

The de Gaulle Dilemma

The year is 1940 and you are a colonel in the French Army. The French are suffering defeats all over the country and the situation is not looking good. However, you are able to lead your troops to defeat the Germans at every turn despite the fact that you have no air support to back you up. Your efforts, bravery, and successes do not go unnoticed and you are promoted to Brigadier General. Who knows what is next for you? Another promotion? Head of the army? A career in politics? Maybe even become president one day? It could be anything! In general, things are looking up.

Suddenly, the French government makes strategic and political decisions that you just do not agree with. You suggest that the government regroup in Algeria and see how things go. People think you're nuts. Many people begin to whisper about your career being over if you keep making radical suggestions and do not go along with what the government suggests. You know the government is wrong, but you also do not want to lose your job and ruin your career and future by being too oppositional. What do you do?

Charles de Gaulle



http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/gaulle_charles_de.shtml

Colonel in WWII who quickly rose in the ranks and gained political positions. He opposed France's surrender to Germany and escaped to Great Britain where he urged the French people through BBC radio to resist Nazi occupiers. After the D-Day invasions, Charles de Gaulle marched through France officially liberating many French towns and cities including Paris. He was instrumental in forming France's Fifth Republic and became president.