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"The Lives of Lucie Dreyfus, Pierre Dreyfus, and  
Madeleine Levy after the Death of Alfred Dreyfus"

Over the years numerous people ranging from teachers and students to historians and politicians have studied the debacle known as the Dreyfus Affair. The Affair has numerous stories woven together that illustrate many of the evils that existed in late 19<sup>th</sup> century society. Unfortunately, many of these evils still exist today. Thankfully, we can use the Dreyfus Affair as an example of how a handful of committed people can overcome unlikely odds through immeasurable amounts of faith, honor,

dignity, and hard work. We can then use this example as a blueprint on how to conduct our own lives with respect and integrity.

Many scholars of the Affair only realize a portion of this amazing story. While it is true that Alfred Dreyfus was an extremely pivotal character in these events, there are many more people involved in this story than could ever conceivably be listed in one publication. Furthermore, many of the writings concerning the Dreyfus Affair stop abruptly at the death of Mr. Dreyfus without continuing to tell the story. Although he was at rest, he unquestionably lived on through others who were fortunate enough to have had him in their lives. This paper will look at the lives of three of the most important people in Alfred Dreyfus's life and their life experiences after death claimed him in July 1935.<sup>1</sup> These people are his wife, Lucie Dreyfus; his son, Pierre Dreyfus; and his granddaughter, Madeleine Lèvy.

Through the late 1930's, members of Alfred Dreyfus' family intensified their private philanthropy and turned their energies toward national and international organizations: Pierre Dreyfus and his mother worked for Jewish welfare committees...Madeleine Lèvy joined scout movements and schools of social work.<sup>2</sup> Their activities reflected their diverse interests—and not the "cowardly neutrality" of "rich Jews," but at the same time confirmed an estrangement from party politics.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Denis Bredin, *The Affair: The Case of Alfred Dreyfus*, 488 (George Braziller Publishing 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Michael Burns, *Dreyfus: A Family Affair 1789-1945*, 443-444 (HarperCollins Publishing 1991).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* At 444

Undoubtedly, Lucie Dreyfus was able to observe that anti-Semitism played a major factor in molding the events that tortured and tormented the Dreyfus family for many years. Rather than sitting idle and hoping that things improved for Jewish people, she began doing charity work for the Paris Consistory. In her own words, she felt "extremely grieved by the persecution of the Jews in Germany, Italy, and elsewhere."<sup>4</sup>

Students of the Affair know that the Dreyfus family was extremely loyal to their beloved France so it comes as no surprise that Lucie searched for the source of anti-Semitism outside the country. In fact, she believed that Germany was to blame for providing anti-Semitism a new lifeblood and vivacity. Her son, Pierre, agreed that France's "neighboring country" had shown how "racial hatred could instigate crimes," and he repeated the belief shared by his mother, that while individual prejudices had played a role in the Dreyfus affair, anti-Semitism was "foreign to the spirit" of liberal France, "a country of generous traditions."<sup>5</sup>

Another way Pierre was like his mother is that he also could not sit idle as anti-Semitism enjoyed a vicious revival. He was concerned about the welfare of Jewish refugees in France and the increasingly horrible situation of German Jews. Alongside Lucie, he volunteered for the Paris Consistory. Additionally, he also worked with the World Jewish Congress.

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

The World Jewish Congress is an international federation of Jewish communities and organizations.<sup>6</sup> As an umbrella group it represents Jews from the entire political spectrum and from all Jewish religious denominations. Serving as a diplomatic arm of the Jewish people to world governments and international organizations it tries to preserve the principle of unity in diversity and always seeks consensus.<sup>7</sup>

Calling the task "too heavy for French Jews alone," Pierre urged greater government intervention and approved a resolution to address the problem of German Jewish refugees through international organizations.<sup>8</sup> Pierre would speak at various meetings to express his hope that representatives of France would travel to Geneva "to obtain the reestablishment of civic equality for persecuted Jews."<sup>9</sup>

During the early years of the Dreyfus Affair, many Jews refused to rally behind Alfred in his quest for justice. Many believed that Jewish-solidarity would hurt Jews as a whole as well as themselves individually. They believed it would make it easier for anti-Semites to target Jewish people, make it more plausible that there was a secret 'Jewish agenda,' as well as feed fuel to the fire of anti-Semitism. Taking the opposite approach, Pierre supported the notion that "Jewish solidarity constituted the best means of stemming the development of anti-Semitism," and under the auspices of the Federation of Jewish

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<sup>6</sup> World Jewish Congress Website, *available at* [http://www.wjc.org.il/wjc/what\\_is\\_the\\_wjc.html](http://www.wjc.org.il/wjc/what_is_the_wjc.html)

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 445

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

Societies (which he helped found), he challenged the French government's refusal to recognize refugees as "victims of political persecution."<sup>100</sup> For his sensitivity—for his willingness to work not only with German Jews but also with poor, Yiddish-speaking immigrants from Eastern Europe, he continued to feel the wrath of Jewish notables who wanted no part of "the rejects of society," the "bunch of nonentities of no use to any human agglomeration."<sup>111</sup>

