FOREIGN POLICY AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Charles-François Dumouriez, Pierre LeBrun, and the Belgian Plan, 1789–1793

Patricia Chastain Howe

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Printed in the United States of America.

For my daughter, Kari Howe Stoltz

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Map 1 Map by Allison Seiwert, University of St. Thomas Geography Department.

Introduction

The storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789 electrified independence movements throughout Europe. Just a month later, a revolution began in Liège and two months after that another in the Belgian provinces (Austrian Netherlands). Although these revolutions were as different as the societies from which they sprung and were followed within a year by an Austrian invasion and restoration, they would play a central but heretofore poorly understood role in the course of the French Revolution that had so inspired them.

This book offers a new interpretation of French foreign policy during the early years of the Revolution. Based on archival evidence in Paris, Brussels, Liège, and London, I argue that between March 1792 and April 1793, French foreign policy was formulated and directed by two successive and largely forgotten French foreign ministers, Charles-François Dumouriez and Pierre LeBrun, whose principal motivation during this turbulent period was a plan to liberate the Belgian provinces and Liège from Austria and establish them as a united democratic republic, a project I have termed the *Belgian plan* although Dumouriez, LeBrun, or their contemporaries never referred to it as such. This new examination of the available evidence demonstrates that this Belgian plan took precedence over all other foreign policy objectives in Dumouriez and LeBrun's direction of foreign policy and played a crucial if not fully acknowledged role in the decision of French policymakers to declare war on Austria in April 1792 and in the expansion of that war to include Britain, Spain, and the United Provinces called the War of the First Coalition in 1793.[1] Thus Dumouriez and LeBrun's pursuit of the Belgian plan launched a European war that raged for two decades and changed the course of both French and European history.

The two central figures in the development of this Belgian plan were Frenchmen of enormous talents and vastly different origins—Dumouriez, a professional soldier and diplomat, and LeBrun, a journalist and revolutionary—who had supported the successful but short-lived Belgian and Liégeois independence movements of 1789-1790. Imbued

with Enlightenment principles and committed to the eighteenth-century notion of political democracy or republicanism, the two developed their Belgian plans first independently and later in collaboration. Archival evidence reveals that Dumouriez and LeBrun entered the foreign ministry determined to use French military power and resources to implement their Belgian plan, and that despite shifts in the specifics of that plan due to the contingencies of war, they never abandoned their dedication to Belgian liberty. Although they made decisions that appeared at times to subordinate the interests of revolutionary France to those of the Belgians and Liégeois, Dumouriez and LeBrun never doubted that they worked in the best interests of their nation and served the most enlightened principles of their age.

LeBrun, who served as the editor and publisher of the influential *Journal général de l'Europe* from 1785 to 1792, was also a naturalized Liégeois citizen who had influenced the outbreak and course of the revolutions in Liège and the Belgian provinces, helped organize Liège's revolutionary government, and after its failure returned to Paris to continue his adopted country's revolutionary struggle in exile. A founding member of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois in Paris, he was already committed to the cause of an independent Belgian Republic when he entered the French foreign ministry as a bureau chief in March 1792 and became French foreign minister in August that year.

Dumouriez, from an aristocratic family with ties to Belgium, was already well-known as a talented soldier and diplomat when in 1790 he was appointed French military advisor to the newly established independent Belgian government and remained dedicated to the cause of an independent Belgian Republic in his capacity as an advisor to major figures in the French revolutionary government. Upon becoming French foreign minister in March 1792, he selected LeBrun as his first officer for Belgian and Liégeois affairs. Their close collaboration began in August 1792, when LeBrun became French minister of foreign affairs and supported Dumouriez's appointment as commander-in-chief of the French Republic's Army of the North.

The single-minded efforts of Dumouriez and LeBrun to implement their plans for the Belgian provinces and Liège affected the course of the revolution in France as well. After seizing the king's prerogative over the conduct of foreign affairs in March 1792, the revolutionary assembly's preoccupation with internal problems and factional struggles and the deputies' inexperience in foreign affairs allowed the two men and their compatriots an extraordinary degree of latitude in focusing French foreign and military policy on establishing an independent Belgian Republic. Essential to that project was the support of the Girondin faction, whose espousal of a universal crusade to liberate subjected peoples was consistent with

Dumouriez and LeBrun's goal of Belgian-Liégeois liberation. To that end, the Belgian connection played a fateful role in drawing revolutionary France into a devastating war against *ancient régime* Europe and led to the charges of treason against Dumouriez and LeBrun that remain part of the established history of the French Revolution.

Indeed, historians have variously treated Dumouriez as a political adventurer, a crypto-royalist, and an arch-traitor, and have dismissed LeBrun as an ineffectual bystander despite his role as foreign minister for almost a year. Accounts of their activities have relied primarily on the later four-volume memoirs of Dumouriez, in which he presents himself as a proponent of constitutional monarchy while disclosing nothing of his ardent support for Belgian independence or his republican sympathies. In fact, he deprecates his influence on French foreign policy and military strategy and makes no mention of his collaboration with LeBrun. Dumouriez's memoirs, purposely written to gain an appointment in one of the European governments after his defection, are a valuable but flawed historical source.

The massive archival material on the lives and careers of Dumouriez and LeBrun, much of it previously unexamined, reveals that during these momentous months, it was not elected policymakers but Dumouriez and LeBrun, supported by the foreign ministry's permanent staff and friends in the revolutionary government, who formulated and executed French foreign policy. Dumouriez's belongings and effects, seized immediately after his defection and placed with the records of the Committee of General Security, were then dispersed among the French National Archives, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Archives of the Ministries of War and Foreign Affairs, and the Archives of the Prefecture of Police in Paris. Found with those papers are the memoirs, correspondence, and other papers of LeBrun, including the complete correspondence between the two that reveals their close collaboration.

Another important source is the registers and minutes of the Diplomatic Committees of the Legislative Assembly and the Convention. Sources in the Belgian and Liégeois archives additionally reveal important connections between the Belgian and Liégeois patriots and Dumouriez and LeBrun. Considerable archival materials from this period are also available in the Library of the British Museum and the Public Record Office at Kew Gardens, the depository of the British foreign office records. Here, for instance, are the records of "Grenville's spies," British secret agents in Paris, which are important for understanding the British view of French foreign policy in the six months before the French declaration of war on Great Britain and the United Provinces in early 1793.

Altogether, these sources challenge the standard interpretation of the French Revolution that treats French foreign policy of 1792-1793 as a miscarriage of revolutionary enthusiasm, a reckless Girondin ideological

crusade against kings, priests, and nobles that led France into a war that by the summer of 1793 brought the French Republic close to defeat. Dumouriez is portrayed as a Girondin accomplice, his eventual defection the culminating treason for which the Girondins are held accountable. The myth of reckless Girondin expansionism eventually defeated in the Belgian provinces was originally a Montagnard invention meant to discredit their adversaries that has come to be accepted by most subsequent historians.

Expanding on recent revisionist assessments of the early years of the French Revolution, this study explains how Dumouriez and LeBrun were able to use the foreign policy consensus within the revolutionary assemblies to direct foreign policy during these crucial years in their unwavering effort to liberate the Belgian provinces and Liège and create an independent Belgian Republic. It integrates the Belgian plan into the history of the French Revolution, provides new insights into the origins and expansion of the war against much of Europe, and illuminates the relationships between revolutionary France and the peoples of neighboring states. Above all, it reinterprets the significance and characters of Dumouriez and LeBrun, whose initiative on behalf of the Belgian plan played a major role in the revolutionary events of 1792 and 1793.

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Map 2 Map by Allison Seiwert, University of St. Thomas Geography Department.

CHAPTER 1

Pierre LeBrun and the Liégeois Revolution, 1754–1792

Pierre LeBrun was born in 1754 in Noyon in the French province of Picardy near the Franco-Belgian frontier, the son of a poor churchwarden.[1] Despite his humble beginnings, he was early recognized as an outstanding student, and by 1766 the local cathedral awarded him a scholarship to attend the prestigious Collège of Louis-le-Grand in Paris. There he achieved great academic distinction in the classics, mathematics, and the sciences and eagerly discussed the works of Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, and the authors of the *Encyclopédie,* absorbing the Enlightenment ideas that would drive his future career as a journalist, political activist, and statesman. In this heady environment, LeBrun also became acquainted with such other future revolutionaries as Maximilien Robespierre, Camille Desmoulins, and Stanislas Fréron. After his graduation, LeBrun first pursued a career in mathematics and astronomy at the Royal Observatory in Paris. In 1779, however, for reasons unknown, he abruptly enlisted in the French army—an apparently unhappy choice, as after two years he deserted.

