



## **Portrait published by Mr. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic in homage to General-de-Gaulle at the time of the 60 years of Time magazine.**

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General de Gaulle famously evoked " a certain idea of France " in his memoirs, but in fact he embodied it.

He was the man who, from London, on June 18, 1940, called on the French to refuse the offer of a shameful armistice with Nazi Germany. He was the man who said no to collaboration. He was the man who saved France' s honor, who in 1945 enabled our country, with the United States, with the Allies, to be counted among the victors. For Charles de Gaulle had understood that the war was a world war, a head-on confrontation between the democracies and Nazi totalitarianism.

He had understood that sooner or later the U.S. would make a decisive entry into the war, tipping the scales of victory onto the side of freedom. Few men have represented the eternal values of France as well as he. That is why even today a large majority of French people still regard him as a symbol and an example. But De Gaulle was also a builder.

After the Liberation he re-established the Republic, secured civil harmony and put industry back on its feet. He brought France into the modern era by at last giving women the vote. He gave fresh impetus to our ideal of solidarity by establishing the social security system which is part of our identity.

He would have liked to reconstruct our institutions on new foundations, but the political class of the time was not ready for it. Few men have twice found themselves taking center stage at key moments in a nation' s history, something else which makes De Gaulle so exceptional.

In 1958, after 12 years of disorder in its institutions, in a country racked by the Algerian war, it was he who again saved the Republic, ending the war and transforming former colonies into close partners. He gave France its present constitution, at once stable and flexible, under which the President derives his legitimacy from universal suffrage. He created the conditions for the wave of industrialization in the 1960s which turned our country into a great economic nation once more.

And De Gaulle restored France' s position in the world by giving it a nuclear deterrent, without which its independence would be just an empty word. Moreover



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he, who had fought Germany so fiercely, chose reconciliation between the two countries and laid the foundations for the construction of Europe. He set a new foreign policy for France: he represented the values France embodies, her unifying influence on five continents. Indeed,

I have framed our country' s response to globalization in keeping with that vision: the quest for global governance based on ethics and not merely economic interest; the importance of independent and sovereign peoples who must be respected; a refusal to use force unilaterally in a world where solidarity and the rule of law must prevail; diversity seen as a source of richness; rejection of the clash of civilizations and recognition of the need for dialogue between cultures.

That is why, in the turmoil of today' s world, General de Gaulle' s vision, ambition and message continue, in my view, to be a source of pride for France and an irreplaceable inspiration.

Jacques Chirac, President of France, was a junior minister in 1967-68, during de Gaulle's last term.

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