When the Nazi's began to take over Austria, Pierre intensified his work of fighting for persecuted Jews. With the parallels to his own family history clear but never stated, Pierre described how he thought constantly of "those fathers torn from their homes, taken to concentration camps, tortured, and pushed to suicide"; of "the mothers who could no longer find milk to nourish their children", and of youngsters suffering in the street.<sup>122</sup> Renewing his call for the international Jewish community to aid their German and Austrian coreligionists, he singled out the generosity of "the American and English people" and the "considerable contributions" of French Jews.<sup>133</sup>

While Pierre was busy doing these things, his niece Madeleine was working to improve the plight of refugee children and the youngsters "suffering on the streets."<sup>144</sup> Madeleine attended the Lycee Moliere in Paris. While there, she demonstrated her grandfather Alfred's aptitude for mathematics

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<sup>100</sup> *Id*

<sup>111</sup> *Id.*

<sup>122</sup> *Id.*

<sup>133</sup> *Id.* at 445-456

<sup>144</sup> *Id.* at 446

and philosophy.<sup>155</sup> Alongside her sister, Madeleine joined a scouting group, which was based on the British model and required its members to accomplish a "good deed" every day.<sup>166</sup> Surely this desire to do good deeds daily was in part due to the traits and values instilled in her by her grandfather Alfred.

Catholics dominated the Scouts de France; Protestants had their separate Eclaireures Unionistes; and many Jewish youngsters joined the Eclaireurs Israelites, established to accomplish the same goals while also providing religious instruction and a platform from which to combat anti-Semitism.<sup>177</sup> The fourth scouting group was known as the Federation Francaise des Éclair, a unit of the secular, or laic, Eclaireurs de France.<sup>188</sup> It was this group, that Madeleine and her sister decided to join. Most of Madeleine's "good deeds" involved children, and in 1936, at the age of seventeen, she decided to pursue a career in child welfare.<sup>199</sup>

By May of 1940, it appeared that the Nazi invasion of Paris was imminent so Lucie, Pierre, and Madeleine prepared for their exodus south.<sup>200</sup> After French forces requisitioned the house the Lèvy's were renting, the family arranged an automobile caravan with Lucie, Pierre, and Pierre's wife and four children.<sup>211</sup> **Madeleine was only twenty-two years old. She left her apprenticeship as a social worker to help with the move, and her**

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<sup>155</sup> *Id.*

<sup>166</sup> *Id.*

<sup>177</sup> *Id.*

<sup>188</sup> *Id.*

<sup>199</sup> *Id.*

<sup>200</sup> *Id.* at 462

<sup>211</sup> *Id.*

older sister Simone, recently widowed, brought her two-year old daughter—Lucie's first great-grandchild.<sup>222</sup> Over one million Parisians (including tens of thousands of Jews escaped the capital.<sup>233</sup>

Not long after Pierre left, German troops broke into his apartment on the Square de l'Albioni, and seized files he had left behind on Jewish welfare organizations. The Germans aimed to suppress the work of Jewish activists and make a census of their names.<sup>244</sup> Pierre was a prime target for German interests for a variety of reasons. These include the facts that he made appeals for the "Jewish victims of Nazi Germany" and his support of the World Jewish Congress. Added to these reasons is the fact that he was the son of a renowned French Jew.<sup>255</sup> Paris Consistory documents also confirmed that Madame Alfred Dreyfus, vice president of the Comite de Bienfaisance, worked closely with Jewish immigrants, and that her family had been anxious to get her out of town.<sup>266</sup>

The expression of anti-Semitism was not exclusive to the occupying German forces. Similar to the earlier times in France during Alfred's trials, there were numerous anti-Semitic newspapers. Looking back on the exodus, the newspaper *Le Matin* used phone books to quantify the "Dreyfuses," "Levys," "Blums" and other Jews who had departed; pleased with the plummeting

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<sup>222</sup> *Id.*

<sup>233</sup> Charles Tilly, *The Contentious French*, 331 (Cambridge, Mass. 1986).

<sup>244</sup> Anny Latour, *The Jewish Resistance in France, 1940-1944*, 13 (Irene R. Ilton, trans., New York, 1981).