Unable to remain in France, LeBrun emigrated to the principality of Liège under the patronage of Abbé Jean-Noël Paquot, a former professor at the University of Louvain. LeBrun arrived in Liège restless and not yet able to focus his considerable talents and energy. In 1782, after LeBrun had a brief stint as a tutor for the children of Bernard-Antoine de Rasquinet, a municipal magistrate, Paquot helped him obtain a position as an apprentice to the printer Jean-Jacques Tutot, where he soon became a master printer and coeditor of Tutot's *Journal historique et politique.* The following

year, LeBrun married a Liégeoise, Marie-Jeanne Cherette, and a year later fathered a son, Jean-Pierre. Within five years of his arrival, LeBrun clearly had made Liège his home.[2]

The Bishopric of Liège, an independent episcopal principality of the Holy Roman Empire, was not a cultural backwater but an intellectually and politically sophisticated society. Since the early fourteenth century, local representative governments had protected individual liberties and fostered an intellectual and economic development far more advanced than anywhere in Europe. The Liégeois were governed by a communal council, an Estates General, and a prince-bishop elected by the canons of the Cathedral of Saint-Lambert, confirmed by the pope, and invested with temporal authority by the Holy Roman Emperor.[3] The communal council, which advised the prince-bishop, consisted of representatives of thirty-two municipal corporations elected by the universal suffrage of their members, and the rights afforded the corporations fostered a democratic spirit among all Liégeois citizens. Under a wide franchise, the Liégeois elected two bourgmestres (mayors), whose decisions were supervised by the communal council. The Estates General consisted of three orders—the sixty canons of the Cathedral, the nobility, and the elected mayors of the twenty-three municipalities—each order with veto power over the others. The prince-bishop ruled with the consent of the Estates General; as Henri Pirenne, the Belgian historian pointed out, "their consent is as indispensable as that of the Parliament is to the king of England."[4] In domestic affairs, the prince-bishop largely deferred to the estates and his prime minister, although he had limited emergency powers. The prince-bishop determined foreign policy, conferring on disputed matters with the other princes of the Holy Roman Empire and the emperor in the Imperial Chamber of Wetzlar. With his sovereign rights maintained only by an alliance of neighboring powers and his revenues derived solely from his ecclesiastical position, he was in effect a political ruler independent of local interests. As a result, by LeBrun's day the Liégeois were among the least oppressed peoples of Europe.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, strong intellectual currents began to challenge the status quo in the Bishopric of Liège and Belgium, where, unlike most of *ancien régime* Europe, Enlightenment works circulated freely. In the decade preceding LeBrun's arrival, the number of printers, journals, newspapers, and bookshops had increased dramatically.[5] As early as 1755, Pierre Rousseau had arrived in Liège from Toulouse and, with the patronage of the prince-bishop's ministers and the Austrian minister to Brussels, established a newspaper, the *Journal encyclopédique,* dedicated to the dissemination of Enlightenment thought in Liège and Belgium. Rousseau had corresponded with and published the

works of Voltaire and a number of enlightened publicists, attacked the *ancien régime* social order as irrational and unjust, and proclaimed that the application of reason and the new science would reform and regenerate all of European society. By then, printers in Brussels were openly selling Jean-Jacques Rousseau's collected works, and Voltaire's works and Diderot's *Encyclopédie* were published in Liège soon after. A democratic movement grounded in Enlightenment thought had gradually taken shape in Liège,[6] and LeBrun's new career was profoundly shaped by its role as a center of Enlightenment thought enjoying almost unlimited freedom of the press.

These developments coincided roughly with Charles François Velbruck's election as prince-bishop of Liège in 1772. Velbruck, educated in German universities, had become an ardent supporter of the *Aufklärung*, and as prince-bishop he supported the rights of all Liégeois citizens against the privileged elite, institutionalized the principle of popular sovereignty, and preserved the tradition of local autonomy. His efforts were supported by the press, which championed civil equality, abolition of privilege, and freedom of thought. To further those same ends, in 1779 Velbruck founded the Société d'Émulation to give men of letters and publicists the opportunity to read and discuss the works of the *philosophes* and publicly champion popular sovereignty. But in 1784, the enlightened Velbruck died and was replaced by Constantin de Hoensbroeck, a conservative whose authoritarian regime threatened to destroy not only the liberal representative institutions of Liège but also the enlightened cultural atmosphere that had nurtured its free press.[7] The Société d'Émulation quickly became the nucleus of political opposition to Hoensbroeck, and LeBrun, who had been welcomed as a member, began to use his position as an independent journalist to play a more active role in politics.

To voice his opposition to the new prince-bishop, LeBrun left Tutot to establish his own newspaper, the *Journal général de l'Europe*, in collaboration with his fellow printer Jacques-Joseph Smits, who became LeBrun's lifelong friend and supporter. The *Journal général* comprised approximately thirty pages per issue and was published three times a week, in six volumes a year at a subscription rate of 18 livres.[8] According to LeBrun, by August 1789 the paper's circulation brought in some 50,000 livres per year, or roughly 2,800 regular subscriptions, and had an estimated readership of 15,000.[9] LeBrun's correspondence as publisher reveals an entrepreneurial spirit and the extraordinary effort he devoted to the writing, editing, printing, and international distribution of the *Journal général*. His newspaper had a wide network of correspondents from the principal cities of Western Europe. Its readers came from the literate of all classes, and copies were distributed to all the major European booksellers to gain the widest possible audience.[10]

LeBrun's *Journal général* was international in scope, covering both Liégeois and European politics, and it circulated widely (if not always openly) throughout the Holy Roman Empire, the United Provinces, France, and England.[11] As subscriptions increased, LeBrun's readership extended into Prussia, where (he told the Berlin bookseller François Lagard) his acquaintance with influential civil servants close to the king, Frederick William II, ensured the circulation of the *Journal général*.[12] LeBrun's correspondence with the directors of postal services and booksellers in Paris, Mezières, Lille, and Sedan indicates that the underground circulation of the *Journal général* was protected by LeBrun's friend M. Buchoz, personal physician of the Count of Provence, among others.[13] Although the *Journal général's* staff resided and published in Liège, they maintained another official location in Herve in the Belgian province of Limbourg under the name of Société Typographique. In establishing his newspaper, LeBrun had sought and gained the protection of Joseph II, the Hapsburg emperor, whose enlightened reforms in Belgium LeBrun supported in its pages.

As an international gazette, the *Journal général* was one of many publications that played an important role in the prerevolutionary political culture of the late 1780s, transmitting information to the public and representing an educated and well-informed opinion to those in power.[14] As such, it was a manifestation of the importance of the emerging public sphere and public opinion in late eighteenth-century Europe.[15] William Augustus Miles, William Pitt's secret agent in Liège, wrote to the British prime minister of "the very great influence which this Gazette has on the minds of the people here, for, their Breviary excepted, the whole of their reading is confined to it."[16] LeBrun maintained from the start that its purpose was "to propagate the reign of the *philosophes* and to spread the wise principles of the Enlightenment to the public," thus bringing about a more just society through rational political and economic reform.[17] For LeBrun, in other words, the *Journal général* was not merely a livelihood but a mission.

