West Africa in the Allied war effort. Units of substantial size under the leadership of General Giraud are fighting side by side with the United Nations in Tunisia against the Germans and Italians. All posts and airfield facilities including the services of officials and technicians have been made freely available for use by the Allies. North African shipping is already entering the services of the Allied Nations. Railroads, motor trucks, communications, public and private buildings and everything that North Africa has to give have been freely offered to the Allied Forces, wherever a military need exists.

“I have stated emphatically and repeatedly to the Commander in Chief, General Eisenhower, that in leading North and West Africa against Germany and Italy and into the ranks of the United Nations, I seek no assistance or support for any personal ambitions. I have announced that my sole purpose is to save French Africa, help free France and then retire to private life with a hope that the future leaders of France may be selected by the French people themselves and by no one else.”