<sup>255</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 463

<sup>266</sup> *Id.*

numbers, the paper hoped for "even greater progress" in the future.<sup>277</sup>

On their exodus south, the Dreyfuses and Lèvy's stopped first in Cholet, beyond Tours, and then in Bordeaux.<sup>288</sup> Pierre then took his wife and children southeast to Marseilles, while Lucie pushed on to Dr. Lèvy's native Toulouse, deep in the unoccupied zone toward the Pyrenees Mountains and the Spanish border.<sup>299</sup>

Toulouse was a city that housed hundreds of thousands of refugees during this time. Spanish republicans had been trekking across the southern mountains since Franco's fascist victory in 1939; refugees from the Low Countries had come in the wake of Hitler's spring invasion; and Eastern and Central European Jews-Poles, Russians, and Germans continued to arrive, mostly from Paris, through the summer of 1940.<sup>300</sup> Initially people in the region supported Petain but "as the occupation continued, it was a certainty that social unrest would surface and bring with it, a certain degree of resistance."<sup>311</sup>

The mass influx of people further crippled a city already reeling from the devastation of the depression. The housing and food shortages that dated from the depression years and the first wave of Spanish immigration quickly became a crisis as

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<sup>277</sup> *Id.*

<sup>288</sup> *Id.*

<sup>299</sup> *Id.*

<sup>300</sup> *Id.* at 463-464

<sup>311</sup> Michael and Sara Grant, *How Important was the Resistance Movement in Toulouse 1940-1944?*, at [http://www.intst.net/humanities/ibhist/student\\_work/ia2002/resistance/index.htm](http://www.intst.net/humanities/ibhist/student_work/ia2002/resistance/index.htm)



hundreds of thousands of homeless people searched for lodging and provisions.<sup>322</sup> Nearly one hundred thousand children were temporarily lost in the melee of exodus throughout France, and Toulouse had more than its share of broken families.<sup>333</sup>

One of these broken families belonged to no other than the Lévy's. The family was fortunate enough, however, to find a small house outside of the city. Madeleine shared apartments with friends in the city center—with former scouts and schoolmates who had fled south.<sup>344</sup> Lucie, seventy-one years old in 1940 and suffering chronic respiratory problems, opted for a room in a heated boardinghouse a few streets away near the Catholic Church of Saint Etienne.<sup>355</sup>

Many members of the Dreyfus family were living transiently throughout France during this time. That summer, Lucie began daily writings with many of these family members', similar to the communications she held with her husband while he was imprisoned on Devil's Island. In June she wrote: "The news is distressing. A change in government now seems assured...[But] I overhear the conversations of railroad workers, and they are certain of our victory...the idea of an armistice hardly crosses their minds."<sup>366</sup> At night in Toulouse, Lucie listened to the *radio anglaise*, and though hopeful that "the English will continue the fight," she believed they had "illusions" about

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<sup>322</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 464

<sup>333</sup> *Id*

<sup>344</sup> *Id*

<sup>355</sup> *Id.*

<sup>366</sup> *Id.*

French government support and French military strength.<sup>377</sup> As her fears started to become reality she became fearful for her family and would pace frantically back and forth.

This was not, however, the first time she was forced to face fear and adversity in the face. Many of these emotions had manifested themselves previously during Alfred's incarceration. She drew not only on these prior experiences, but also from the example her husband had set during those earlier troubled times. The dark passages gave way to calls for patience, conciliation, and courage, and to descriptions of her daily routine: "I sit at my writing table, with my letters, my knitting and my books...Despite tired eyes I read a great deal, and English books are a good distraction, perhaps more for overcoming the difficulty of the language than for the amusement of the stories."<sup>388</sup>

Most of the individuals who fled south out of Paris in the spring returned after the armistice. These people envisioned that the German troops would be brutal and sadistic. To their surprise, they discovered that the occupiers stayed in elegant hotels, went about their work with quiet efficiency; disciplined troops paid for their café bills, gave up metro seats to the elderly and infirm, and conducted most searches in an orderly manner.<sup>399</sup> This early good conduct, which would later change, lulled many people back to their Paris homes with a false sense of security. Madeleine returned to Paris and resumed her

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<sup>377</sup> *Id.*

<sup>388</sup> *Id.*

<sup>399</sup> *Id.*, at 465

apprenticeship as an *assistante sociale*, helping direct an educational and gymnastic program for children of factory workers in a Paris suburb.<sup>400</sup>

Almost everyone in the extended Dreyfus family escaped Paris that summer and the majority returned that fall. Those family members who did not return by that time discovered that they would no longer have that opportunity. On September 27, 1940, a German ordinance closed the entire northern sector to returning Jews and prolonged the family's strange exile as citizen-refugees.<sup>411</sup>

Concerned about her sisters, grandchildren, and in-laws dispersed in southern villages and towns, and having received little news from Pierre in Marseilles, Lucie set out on an odyssey through what became known as the *zone-nono* or the nonoccupied zone.<sup>422</sup> Traveling alone—or, at times, with Leon Dreyfus's widow, Alice—she visited family in the environs of Cahors, north of Toulouse; in Montpellier to the east; in Cassis, outside Marseilles; and in Avignon, Carpentras, Grenoble, and Valence.<sup>433</sup>

On her travels, Lucie rented small hotel rooms (her letters stressed both her desire for independence and her fear of becoming a burden), and from afar she helped her grandchildren earn a few francs by knitting sweaters and socks, and by procuring lace for women's hankies.<sup>444</sup> This was the first time

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<sup>400</sup> Richard F. Kuisel, *Ernest Mercier: French Technocrat*, 144 (Berkeley, Calif. 1967).