LeBrun became a master propagandist and a fiery champion of Rousseau's *Social Contract*, promoting Rousseau's notion of liberty and insisting that all authority is founded on the free consent of the governed. In article after article, LeBrun denounced the injustices of the *ancien régime* and questioned the motives of the powerful, challenging them to recognize the limits of their power and the extent of their obligations. "Leaders of all nations, of all ranks," he asked, "Do you at least know the limits of the powers which are given you? Are you totally informed of the full extent of your responsibilities? Have you ever forgotten that sovereign authority belongs to the nation and that it is above all the individual persons who make up that nation?"[18] Citing Rousseau's dictum that "As long as a people is constrained to obey, and obeys, it does well; but as soon as it can

shake off the yoke, and shakes it off, it does better," he left no doubt about the implications of this view for present governments and future patriots: "With Despotic Governments, the Sovereign, lacking the aid of the law to control public opinion, cannot guarantee that his orders are carried out except through the use of force, that is, through torture and execution. Reciprocally, the people, being unable to find a remedy to the despotism of the tyrant, turn necessarily to violence, to uprising, and to massacre."[19] LeBrun and his collaborators also used the *Journal général* to disseminate the Enlightenment ideas of the physiocrats Mercier de la Rivière, the Abbé Baudeau, and Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours to the literate public. Above all, LeBrun became an apostle of the master physiocrat he referred to as "the wise, the beneficent Quesnay," ardently defending free trade and advocating the abolition of indirect taxes and the imposition of a land tax only on the revenue of landed proprietors.[20] Arguing with increasing frequency for individual freedom and for the legitimacy of revolt against despotism, LeBrun's writing was part of the machinery of protest, first of reform and then of revolution, and helped ignite political dissatisfaction throughout Europe.

At first LeBrun restricted his subject matter to Enlightenment themes and general politics, limiting his direct criticism of the authoritarian methods of Prince-Bishop Hoensbroeck. By the spring of 1786, however, Hoensbroeck's censorship and political oppression had increased, and his role in the Jeux de Spa affair led LeBrun to launch an all-out attack on his regime that helped set the stage for the Liégeois Revolution. The prince-bishop, although a religious fanatic, had personally controlled the gambling concessions in the resort town of Spa. The previous July, however, Noël Levoz, a wealthy Liégeois merchant, had declared Hoensbroeck's monopoly unconstitutional and opened his own gambling casino there. When the city council ruled in favor of the prince-bishop, who then closed Levoz's casino, Levoz sued him, arguing that Hoensbroeck had violated his rights as a citizen of Liège. This time the city council agreed with Levoz but was overruled by the Imperial Chamber of Wetzlar, and Levoz's gambling casino remained closed. In response, Levoz published a bitter pamphlet protesting Hoensbroeck's arbitrary action, prompting a stormy public controversy over the powers of the chief executive and the rights of his subjects. This was followed by an especially virulent anonymous pamphlet attacking the prince-bishop that the authorities suspected had been authored by Hyacinthe Fabry, the son of the chief of police, Jacques-Joseph Fabry. When Hoensbroek dismissed the elder Fabry from his post a few months later, LeBrun began a concerted propaganda campaign against the prince-bishop's abuses of power.

The public debate over the Jeux de Spa affair led to the emergence of two opposing political factions in Liège: the aristocrats, who advocated

giving all political power to the prince-bishop, and the patriots or democrats, who maintained that the accustomed and constitutional rights of the Liégeois and the legislature limited the prince-bishop's authority. The patriot leaders of the community, all respected members of the Société d'Émulation, founded the Société Patriotique and pledged to defend the rights of citizens and popular sovereignty against Hoensbroeck's encroachments. Among its members was Pierre LeBrun.

In March 1786, LeBrun moved to oppose Prince-Bishop Hoensbroeck openly. As LeBrun's criticism of the prince-bishop's regime became more strident, Liège became increasingly dangerous for him and his staff.[21] When Hoensbroeck initiated judicial action to close down the newspaper office in August 1786, LeBrun and Smits were forced to leave Liège to avoid imprisonment. Fleeing with their families, they moved the operation of the newspaper to their Belgian office in Herve, where LeBrun redoubled his assault on Hoensbroeck, calling for the reestablishment of popular sovereignty and individual freedoms, including freedom of the press. His primary contact in Liège was Fabry, who, after LeBrun's exile, sent him detailed accounts of events in the principality.[22]

In Herve, LeBrun became the major spokesman for enlightened reform in Liège and the Belgian provinces. He advocated giving the Liégeois the right to elect all members of the communal council, urged the establishment of a uniform land tax for all landowners, and denounced the prince-bishop's imposition of taxes and arbitrary rule. Over the next three years, LeBrun's political thought grew progressively more radical, and the incendiary words of LeBrun and other such propagandists stimulated the emergence of centers of protest across the continent. As popular agitation for reforms increased across much of Europe, the authoritarian positions of the royal governments became more intransigent. When even the enlightened Joseph II, frustrated by Belgian opposition to his liberal reforms, used force to implement them, LeBrun opposed him and attacked all monarchy as tyranny.[23] After 1788, the newspaper and its editor openly publicized not only the ideals of natural law and popular sovereignty but also the legitimacy of revolt against despotic governments:

> Violence, fear, gullibility, prejudice, credulity, and imprudence often produce a numbing of the people and destroy their natural spirit, but when they listen to the voice of reason and when necessity forces them to come out of their lethargy, they see that the so-called rights of their tyrants are but effects of injustice, of seduction, and of force, which have not been successful in destroying the eternal rights of man; it is that nations, given cause to recall their dignity, remember that they themselves established authority, that they have submitted to it only to attain happiness, that the law exists only to represent their will, and that when the sovereign power

> deviates from their plan, they assume once more their primitive independence and can revoke the powers that are being shamefully abused.[24]

During his stay in Herve, LeBrun had become not merely a reformist but a revolutionary.

In Liège, the patriots' active opposition to Hoensbroeck was the major cause of the Liégeois Revolution in August 1789. News of the revolutionary drama playing out in France earlier that summer had thrilled and encouraged the Liégeois patriots. In June, the pages of LeBrun's *Journal général* were filled with news of the revolution of the French National Assembly, and in July the Liégeois were moved by his account of the storming of the Bastille in Paris:

> The people of Paris fought today only for their liberty; they massacred only those who had given them provocation and who had betrayed them. These people who have been too much slandered, accused of being so debased, so corrupt, showed that they had great vigor, admirable courage. These people who had for thirteen hundred years fought so well and so gloriously for their kings could not fail to avail themselves again of their traditional vigor at a time when it was necessary to fight for their liberty, for the constitution that they wish to give themselves.[25]

So vivid was this account, in fact, that Joseph II, one of the newly threatened crowns of Europe, charged that "your pages written in this spirit would become the sound of alarm for all of Europe" and ordered the Herve offices of the newspaper closed.[26] LeBrun, in a written response, stated that his stance merely reaffirmed his commitment to the Enlightenment principles of liberty and natural law: "These truths are to be found in a hundred places throughout our paper; they have even been repeated often, endlessly; they are unvaryingly graven in our hearts; no human force will ever efface them."[27]

Although the *Journal général's* advocacy of such ideals led to its closing, it had already had its effect on the tumultuous events that followed. On 9 August, emboldened by the events in France, the patriots demanded elections for their own national representative assembly. Four days later, Hoensbroeck finally made a conciliatory gesture, announcing an intention to unite the three estates in an assembly and proposing that the clergy renounce its tax-exempt status. But he had acted too late. On 19 August, contempt for the regime exploded into revolt.

On that day, workers from the factory of the arms manufacturer Gossuin and other townspeople poured into the streets in protest against Hoensbroeck's rule. In a march to the Hôtel de Ville led by the patriot leaders, they took over the government in a bloodless coup. By acclamation

the crowd proclaimed the patriots Fabry and J. R. de Chestret the bourgmestres of Liège, and Jean-Pierre Ranssonnet, a friend of George Washington recently returned from the war for American independence, seized the citadel and forced its commander to fire a twenty-one gun salute in their honor.[28] In a letter to Miles, Fabry captured the excited atmosphere of the revolution: "Yes, the revolution is true! Since the 17th I have not had a minute to myself. The work is immense. We must watch day and night. It is impossible for me to give you the details; it is a miracle that this operation has been effected without a drop of blood, without a scratch."[29] Hoensbroeck was forced to sign an abrogation of his powers, and the revolutionaries reestablished popular sovereignty.[30] LeBrun and his newspaper were welcomed back to Liège, and in its pages a euphoric LeBrun praised the revolution:

> It is a spectacle—both magnificent and imposing—of a people who recognize their prerogatives, who reclaim them and know how to recover them; but how much more interesting still is this spectacle when a revolution of this kind seems less an insurrection, a struggle of hatred and vengeance, than a reunification of feelings, a coming together of points of view, a selfless and patriotic struggle, and when such a fine conquest is not bathed in blood, it demands only tears of joy and tenderness. The city of Liège provided this great example during the last three days, and Liège has regained its liberty.[31]

On 27 August, Hoensbroeck, although invited to remain titular head of the government, fled to the Abbey of Saint Maximin near Trier to organize opposition to the revolution. Fortunately for the new government, Frederick William II of Prussia offered to mediate between the prince-bishop and the revolutionary government and to send troops to Liège to restore order, supporting the new regime to gain advantage over his rival Leopold of Austria. The Liégeois gratefully accepted his support and protection, and on 30 October Prussian forces commanded by General von Schlieffen occupied the city. LeBrun played an active role in gaining the intervention of the Prussians, meeting frequently with the Baron de Senfft, the Prussian resident at Liège, and with the Baron de Dohm, the Prussian representative to the Circle of Westphalia. In the *Journal général*, LeBrun assured the populace that the Prussian troops were in Liège only to protect the new revolutionary government.[32] Even though the insurgents knew that the other German princes of the empire had sworn to resist the new revolutionary government, they could now face the counterrevolutionary armies with at least the support of Prussia.

Seeking to maintain Prussia's support and to soothe the rest of the European community's apprehensions about the new regime, the new

revolutionary government turned to LeBrun to conduct its foreign affairs and diplomacy. Multilingual and an expert in European affairs, LeBrun was a logical choice; having analyzed the international scene daily for almost five years, he understood the predispositions of the foreign powers and the political and historical context of Liège's position in Europe. He also had connections with the British through his friendship with Miles, whom he had met three years earlier when Miles, attached to the mission of Sir James Harris representing Britain to the Estates General in Holland, served as Pitt's unofficial agent in Liège. As Belgium had also just won its independence, Miles argued that, with Britain's concurrence, the Liégeois and Belgians should unite into a single republic to resist their possible invasion by France, where despite the revolution, the king still directed foreign affairs. Liège's revolutionary government hoped through the intervention of Miles to secure Britain's recognition and protection despite its official policy, which was to support Hoensbroeck's restoration and the Austrian regime in Belgium. Thus, in December LeBrun initiated overtures to the new Belgian revolutionary government about the possible union of the two peoples, but he received no response.[33] In early April 1790, the Liégeois government also made its first appeal to France for help, sending a delegation of representatives to the Fête of the Fédération in Paris to seek French support for Liégeois independence. Although both the National Assembly and the patriots of the Jacobin Club received the delegation with enthusiasm, they could offer no official assurances of French support or recognition of the Liégeois revolutionary government.[34]

When the ruling princes of the Holy Roman Empire who made up the Imperial Chamber of Wetzlar published an edict condemning Prussia's protection of the new Liégeois government and calling on the other circles of the empire to restore the prince-bishop to power, LeBrun and the patriots launched an aggressive campaign to rally the people against the anticipated counterrevolution. In May, LeBrun wrote, "Oh Liégeois! If a more powerful motive were needed to excite you than that of justice of your cause, we would still offer you only one alternative: the necessity of conquering or the certainty of being buried—you and your families—under the ruins of liberty and the father-land."[35] When the armies of the electors of Palatine and Mainz invaded Liège later that month, the quickly constituted revolutionary army drove them back across the Meuse into German territory—a victory confirming the new government. A euphoric LeBrun urged continued resistance, maintaining that the Liégeois could take heart that Prussia, Britain, and France were favorably disposed to their cause.

In addition to conducting foreign affairs for the new nation, LeBrun helped Pierre Joseph Henckart draw up a plan for a democratic government in Liège designed to neutralize the power of the privileged elites by

providing for the political participation of all male citizens and dividing the city and suburbs into sixty sections, each of which would directly elect its own assembly by secret ballot.[36] The new municipal government consisted of two councils, the members of which were elected for two-year terms, thus abolishing the privileged positions of the thirty-two professional corporations in the old communal council.[37] On 23 July, the city's leaders made LeBrun a naturalized citizen of Liège to honor his role in the revolution and the planning of the new independent government. While never renouncing his French citizenship, LeBrun pledged "to be forever faithful to the laws and to the interests of the country that has just adopted me."[38] Within a few days, he was elected to the General Council and made its secretary. LeBrun had become a central figure in the revolutionary government.

Meanwhile, events were unfolding outside of Liège that would have fateful consequences for the success of its revolution. Although antagonisms among the great powers had thus far prevented active opposition to the Liégeois Revolution, by late June the political climate changed drastically. On 26 June 1790, diplomats from Austria, Prussia, Britain, and the United Provinces met at Reichenbach, Silesia, to discuss the restoration of the Austrian regime in Belgium and to establish a general and lasting peace among the old regimes of Europe to protect their power in the face of the new revolutionary threat. Prussia's earlier offer of help for Liège had played out against the backdrop of the Austro-Prussian rivalry in central Europe, one of the major obstacles to peace. Though rumors of an imminent Prussian attack on Austria had circulated between February and June, Prussia's Frederick William and Austria's Leopold had actually begun negotiating their differences as early as March, Frederick William seeking territorial compensation for its support and Leopold recognizing that peace with Prussia was imperative if Austria was to regain control of the Belgian provinces.[39] Britain and the United Provinces had good reason to support a general peace in Europe, as the Nootka Sound Crisis, which had flared up in May 1790, threatened to involve both nations in a naval war with Spain.[40]

The Declaration of Reichenbach, signed on 27 July 1790, accomplished the goal of the conference—a peace in Europe that would hold until LeBrun and Dumouriez led France into war with Austria two years later, but one which came at the expense of the rebellious Belgians and Liégeois. Meeting at the Hague Conference in late October 1790, the great powers confirmed the support of Prussia, Austria, Britain, and the United Provinces for an Austrian military restoration of Belgium and Liège.[41]

In response, the Liégeois frantically began military preparations to replace the departed Prussian troops, creating two regiments of National Guards commanded by Jean-Joseph Fyon and Hyacinthe Fabry, while

LeBrun unsuccessfully continued to seek military support from France.[42] As the German and Austrian armies approached Liège, the combined councils met for the last time on 23 December 1790. In a stormy meeting, LeBrun and Smits urged their fellow citizens to oppose the counterrevolutionary forces with their last breath, but the council members voted to surrender to Leopold. [43]

In despair, LeBrun and the patriots fled into exile in late December, first to Givet and then to Paris, LeBrun calling upon other Liégeois democrats to follow him to France, where he declared, "they will be received with open arms and that in that way they will one day be able to avenge themselves on Leopold."[44] Now back in the country of his birth, still in the throes of revolution itself, LeBrun thereafter dedicated himself to advancing the enlightened principles of liberty, equality, and resistance to tyranny and to a plan for Belgian and Liégeois independence. From Paris, in January 1791 LeBrun resumed publication of the *Journal général*, which now became the official newspaper of the Liégeois and, eventually, the Belgian-Liégeois patriot party, and began lobbying French patriots and policymakers for their support for the liberation of the Liégeois.[45] The deputies Antoine Pierre Barnave and Philippe Auguste Merlin de Douai were interested, but the most influential deputy of the time, Honoré Gabriel Riquette, the Count de Mirabeau, was extremely receptive and kept in regular contact with LeBrun and the Liégeois patriots through Guillaume de Bonne-Carrère.