<sup>411</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 465

<sup>422</sup> *Id*

<sup>433</sup> *Id*

<sup>444</sup> *Id.* at 466

Lucie had ever worked for a living and to an extent she enjoyed it. However, she was still uneasy because the family's bank account was diminishing and Vichy decrees informed her that things could potentially worsen before they got better.

By early 1942, family members confronted special Jewish "taxes," food and housing shortages, and limited jobs—or no jobs at all.<sup>455</sup> Fortunately, Lucie was very apt at handling money and managing budgets. It was in part to this skill that had enabled her to leave Paris with a decent amount of money. She did her best to calm the nerves of other family members who worried about their financial situation. Always a generous woman, she told family members to inform her how much money they needed and that she would make sure to get it to them. She did not want anyone else in the family to worry over money. Lucie stayed in hotels at Cassis for a while. Later, she also stayed at Aix-les-Bains. While at Aix-les-Bains, she recovered from a respiratory illness from which she had been experiencing difficulties. She was surprised at the fact that these areas still had fair amounts of decent foods. She considered the obsession with food "exasperating," however, and the life around her increasingly "insipid."<sup>466</sup>

Remembering how her husband's allies had confronted the affair, she longed to return to "a milieu where people care about exchanging ideas, especially now, when it is so important."<sup>477</sup> As she traveled, she contrasted the "sun-filled

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<sup>455</sup> *Id.* at 467

<sup>466</sup> *Id.*

<sup>477</sup> *Id.*

days" spent on terraces overlooking the Mediterranean or the Lac du Bourget at Aix-les-Bains ("there is no impression that a war is going on") with the "despair and anguish deep in us all."<sup>488</sup> Lucie felt as if "the world has gone mad. We have lost our way in the midst of all these massacres, of all this universal unconsciousness."<sup>499</sup>

While Lucie did her best to ensure the financial well-being of her family, she did lose contact with many family members. She also lost contact with a great deal of friends. Many of these people were fortunate enough to relocate in England, Northern Africa, or the United States. One of these fortunate souls belonged to no other than her son. After nearly two years in Marseilles and the villages of its coastal hinterlands, Pierre Dreyfus received permission from the United States to emigrate with his immediate family.<sup>500</sup> This decision was based in part on the fact that his wife had family living in the United States. Another major factor in the decision was the belief that his involvement with the Jewish community and political activism put him at risk.

His relation to Captain Alfred Dreyfus was both a gift and a curse. It was a curse in the sense that it made him a more visible target. It was a gift in the sense that it was a major factor in deciding to allow him to emigrate and escape the threat of death in Europe. Additionally, given his many contacts with international organizations, he probably received help from

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<sup>488</sup> *Id.*

<sup>499</sup> *Id.*

<sup>500</sup> *Id.*

the American Joint Distribution Committee, a philanthropic group that aided Jewish immigrants in Paris and moved its offices to Marseilles after the German invasion.<sup>511</sup> Pierre, alongside his wife and four children, set sail from Casablanca in June 1942 on the way to a new life in New York City.

By January 1943, Pierre settled in America, in a rented apartment in New York City, near the intersection of Eighty-first Street and Columbus Avenue.<sup>522</sup> He became active with General de Gaulle's Free French almost immediately. His two oldest children, Francoise and Charles, joined him in this endeavor. In order to provide his family with food, clothing, and shelter, Pierre would host lectures on topics such as the previous civil war that had taken place in France and the ordeals that his father faced throughout the Dreyfus Affair.

For two years, Lucie was able to travel across southern France essentially unchecked. Vichy may have been a masquerade of autonomy from Nazi control, but early on it required no special passports for French Jews, and it policed more foreigners than natives.<sup>533</sup> In the winter of 1942-1943, however, Darquier de Pellepoix, chief of the Commissariat for Jewish Affairs, ordered that the identification papers and ration cards of all Jews be appropriately stamped (Juif or Juive); it prohibited travel through certain *departements*; and, on a more minor, but, for Lucie Dreyfus, immediate note, it restricted

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<sup>511</sup>1 *Id.* at 467-468

<sup>522</sup>2 *Id.* at 468

<sup>533</sup>3 *Id.* at 469

Jews from the cure centers of the south.<sup>544</sup> Before getting help, Lucie and others suffering from ailments had to prove both that the illness was severe, and that in order to recover, treatment was necessary. Many everyday things began to change around Lucie during this time of tightening surveillance. Prices began to rise, shops started closing, curfews were enforced, and there were threats of an oncoming evacuation. As living conditions deteriorated, outbreaks of popular anti-Semitism—ignored by Vichy or encouraged by its followers—spread through towns and villages, and Lucie Dreyfus's quotidian problems with identification papers and restricted movement gave way to a search for a hiding place.<sup>555</sup> Lucie escaped to the Vaucluse region where she was taken in by two of her nephews on the Dreyfus side. Unfortunately, both of these men were soon arrested and imprisoned in Avignon, and shortly thereafter shipped north.<sup>566</sup>