Bonne-Carrère, who had been an agent for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs since the early 1780s, would play an important role in the project to liberate Liège and Belgium. After the French Revolution, the French foreign minister Armand Marc, the Count de Montmorin, had sent him on secret missions throughout Europe, and through these assignments Bonne-Carrère had become acquainted with Mirabeau, Charles-François Dumouriez, and Hugues-Bernard Maret. In Paris, Bonne-Carrère had joined the Société des Amis de la Constitution, better known as the Jacobin Club, and even served as its secretary, yet he maintained good relations with all the factions that made up the complex politics of revolutionary France, including key policymakers in the revolutionary assemblies and at court. [46] In March 1791, through the intervention of Mirabeau, Bonne-Carrère was named French minister to the restored Austrian regime in Liège, but Hoensbroeck, fearing the resurgence of a democratic revolution, refused to recognize him. Bonne-Carrère became a staunch advocate of Liégeois independence, hoping to eventually become the French ambassador to a new Belgian-Liégeois Republic, and Mirabeau made him the unofficial liaison between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the patriots in France. During this time, Bonne-Carrère and LeBrun became close friends, working together toward their goal of establishing

a Liégeois Republic. When Antoine DeLessart replaced Montmorin as foreign minister in November 1791, he chose Bonne-Carrère as his secretary and chief liaison with the Diplomatic Committee of the Legislative Assembly. Through him, LeBrun became the chief intermediary between the Liégeois and Belgian patriots in Paris and the foreign ministry that he would one day head.

What would become LeBrun's plan for liberating Liège and Belgium was also strongly influenced by the ideas of his close friend Fabry. After the failure of the Liégeois Revolution and the Austrian restoration, Fabry, his son Hyacinthe, and Nicolas Bassenge fled to Venlo in the Dutch Netherlands instead of to Paris with the majority of Liégeois exiles, but they maintained close contact with the patriots in Paris. In the fall of 1791, Fabry was the first of the Belgian-Liégeois patriots to argue that for France to successfully oppose the growing counterrevolutionary threat, it must declare war on Austria and launch a preemptive strike on the Belgian provinces. In a letter to the patriot Levoz, Fabry argued that the French king's flight to Varennes that June had proved that he was in fact inalterably opposed to the French revolutionary government, and that sooner or later Austria would organize a coalition of monarchs whose armies would invade France to restore the absolute monarchy unless France first declared war on Austria by launching a swift, decisive strike into Belgium and Liège.[47] Fabry maintained that if a French army of two or three thousand crossed the Franco-Belgian frontier, fifty or sixty thousand Liégeois would rise in revolt and overthrow the prince-bishop's regime within a week, the Belgians would follow their example, and their combined insurrection would ensure a French victory. He warned, however, that the French must strike quickly before Austria had time to completely militarize the Belgian provinces and Liège and to organize an "invincible coalition of crowns." Fabry urged the patriots in Paris to organize a Liégeois legion that could be mobilized on the Franco-Belgian frontier and to be ready in case war should break out between France and Austria.

Taking Fabry's advice, LeBrun and the Liégeois and Belgian patriots immediately began to organize legions. On 9 November, Fabry wrote to LeBrun that, according to his sources, an attack upon France was fast approaching. Austria was sending more troops to Belgium and Liège, bordering France, and "along with the sixty thousand Austrian troops marching toward the Rhine were Hessians, Wurtemburgers, and contingents of other Teutonic animals and Prussians."[48] It was essential, he warned, that the legions be ready as soon as possible. In the *Journal général,* LeBrun began to strongly urge France to declare war on the Hapsburg Empire, as Leopold had sworn his opposition to the French revolutionary government. He advised the policymakers in Paris to take advantage of the revolutionary fer-

ment in Belgium and Liège, assuring them that if French troops invaded those territories, the patriots would revolt against the hated regimes and together they would defeat the Austrian army.[49] On 18 December 1791, LeBrun led a Liégeois delegation to the bar of the Legislative Assembly to seek the deputies' support for the creation of a legion that would fight alongside the French army against Austria.[50] Warmly received, LeBrun appealed to the deputies' shared devotion to liberty, arguing that Austria would quickly restore a reactionary regime in France as it had in Liège.

LeBrun also lent his support to the Belgian Vonckists, the republican wing of the coalition led by Jean-François Vonck that had won independence there. As they worked together in Paris, the exiled Belgian Vonckists and Liégeois patriots came to see the wisdom of a Belgian-Liégeois union, which LeBrun had earlier suggested at Miles's urging. In April 1791, Albert d'Aubreme, a leading Vonckist in Paris, wrote to Vonck about the close ties he had formed with LeBrun and the Liégeois patriots and recommended that they join forces.[51] LeBrun had grown to admire the Vonckist leader Edouard de Walckiers, praising him as a dedicated and loyal patriot who had given freely of his private fortune to the cause of liberty, and during the autumn of 1791 they began to work together to further a joint plan for Liège and Belgium.[52] The Vonckist and Liégeois leaders sought the support of the French government for this project, and Bonne-Carrère, although only in an unofficial capacity, played a major role in their negotiations. Based on their discussions, in October 1791 Walckiers prepared two documents to serve as guidelines for the establishment of a united democratic republic of Belgium and Liège.[53] The first called for the establishment of an Estates General with double representation for the third estate to promote the equality of all citizens before the law, free and equal access to all professions, and freedom of the press, and the second contained thirteen articles for the proposed confederation of Belgium and Liège. Walckiers contended that unification would strengthen the military forces of both revolutionary movements and that the Liégeois would strengthen democratic opinion within the new republic, thereby offsetting the strong clerical and aristocratic sentiment in Belgium.[54] On 26 October 1791, the Vonckist and Liégeois patriots formally concluded an alliance to unify their two peoples into a single republic. Vonck wholeheartedly supported Walckiers's plan,[55] as did the Liégeois patriots. As Fabry wrote to LeBrun, "The idea of union with the Belgians, a necessary union, ordered by nature, has always been ours."[56]

Walckiers, like LeBrun, was widely respected among French policymakers and had powerful connections on the Diplomatic Committee of the National Assembly. Walckiers's influence in the French Assembly was demonstrated in mid-December 1791, when reports filtered into Paris

that the conservative Belgian Statist refugees, who wished to restore an independent but undemocratic government in Belgium, were concentrating in French towns near the Franco-Belgian frontier. Although the local governments had issued orders to disperse these refugees, the Belgians, led by Count Armand-Louis of Béthune-Charost, a Belgian noble who claimed descent from the French counts of Flanders, had refused. Greatly alarmed by the presence of the Statists in northern France, Walckiers urged the Diplomatic Committee to take action against Béthune-Charost and the refugees, and after the Committee presented its recommendations to that effect, the Assembly had decreed the dispersal of the Statists from the French frontier.[57] In effect, Walckiers had gained official French support for the democratic Vonckist party and its program of opposition to the conservative Statists.

On 10 January 1792, Walckiers and LeBrun convened a meeting of the principal Belgian and Liégeois patriots in Paris to create a joint committee for the liberation and unification of Belgium and Liège. Their immediate purpose was to draw up plans for a new Belgian-Liégeois Revolution and to win the approval of the French government. Vonck sent two representatives, the Flemish priest Etienne van der Steene and the Brabançon Jean-Joseph Leunckens, former aide-de-camp to General van der Mersch.[58] Another Vonckist leader of the failed Belgian Revolution, E. L. Rens, also attended. LeBrun led the Liégeois delegation, which included Levoz, Smits, Fyon, Bassenge, Brixhe, Dethier, Digneffe, Lesoinne, and, representing Fabry, his son Hyacinthe. Vonck wrote to LeBrun assuring him of his full support for the cause and thanking him for his considerable contribution to democracy in both Belgium and Liège.[59]

On 17 January, the first official meeting of Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois was convened at LeBrun's home to determine how, in the event of war between France and Austria, they could best ensure that a French invasion would ignite a general insurrection against the Austrian regime.[60] At a second meeting, the Committee adopted Fabry's plan to press the French government to launch a preemptive war against Austria in Belgium and Liège and resolved to gain French approval for the formation of two legions to fight with the French army in the invasion.[61] Finally, the Committee adopted a plan set out by LeBrun for organizing the new governments of Belgium and Liège immediately after the anticipated French invasion, revolution, and expulsion of the Austrians.