In an effort to remain undetected, Lucie changed her name. This was not the first time she had taken such measures. During the affair she had, on occasion, used her brother-in-laws's name, Valabregue.<sup>577</sup> Reverting back to this name was not an option this time however, because Valabregue was as easily identifiable as Jewish as was Dreyfus. Lucie had no choice other than finding a new alias to operate under. Lucie's third sister, Alice, had married a man named Duteil and had settled in

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<sup>544</sup> *Id.*

<sup>555</sup> *Id.*

<sup>566</sup> *Id.*

<sup>577</sup> *Id. at 470*

Valence, southwest of Aix-les-Bains.<sup>588</sup> That family had close connections with members of the local Resistance movement, and Alice had friends among a community of retired Catholic nuns.<sup>599</sup> Helped by Alice and using her married name—one which could pass as a non-Jewish name—Lucie found shelter in the retreat house of “the good sisters of Valence.”<sup>600</sup> Lucie was seventy-four years old when she took on the moniker “Madame Duteil” in 1943. In order to pass the time Lucie studied the English language and read. She would also knit sweaters that she could sell to make a little money.

Madeleine had fled south to Toulouse with her family during the first summer exodus, and before returning to Paris she had joined a friend, another former *eclaireuse*, to hear Petain’s address of capitulation.<sup>611</sup> **In response to the marshal, those two young women stood in front of their radio and recited a Kipling poem, “If,” they had memorized as Girl Scouts: “If you can meet Triumph and Disaster/And treat those two impostors just the same...Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,/And stoop and build ‘em up with worn-out tools...”**<sup>622</sup> Using quiet verse as a form of protest fitted the reputation that Madeleine enjoyed among schoolmates and Scouts; as a teenager at the Lycee Moliere, she and six other Jewish students had staged a silent

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<sup>588</sup> *Id.*

<sup>599</sup> *Id.*

<sup>600</sup> *Id.*

<sup>611</sup> *Id.* at 470-471

<sup>622</sup> *Id.* at 471



"strike" on the steps of the home of a professor who had slandered the memory of the "Juif" Alfred Dreyfus.<sup>633</sup>

Madeleine was a beautiful woman but she was far from fragile. She had a gorgeous smile, dark hair, and stunning dark eyes to match. A chiseled jaw complemented these delicate features. Her voice was pleasanter than that of her favorite grandparent, but, unlike Alfred, she had an air of "natural control and calmness"; one friend described her as sometimes "wreathed in silence."<sup>644</sup> While Madeleine was not afraid to voice her opinions through spoken word, she would rather express herself through action. Undoubtedly, this is an effect of the importance that Alfred played in her human development.

Madeleine returned to Toulouse in the spring of 1941. Following the lesson of Kipling's poem, she took up the "tools" of her training as an *assistante sociale* and applied them to a new job with the Secours National, the general welfare organization of the French state, which Vichy funded, in part, through the liquidation of Jewish property.<sup>655</sup> Madeleine played a second secret role through her employment with the Secours National and actually helped Vichy's enemies. Throughout France—and nowhere more dramatically than in Toulouse—members of the Secours National created shadow organizations to aid immigrant children, political "criminals" on the run, and Jews searching for an escape route from France.<sup>666</sup>

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<sup>633</sup> *Id.*

<sup>644</sup> *Id.*

<sup>655</sup> *Id.*

<sup>666</sup> *Id.*

Early on in the ordeal, most French Jews hoped that Vichy would protect them from Nazi persecution. These people did not foresee that the Nazi agenda would actually be assisted. But key events in 1941 and, above all, in the summer of the following year turned the reverence that many citizens held for Petain's "divine surprise" into revulsion, and drew thousands of recruits like Madeleine into networks of resistance.<sup>677</sup> During that summer of 1942, Jews were rounded up all over France. That summer over a thousand Jewish children under the age of six were deported east out of France. Approval of the deportation was granted by Petain's Vice-Premier Pierre Laval. Laval promised these deportees that they were going to experience a family reunion. What he did not make clear was that for many, this reunion would take place from beyond the grave.<sup>688</sup>

Madeleine had dedicated much of her life to helping children through her social work and participation in girl scouts. Seeing the plight and certain fate of so many children in the deportation of 1942 fueled her drive to fight for justice. On November 11, 1942, the day of the World War I armistice, German troops occupied Toulouse and the French prefect issued a warning: "The population must remain absolutely calm...Every act contrary to order will be ruthlessly repressed."<sup>699</sup> At the same moment, still under the cover of the Secours National, Madeleine became a departmental assistant in

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<sup>677</sup> *Id.*

<sup>688</sup> Jacques Adler, The Jews of Paris and the Final Solution: Communal Response and Internal Conflicts, 1940-1944, 123,196 (New York, 1987).