LeBrun's plan was published in three pamphlets.[62] In *The Revolutionary Power,* he proposed that at the beginning of the revolution, a new committee of fifty patriots should be chosen by the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois to serve as a temporary revolutionary authority that would send commissioners to all parts of Belgium and Liège to provide for the

common defense of the citizenry and the election of provisional administrators. Once loyal administrations had been established, the authority would hold a general election to choose a constitutional convention. In the second pamphlet, *Manifesto of the United Belgians and Liégeois in Paris,* LeBrun presented a statement to be distributed at the proper time declaring that Liège and Belgium were to be united, arguing against divine-right monarchies and proclaiming that the ideology of the Belgian-Liégeois Republic must be a democratic one. The democratic ideas and many of the details of LeBrun's third pamphlet, *Essay on a Constitution to be Adopted by the United Belgian Provinces and Country of Liège,* appear to prefigure the 1793 constitution of the French National Convention that would follow the Second French Revolution of 10 August 1792. By this plan, Liège and Belgium would be divided into communes. Legislative power would be exercised by a unicameral assembly elected by all male citizens that would propose and pass laws, decide questions of finance and taxation, allocate taxes, review military conscription, and propose and ratify treaties of alliance consistent with the freedom of peoples and the needs of Belgian national defense. Any decision on war or peace would require the sanction of a council of ministers and the ratification of the people. The executive power would be exercised by a council of fifteen ministers elected by the voters from a list of legislative representatives. Although the council would have a veto over decrees of the assembly, any veto could be reversed by popular referendum. The judicial system would consist of elected magistrates, and all criminal cases would be tried before juries.

The rhetoric of these three publications was stoutly democratic and their constitutional plan outlined a coherent and republican government. Indeed, the French Jacobins of 1792 could have supported this government with enthusiasm. The Vonckists fully accepted the positions taken in the pamphlets, Vonck praising the preamble LeBrun wrote for his provisional constitution as having been drafted "with energy and genius."[63] Certainly there was full agreement between LeBrun and the democratic wing of the Belgian revolutionaries as to how the forthcoming revolution should be carried out and the way democratic institutions would develop from it.[64]

Thus after fleeing to Paris in late December 1790, LeBrun refused to accept the defeat of the revolution he had done so much to inspire and implement and instead organized the exiled Liégeois patriots and collaborated with the Belgian patriots to work toward a united Liégeois-Belgian Republic. To that end, he urged the French revolutionary government to defeat the Austrian army in the Belgian provinces with the aid of the Belgian and Liégeois peoples and provided the first written expression of the new republic's ideology in the form of a plan for a government and

constitution. A year later, LeBrun would be joined in this project by an equally dedicated republican, General Charles-François Dumouriez, whose commitment to the cause of an independent and democratic Belgium in 1790 and rise to power in the French revolutionary government in the spring of 1792 would allow the two to work closely together to implement their shared plan for the creation of a Belgian-Liégeois Republic.

CHAPTER 2

Charles-François Dumouriez and the Belgian Revolution, 1739–1792

Charles-François du Périer Dumouriez was born in his ancestral home of Cambrai, on the Scheldt River in northern France, on 25 January 1739 to Sophie de Châteauneuf and Antoine-François du Périer du Mouriez, both of noble rank. Only sixty years earlier, Cambrai had been part of the Belgian provinces, and for that reason Dumouriez would always consider himself a Walloon or French-speaking native of Flanders.[1] Although the family fortune had been largely dissipated by Dumouriez's namesake and paternal grandfather, Charles-François du Périer du Mouriez, the succeeding generation lived comfortably on rents in Cambrai. Little is known of his mother, who died when he was six. From his father, an officer and *commissaire des guerres* in the French army, and his six uncles, all of whom served with distinction in the same Picardy regiment, he inherited a passion for the military.[2] Dumouriez described his father as a noble, generous-spirited man of great integrity, a talented military officer, scholar, artist, musician, and poet. Under his guidance, Dumouriez spent his formative years studying Latin, Greek, English, German, Spanish, and Italian as well as mathematics, history, and music.

After leaving his father's tutelage, Dumouriez continued to be a voracious reader and scholar, receiving his formal schooling at the Collège of Louis-le-Grand in Paris, the same college attended by LeBrun a decade later. There he pored over the works of Plutarch, Montaigne, Pascal, Bayle, and Voltaire and was particularly influenced by the writings of the *philosophes*. In 1755, Dumouriez's father sent him to Versailles to live for a year with one of his uncles, a first *commis* in the Ministry of Interior under the

Duke de la Vrillière, where he became acquainted with life at the court of Louis XV and practiced the martial arts. He also learned much about the internal organization of France by attending administrative sessions of the ministry.[3]

At the age of seventeen, Dumouriez began his military career in the French army fighting the Prussians in the Seven Years' War as an aide-de-camp to General d'Armentières. Guided by his friend the Count Antoine Hyppolyte de Guibert, one of the great military strategists of the eighteenth century, he studied the rules of warfare, military strategy, and tactics. Learning the lessons of war quickly and thoroughly, he trained on the battlefield under Colonel Jean-Chrétien Fischer, chief of the German mercenaries serving France.[4] Through his studies and these experiences, he also came to greatly admire the military genius of Prussia's Frederick the Great. During his service in the Seven Years War, Dumouriez was wounded twenty-two times and awarded the Cross of Saint Louis for bravery.[5]

By the end of the war in 1763, Dumouriez had risen to the rank of captain in the cavalry. He settled in Paris and through his family connections was formally introduced at court, where he met the leading political figures of the day, including Jean-Louis Favier; Armand-Louis de Gontaut, the Duke de Biron; Lauzun, the Count de Broglie; and the highly influential Duke de Choiseul. Choiseul, minister of foreign affairs, was apparently impressed by the young officer's talents and intelligence and arranged for Dumouriez to become a military observer in Europe. In that capacity he traveled to Italy, Corsica, the Low Countries, Spain, and Portugal, sending voluminous reports of his observations to Choiseul.[6]

In 1767, the foreign minister gave him a military command as deputy quartermaster general to the Army of Corsica under the Marquis de Chauvelin. Despite his part in the French conquest of Corsica, Dumouriez found himself sympathetic to the plight of its people and to the struggle for independence led by General Paoli's patriot army.[7] He returned to France in 1769 deeply impressed by the courage and ingenuity of the Corsican people and highly critical of his own country's intervention into their affairs.

By 1770, Dumouriez, now a colonel and an acclaimed military officer at court, had earned Choiseul's full confidence, leading to his first diplomatic assignment, a secret mission to Poland. Through the marriage of Louis XV to a Polish princess, France had acquired an interest in Poland, which was being threatened with partition by Prussia and Russia. To safeguard the country's territorial integrity, Choiseul intended to incite Turkey against Russia and gain an alliance with Saxony and Sweden. While Choiseul was unwilling to commit French forces to a war in central Europe, he felt it necessary to superintend the political and military activities

of the Polish Confederation of Bar, the French-supported league of Polish nobles leading the resistance. This task he entrusted to Dumouriez, giving him financial and diplomatic carte blanche.

To prepare, Dumouriez read everything available on the history and geography of Poland as well as all the dispatches of French agents who had served there since 1764. He also consulted Jean-Louis Favier, the king's personal secret agent, who was the most prominent international affairs expert of his day and an Enlightenment publicist on international relations.[8] This intensive study resulted in a one-hundred-page report strongly supporting Choiseul's policy of aiding Poland. Arriving in Eperies, Hungary in August 1770, Dumouriez found the political and military conditions of the Polish Confederation chaotic. Its leadership torn by factionalism and its army undisciplined, it seemed no match for the formidable Russian Army under General Suvorov.[9] In response, Dumouriez drew up plans for a new Polish government that would replace the king and a new military strategy for the defeat of the Russian Army. The Polish Confederation adopted both proposals, and Dumouriez unofficially assumed leadership of the Army of Little Poland, which, with a French subsidy and military reinforcements, stopped the Russian advance. Dumouriez's mission appeared to be a great success.

As a result of intrigues at court, however, in December Choiseul was dismissed and replaced by the Duke d'Aiguillon, the king's new favorite, who covertly decided to sabotage Dumouriez's mission. Although Dumouriez assured the new foreign minister that with continued French financial and military aid Poland could maintain its independence, d'Aiguillon gradually reduced French personnel and funds to Poland, and the gains of the confederation were lost.[10] In April and May 1771, the Russian Army decisively defeated the Polish forces, and in 1772 Russia, Prussia, and Austria agreed to the first partition of Poland.

Dumouriez arrived back in Paris in January 1772. Alienated from the king by the current foreign minister, Dumouriez sought a military post from the Marquis de Monteynard, the minister of war, who gave him a staff position with the regiment of Lorraine, writing diplomatic and military reports.[11] He received a new diplomatic assignment when, in early 1773, with the king's approval Monteynard chose Dumouriez for a secret mission to Sweden to assure Gustavus Adolphus III of the French king's support against the resistance of many Swedish nobles to his reforms. But Dumouriez, once again the victim of court intrigue, was caught between Louis XV's secret foreign policy and the official policy of the foreign ministry. D'Aiguillon had him arrested and imprisoned in the Bastille for six months.

Waiting for the king to intercede on his behalf, Dumouriez studied mathematics, history, and literature and wrote several works including

Military Principles, Treatise on Legions, Philosophical Essay on Travels, and *Political and Commercial Memoirs on Hamburg and Lower Saxony.*[12] After his release, the king exiled him to Caen, Normandy, where in September 1774 he married his cousin, Mademoiselle de Broissy. His marriage was childless and unhappy, and fifteen years later Dumouriez's wife entered a convent in Paris.

Upon the death of Louis XV in 1774, Dumouriez was recalled to Paris and, because of his writings concerning the defense of the French Channel ports, was assigned to posts in Lille and Boulogne by the Count de Saint-Germain, the new king's minister of war. But when France declared war on Britain in 1778 in support of the American war for independence, Dumouriez was appointed to the important post of Commandant of Cherbourg by Louis XVI's chief minister, Count de Maurepas, Jean Frédéric de Phélypeaux, and immediately began work on plans for the defense of Cherbourg and the capture of the English Channel islands.[13] He remained commander after the war ended in 1783 and was promoted to *Brigadier des armées* in 1788. During those five years he devoted most of his time to building the port of Cherbourg, but, clearly hoping to obtain a more significant diplomatic or military position, also kept in touch with the political world of Paris and Versailles.

When the French Revolution began in 1789, Dumouriez was fifty years old, a man of recognized intelligence and wide experience. He was widely known as a brave soldier and a brilliant officer, a scholar and a prolific writer, a shrewd diplomat, and a charming and witty man of the world.[14] Capable of inspiring intense loyalty among friends and subordinates alike, Dumouriez was ambitious, ever searching for a career to match his abilities. Although a product of the *ancien régime,* his devotion to Enlightenment thought had led him to reject the corruption endemic among the French nobility and upper clergy. He also had been deeply affected by the Corsican and Polish struggles for independence. Thus he enthusiastically embraced the convocation of the Estates General, the French Revolution, and the Principles of 1789.

Even from Cherbourg, Dumouriez was confident that he could help bring about a new political order in France. To the Count de Montmorin, the foreign minister, he suggested that the Estates General meet beyond the control of factions in either Paris or Versailles; by assembling at Tours or Bourges, he argued, the estates could be more receptive to the opinions and needs of the nation as a whole.[15] In a position paper, he supported the movement in the third estate to vote by head and not by order.[16] Although friends pressed him to stand for election to the second estate, he refused.[17] According to his memoirs, Dumouriez preferred to remain Commandant of Cherbourg and finish his plans for the port, but he was also a man accustomed to command, and it seems unlikely he would have been satisfied

acting as one deputy among many. Unable to stay out of politics entirely, however, he urged the deputies of the second estate from the Cherbourg district to abjure their financial privileges and titles, thus anticipating the decrees of 4 and 11 August 1789. The deputies rejected the suggestion, calling him a traitor to his class.

When the third estate broke away from the Estates General and proclaimed itself the National Constituent Assembly, Dumouriez gave it his wholehearted support. He rallied to the new conception of the nation, to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, to the creation of a constitution, and to the Assembly's opposition to giving the king veto power.[18] When revolution broke out in Cherbourg on 21 July, Dumouriez named himself commanding general of the new government's National Guard and quickly restored order.[19]

His correspondence from Cherbourg with influential policymakers at court and in the legislature indicated that Dumouriez actively sought an appointment as part of the new revolutionary government. Among those with whom he communicated were General Lafayette, commandant of the Paris National Guard; Hippolyte de LaPorte, intendant of the civil list; Lebègue Duportail, minister of war; and the Count de Montmorin, minister of foreign affairs.[20] He also corresponded with his close friend Hugues-Bernard Maret, editor of *Le Bulletin de la Constituante* (forerunner of *Le Moniteur universel*), who often sent Dumouriez detailed descriptions of the meetings of the Estates General and the National Assembly as well as information about possible posts. In a letter on 23 July 1789, Maret told Dumouriez of his efforts to improve his friend's relations with the court, referring often to their mutual friend and patron, the Count de Mirabeau.[21]

Dumouriez was clearly growing restless outside the mainstream of revolutionary activity. While his prolific correspondence with those in the French capital yielded much news, it had not produced a role for him in the new government, so in November 1789 he requested a leave of absence from his command at Cherbourg and went to Paris. There he joined the Jacobin Club and established closer contacts with powerful friends in the revolutionary government, meeting frequently with Bertrand Barère, Mirabeau, and Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, to discuss the Assembly's legislation.[22] At this time, however, Dumouriez was also sympathetic to the crown, conferring often with "his oldest and best friend," Arnaud de La Porte, who was close to the king.[23] Dumouriez also had frequent meetings with Lafayette, with whom he formed a close attachment in the autumn of 1789, and with Tort de la Sonde, Lafayette's liaison with the Belgian patriots seeking French support for their revolution. It was through Lafayette, the great champion of independence movements, that Dumouriez would become involved with the Belgian liberation struggle.

Although at the time the Belgian provinces were under Austrian-Hapsburg rule, until the recent reign of Joseph II, Austrian sovereigns had followed a relatively laissez-faire policy toward them, respecting the traditional provincial charters and cooperating fully with local government. Unlike the liberalized culture of Liège, however, Belgian society was strictly hierarchical and was dominated by the wealthy clergy, nobility, and guilds. Nonetheless, the Belgians saw themselves as a free people with provincial autonomy and guaranteed rights committed to safeguarding Belgian autonomy against Hapsburg encroachment. But when Joseph II had become emperor of the Austrian territories in 1780, he was shocked by the inequities wrought by the local privileged rule, the great power of the Roman Catholic Church, and the apparent chaos of the imperial administration. He immediately began the program of Enlightenment-inspired reforms that LeBrun had supported in his newspaper after fleeing to Belgium from Liège.[24] These reforms were intended to promote the well-being of all Belgians at the expense of the privileged classes, to modernize the administration of the territories, and to subordinate ecclesiastic power to secular authority, even though Joseph II, in keeping with a major current of Enlightenment thought, believed that the natural rights of citizens did not extend to the sphere of statecraft and that only the sovereign ruler could determine what was in the best interests of his subjects. The conservative Belgians, however, were strongly opposed to his reforms, especially the privileged classes in the politically powerful province of Brabant.[25]

By encroaching upon the autonomy of the Belgian provinces and arbitrarily attempting to transform their political life from top to bottom as quickly as possible, Joseph antagonized almost every element in Belgian society, his attacks on the Church and feudal provincial constitutions creating a union of powerful interests between otherwise antagonistic groups. The almost unanimous Belgian opposition to Joseph II's rule resulted in the Disturbances of 1787, and despite concessions by the emperor, the strong traditions of local autonomy, political control by the privileged, and a nascent Belgian nationalism would lead to even more explosive results.

While opposition to Joseph II was nearly universal among the Belgians, organized political resistance consisted of two ideologically opposed factions. The first, the conservative Statist party, had been founded by Hendrik van der Noot, a lawyer and wealthy noble who during the Disturbances of 1787 had become the champion of the Church and privileged classes. After the publication of his pamphlet *Memoir on the Rights of the People of Brabant* in early 1787, van der Noot had become the first recognized leader of the resistance movement.[26] When the Austrian authorities ordered his arrest in August 1788, van der Noot fled to Breda, just over the Dutch frontier, where he set up Statist party headquarters. The goal of the Statist party was to win Belgian independence, not to establish popular rule but to

reestablish a decentralized state based on its ancient provincial constitutions ensuring the privileges of the Church and nobles. To this end van der Noot and the Statists began to seek aid from other European powers, which had their own reasons for wanting to limit Austria's power.[27] Through the Statist party, the privileged classes represented themselves as the defenders of Belgian tradition, persuading the lower classes that the privileges of the nobility, upper clergy, and corporations were sacred, inalienable, and essential to the liberty and happiness of all Belgians. As defenders of the Church, the Statists convinced most Belgians of the morality of their cause. Many Belgians thus accepted the Statist ideology of privilege as part of their national identity and as a rationale for independence from Austrian-Hapsburg control.