<sup>699</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 472

Region IV of the "Combat" movement, the premier Resistance organization in the southwest.<sup>700</sup>

Just as Pierre's visible association to Alfred was both a gift and a curse, Madeleine's connections with the Secours National had both risks and benefits. It benefited her in the fact that it made her appear less likely to be involved in the Resistance. At the same time it placed her in extreme danger because it placed her in daily contact with people opposed to the causes of her covert actions. Following orders to stay on the move, she spent some nights with her parents on the rue de la Dalbade, others with friends, and still others with her sister, Simone, who had returned to the city with her young daughter and had taken an apartment near the train station.<sup>711</sup> Madeleine and Simone were able to locate counterfeit identification cards and the Levy's became known as the "Dupuy's".

In 1943, Combat merged with other groups and became known as the Mouvements Reunis de la Resistance (MUR). MUR was comprised of many sections. A few include the political section, the military section, and a general service section that Madeleine was involved with. Departmental assistants, most of them young women who reported to older female *responsables*, packed boxes of food, clothing, and soap and delivered them (under false identities) to local prisons and internment camps; they washed prison laundry, forged papers, located "safe

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<sup>700</sup>*Id* at 472-473

<sup>711</sup>*Id.* at 473

houses," brought news to the relatives of arrested comrades, and took in, or tried to place, orphaned children.<sup>722</sup> This is yet another example of Madeleine's devotion and commitment to help children and others in the community. Her position with the Secours National, and her work with the Toulouse office of the Red Cross, helped her get provisions to people in the internment camps, but her principal task—helping to arrange escape routes across the Pyrenees for those who had few illusions about their fate—placed her in the greatest danger.<sup>733</sup>

Working from her base in Toulouse, Madeleine Levy joined other members of the *Combat's service social* to arrange food, counterfeit documents, special identity photographs, and money (usually three thousand francs per person, but often much more) needed for the voyage out.<sup>744</sup> Toulouse was the opening gate of numerous escape routes to southern French cities or even further into Spain. Volunteer guides motivated by compassion, and professional smugglers motivated by greed, accompanied a wide range of secret travelers into mountain villages: refugees from the Low Countries and northern France; political prisoners on the run from southwestern camps; soldiers hoping to join the Free French in North Africa (or hoping to disappear); young men about to be conscripted into German factories; and, increasingly, Jews escaping deportation.<sup>755</sup>

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<sup>722</sup> *Id.*

<sup>733</sup> *Id.* at 474

<sup>744</sup> *Id.*

<sup>755</sup> *Id.*

Madeleine's group received a special warning from regional headquarters late in 1942: "It is certain that in a few weeks, perhaps in a few days, Jews in the southern zone will suffer the same fate as those in the north...All Jews occupying key positions in the movement should immediately go underground...They must change their place of residence...and take on a new identity...One's duty," the Region IV report added, "is not to go to the slaughterhouse, but to escape it."<sup>766</sup>

Due to her hard work and commitment to the cause, Madeleine was offered a promotion to a position with the French Forces of the Interior, which was Combat's leading entity. Accepting the promotion would require relocating in Lyon. This would be a perfect chance to avoid the certain upcoming crackdown, yet Madeleine turned down the promotion for various personal reasons. One reason is that she felt that her job in Toulouse had not yet been completed. She also wanted to remain in close contact with her friends and family in the area.

Not surprisingly, considering the warning, Madeleine's cover was soon to be blown. "JEWS?...NO! JEWESSES!" went the headline of a collaborationist tract in Toulouse in 1943; "The Jewess who dares not speak her name...calls herself Miss Madeleine...but she is LEVY...the grand pontiff of the Secours National...Had you missed the point, good and brave Christians?" the local paper, *The Ironworker (Le Ferro)* asked its readers.<sup>777</sup> And it ended with an order to "Sweep her out! Sweep her out!"<sup>788</sup>

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<sup>766</sup> *Id.* at 475

<sup>777</sup> *Id.* at 480

<sup>788</sup> *Id.*

In 1943 the Nazi's and their supporters were all around Madeleine and her surroundings. They were in the neighborhoods that her and her family lived in and even in the offices that she worked in as an employee of the Secours National. Warnings from Combat headquarters to operatives like "Miss Madeleine"—orders to change domiciles, to beware of double agents, to go underground—intensified through the summer and fall, and it became more important than ever to follow Combat's two cardinal rules: "Everything that is unnecessary to say is dangerous to say," and, "In our métier, a bigmouth [*bavard*] is an assassin."<sup>799</sup>

Madeleine and other members of her family finally took heed to the warnings and fled Toulouse. On November 3, 1943, two bombs exploded at *malice* headquarters in the city, killing the movement's leader and setting the Gestapo off on another roundup.<sup>800</sup> The Gestapo had already obtained many documents from one of Combat's offices and were busy following up on leads in efforts to track down and arrest their members. They even had information that many of Combat's members were linked to the Secours National. On the day of the bombing, or the day before, Madeleine had come back to Toulouse, and, according to her Combat supervisor and two Red Cross associates, had "worked late into the night."<sup>811</sup> Violating the curfew, she then went to the apartment on rue de la Dalbade to pack clothes and provisions for her family; she wore only a light summer dress, and that

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<sup>799</sup> *Id.*

<sup>800</sup> *Id.* at 481

<sup>811</sup> *Id.*

would not do for a winter hiding in the countryside.<sup>822</sup> While at the apartment, police entered and upon discovering her presence, they arrested her for her work with the Resistance Interieure Francaise. The concierge attempted to warn Madeleine that the police had arrived but she was nearly deaf in one ear and did not hear a thing. The next day she was interrogated alongside many others who had been arrested. After questioning, the Gestapo released all the Secours National workers but one.<sup>833</sup> "Because of her name," Madeleine Dreyfus Levy remained in custody.<sup>844</sup>

She might have been sent to the camp for political prisoners at Compiegne, but in the bureaucracy of deportation "racial" designations eclipsed "resistance" categories, and along with at least three Jewish friends from Toulouse she was transported by train to the Drancy holding center northeast of Paris.<sup>855</sup>

The Drancy complex was originally planned as an apartment complex for low-income families. The Germans turned the building into a prison before it could ever be used for this purpose. The building was five stories tall and the landscape looked similar to other prisons since it had barbed wire fencing, powerful lighting, and towers containing observation guards. Madeleine was taken to the complex in November and was housed alongside three thousand other prisoners. No question

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<sup>822</sup> *Id.*

<sup>833</sup> *Id.*

<sup>844</sup> *Id.*

<sup>855</sup> *Id.*

remained among inmates that the complex, later known as "Drancy-la-Juive," was an "antechamber" of deportation.<sup>866</sup> The only question that remained was where these individuals would be deported and what their fate would ultimately be.

Upon arrival, Madeleine noticed that there were many children in the camp population. Staying true to her life calling, Madeleine continued to perform social work and dedicated herself to helping these children. Convoy Number 62, the fifteenth to leave Drancy in 1943, had 83 children under the age of 12, and Madeleine, along with a friend, Claude Lehmann, born in Mulhouse, helped care for them.<sup>877</sup> 1200 Jews—634 men, 556 women, and 10 unspecified prisoners—were loaded onto freight cars at the Bobigny station near Drancy.<sup>888</sup> The train left at 10:50A.M. on November 20, 1943, two days after Madeleine Levy's twenty-fifth birthday.<sup>899</sup>

Those unfortunate enough to be on the train rode for three long days. Many of the passengers had been friends for years and tried to interact with each other under the false guise of happiness. The train made it to its destination of Auschwitz at two in the morning on November 23. As Madeleine was making her way off of the train alongside the others her suitcase was taken almost immediately. "SS troops, holding their dogs on a tight leash, directed the way to quarantine centers at the neighboring camp of Birkenau, where inmates were 'disinfected,' shorn with

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<sup>866</sup> *Id.* at 482

<sup>877</sup> *Id.*

<sup>888</sup> *Id.*

<sup>899</sup> Michael R. Marrus & Robert O. Paxton, Vichy France and the Jews, 294 (New York, 1981).



scissors and razors, and given uniforms marked with the Star of David.<sup>900</sup>

Shortly after arriving at Auschwitz, Madeleine fell ill with typhus and was sent to stay in one of the barrack's that was used as the camp's hospital. "Patients like Madeleine, too ill to walk to the *Waschraum* showers for compulsory disinfections were carried on the backs of orderlies; and in the winter of 1943-44, when Madeleine's fever had advanced, hospital workers recorded seventy-four deaths in one day in one block of 250 patients."<sup>911</sup>     **The disease caused Madeleine to become disoriented and to develop a rash consisting of red spots all over her body. "Deprived of food and medication needed to fight the infection, Madeleine weighed less than seventy pounds when she died in January 1944, at Auschwitz-Birkenau."**<sup>922</sup>

"Lucie Dreyfus, still known to her protectors as "Madame Duteil," remained in hiding with the nuns of Valence until the late summer of 1944, when a fire, caused by an explosion at a German armaments depot nearby, destroyed the Catholic retreat house."<sup>933</sup>     **Lucie was not injured during the incident and met up with her granddaughter Simone. Paris was liberated by Allied troops that August so Lucie and Simone started the trip back to the capital. Lucie was 75 years old at the time.**

**Germany was defeated and surrendered the next year. The Comite de Bienfaisance once again gathered in Paris. This was**

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<sup>900</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 483

<sup>911</sup> *Id.*

<sup>922</sup> *Id.*

<sup>933</sup> *Id.* at 485

their first meeting in 5 years. Lucie could not attend the historic meeting but the General Assembly made it a point to recognize her since she had once been their vice president. "Battling tuberculosis and a heart condition, she was treated at the Rothschild hospital in eastern Paris, where the committee's leadership "had the pleasure of visiting her," and where they found her "still interested in the problems of social welfare to which she devoted all her charitable work in the past."<sup>94</sup>

Lucie was released from the hospital and spent her final weeks at home in Paris. She was cared for by many members of her family. Her daughter Jeanne, her granddaughter Simone, and two family doctors, Pierre-Paul Levy and his son Jean-Louis were among them. Unfortunately, Lucie would never make it back to further improve the conditions of society. "Survivor of two world wars and the civil war of her husband's affair, Lucie Dreyfus died at home, at the age of seventy-six, on December 14, 1945."<sup>95</sup>

"Alfred had died a decade earlier at the same age, in the same apartment, and his son had been by his side."<sup>96</sup> Pierre returned to France after it's liberation and had the same experience he had with his father by being at Lucie's side as she passed away. Pierre's son had remained in the United States in order to continue his education. "On December 27, 1946, Pierre boarded a plane, the *Star of Cairo*, for a flight back to

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<sup>94</sup> *Id.* at 485-486

<sup>95</sup> David H. Weinburg, A Community on Trial: The Jews of Paris in the 1930's, 213 (Chicago, 1977).

<sup>96</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 486

New York to visit his son."<sup>977</sup> The plane initially flew out of Paris and was to stop in Ireland before making the transatlantic leg of the flight. They were met with thick fog on the way to Ireland and were redirected to Scotland. As the pilot began to set off on the new course, "the port engine caught fire and the plane dived into a riverbank, bounced across muddy water, and came to rest on a deserted island."<sup>988</sup> Twelve of the twenty-three passengers were killed in the crash. Many died during the initial explosion while many others died before rescuers made it to the scene two hours later.

Jack Frye, president of the airline, issued the following statement: "Preliminary statements by Capt. Herbert W. Tansey, pilot of the plane involved in the accident this morning in Ireland, indicates with certainty that weather, resulting in ragged ceiling and varying visability, was the direct factor causing the unfortunate accident. There is no indication that mechanical defects were involved."<sup>999</sup>

Among the victims was Capt. Pierre N. Dreyfus, son of the late Lieut. Col. Alfred Dreyfus, whose conviction for military treason caused a worldwide sensation in the 1890's and led to a reorganization of the French Army.<sup>1000</sup> Captain Dreyfus, 54, who was a veteran on both World Wars, holder of the Croix de Guerre and a member of the Legion of Honor, came to [the United States] in 1942 after having served with the de Gaullist forces.<sup>10101</sup> He

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<sup>977</sup> *Id.*

<sup>988</sup> *Id.*

<sup>999</sup> *TWA Opens Inquiry In Eire Accident*, New York Times, Dec. 29, 1946, at 26A

<sup>1000</sup> *Pole In Plane Dies On Way to Refuge*, New York Times, Dec. 29, 1946, at 26A

<sup>10101</sup> *Id.*

was a member of the central board of the American ORT (Organized Rehabilitation Training Union), which trains displaced persons for new livelihoods, and a member of the executive board of the American branches of OSE, an international Jewish organization for child care, health, and hygiene.<sup>102</sup><sup>02</sup>

Eventually, the remaining family members reunited in Paris. They immediately began their search for Madeleine since they had not heard anything as to her whereabouts since Drancy. The family discovered the names of some of the other members of Madeleine's convoy. Through these contacts, the family learned of Madeleine's fate. "It took more than two years for the official "act of Disappearance" to make its way through the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Veterans and Victims of War; but by 1950 the French Fourth Republic had awarded the granddaughter of Alfred and Lucie Dreyfus the Military Medal, the Croix de Guerre with palm, and the Medal of Resistance."<sup>103</sup><sup>03</sup> "Madeleine's remains were never found, but her name, age, and mention of her 'deportation by the Germans...to Auschwitz' were chiseled on the gravestone with her Dreyfus grandparents in the Montparnasse Cemetery."<sup>104</sup><sup>04</sup>

While all three of these people went through many struggles and unbelievable obstacles during their lifetimes you can definitely see aspects of Alfred Dreyfus that helped to carry them through these ordeals. All three looked beyond the immediate situation that they were in and continued to carry

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<sup>102</sup><sup>02</sup> *Id*

<sup>103</sup><sup>03</sup> Burns, *supra* note 2, at 487

<sup>104</sup><sup>04</sup> *Id.*

themselves with integrity and ask themselves how they could help someone else. Each of them could have gotten caught up in their own circumstances but each chose to make a difference for the better in the people around them. Alfred Dreyfus should be proud that he provided such a strong example of strength and dignity for these people to lean on when times were tough. Thankfully, his lesson did not stop with those three and is still reflected through the hearts and souls of many people worldwide today.