The other faction, the democratic party that came to be known as the Vonckists, was organized by Jean-François Vonck, a lawyer and energetic leader who, like the leaders of the Liège Revolution, was steeped in the classics and Enlightenment thought.[28] Vonck's followers, a small but devoted band dedicated to replacing the Austrian regime with a Belgian democratic Republic, were primarily bourgeois—lawyers, merchants, manufacturers, bankers, and townspeople outside the guilds—although his supporters also included a number of wealthy nobles. Unlike the Statists, the Vonckists believed the elitist structure of Belgian society and the provincial governments hindered the development of commerce and industry, paralyzing capital and individual enterprise, leading to poverty and unemployment. Influenced by Rousseau's *Social Contract,* the Vonckists aimed ultimately to establish a democratic republic, making all citizens equal before the law, extending the representation of the third estate in a single national assembly, and leading the other two estates to renounce their exemptions and privileges.[29] The Vonckists' ideology had been strongly influenced by Vonck's friend Mirabeau, who while a deputy to the French Estates General in 1789 had advised them to rally popular Belgian support behind a revolt against Austria and then turn to the Great Powers for recognition and alliances.[30]

Although the Statists and Vonckists pursued their revolutionary goals independently, when Joseph II suspended activities of the University of Louvain and revoked the Joyous Entry of Brabant and the privileges of the Belgian provincial estates in June 1789, both, along with the enraged Belgian estates, determined on a final break with Austria.

The Vonckists had already begun to actively plan for revolution at clandestine meetings held in Vonck's home. By April, Vonck and his trusted top aide, the Brussels lawyer J.-B.-C. Verlooy, had founded Pro Aris et Focis (For Hearth and Altar), a secret revolutionary society committed to organizing the populace to overthrow the Austrian regime and establish a democratic republic.[31] Using Pro Aris et Focis as a base, Vonck and Verlooy

developed a two-pronged plan: to recruit a core of revolutionaries throughout Belgium and to build a patriot army outside the provinces based at Liège and Breda, hoping that an invasion by this army would ignite an insurrection.[32] By the summer of 1789, the society's membership reached approximately 70,000. Members had established branches in all the provinces, distributed pamphlets calling for resistance to the Austrian decrees, collected weapons and money, and organized revolutionary committees to plan local rebellions. The successful revolution in Liège in August furthered their mobilization of a patriot army when they received permission from LeBrun's friend Fabry, bourgmestre of Liège, to train the Belgian volunteers on Liégeois soil. There thousands of youths arriving from the Belgian provinces joined hundreds of Belgians deserting the Austrian army of occupation. Vonck, seeking to unite the two revolutionary organizations, originally asked van der Noot to command the patriot army, but when he refused, Vonck appointed a close friend and dedicated democrat, General Jean-André van der Mersch, as commander in chief.[33]

Lafayette had first became involved in Belgian affairs in late August when the Vonckists, convinced that an independent Belgium could not be established without French assistance, sent Vonck's trusted aide Jean-Joseph Torfs to Paris to determine the likely response of the new government to a Belgian Revolution. Seeking the support and counsel of his friend Lafayette, Torfs learned that the National Assembly and the king were in conflict over foreign policy; although Louis and the court supported Austria, Lafayette assured Torfs that the Assembly would never send French troops to aid the Hapsburg government. This prompted the Belgian patriots to appeal directly to the deputies of the National Assembly, who were sympathetic to the revolutionary cause as represented by the democratic Vonckists.

The Statists looked instead to the Triple Alliance—Britain, the United Provinces, and Prussia—for help against their rival Austria. Although van der Noot was unable to enlist Britain and her Dutch ally in support of an independent Belgian state, Prussia expressed its willingness to help the Belgians as they had the Liégeois, although only after the Belgians had won their independence.[34] The Statist leaders, reluctantly concluding that they would have to join forces with the Vonkists to ensure victory, therefore invited the chief Vonckists to meet with them in Breda on 18 October to form a provisional revolutionary government, the Committee of Breda, and jointly devise a strategy for revolution. According to that plan, the patriot army of 13,000 would shift its headquarters from Liège to Breda and, under van der Mersch's command, launch an invasion of the Belgian provinces and trigger a general insurrection. Meanwhile, the Statist and Vonckist diplomats would continue negotiations for aid in Berlin, London, and The Hague as well as in Liège and Paris.[35]

On 24 October 1789, General van der Mersch read a declaration of Belgian independence to the patriot army, and the Revolution began.[36] Invading Belgium, the patriot army swiftly defeated the Austrian army at Turnhout on 27 October, inflicting heavy casualties on the Austrians, who fled in panic, leaving their artillery behind. After this victory, the patriot troops returned to Dutch soil, unable to sustain continued fighting, but the Belgian declaration of independence and the victory at Turnhout inspired and temporarily consolidated all sectors of Belgian resistance. In early November, the patriot army again invaded Belgium, and soon Hainaut, Namur, and Limbourg joined Brabant and Flanders in a full-scale revolution. On 10 December, Edouard de Walckiers led a successful insurrection in Brussels with a small force of Vonckists, and General d'Alton, the Austrian military governor, ordered his army's evacuation. After sixty-four years, the Austrians lowered the imperial flag at the Hôtel de Ville in Brussels. Of the ten provinces, only Luxembourg remained under Hapsburg rule.

On 18 December, van der Noot, as head of the Committee of Breda, entered Brussels triumphantly, ending the violent phase of the Revolution. Most of van der Noot's supporters were in Brussels when the victory occurred, but Vonck's ill health prevented him from attending personally and the Vonckists failed to receive recognition for their dominant role in the victory. The absence of Vonck and his supporters from Brussels during the victory celebrations also allowed van der Noot to credit the victory to divine intervention rather than to the courage and strength of the patriot army and the brilliant leadership of General van der Mersch.[37] Taking advantage of popular support in the capital, van der Noot and the Statist party quickly consolidated power and established sole control over the new government, adopting a constitution for the commonwealth, the United Belgian Estates (États-Belgiques-Unis), that reasserted provincial autonomy, predominance of the Church, and sovereignty of the privileged classes. Most governmental powers were delegated to a Congress composed of deputies elected by the Estates General from each of the provincial estates. Van der Noot, as president, and Pierre van Eupen, as secretary of state were to sign all acts of the Congress and the new Estates General.[38] Except for Torfs, who remained as ambassador in Paris, no democrat became part of the new government.[39]

The new government urgently sought recognition and assistance from the Great Powers. Although its greatest hope was revolutionary France, the Belgian Congress found little support in the National Assembly once the deputies discovered that the conservative Statist regime had repudiated popular sovereignty, and they received none from the king and court, who naturally sided with the Hapsburg monarch.

Before the revolution, the strongest encouragement from France had come from Lafayette, whose commitment to liberty had become legendary

since the American Revolution, and who at the time was considered the most powerful figure in the French revolutionary government.[40] But when the Statists asked Lafayette for assistance in gaining French recognition and support for the Belgian army, Lafayette, aware of their politics of privilege and rift with the Vonckists, proposed that the Statist government adopt a constitutional monarchy under Austria and resolve their differences with the Vonckists. The Statists, refusing to share power with the democrats, rejected his suggestions, and the Belgian government proceeded without France's support.

A few months later, the Statists returned. A potential turning point in Austro-Belgian relations came in February 1790 with the death of Joseph II, when his more pragmatic successor, Leopold II, in his manifesto of 2 March, proposed liberty and sovereignty of the people, all but ensuring Belgian autonomy. The Vonckists were receptive, but the Statist government neither considered nor replied to the manifesto.[41] Given the resulting alienation of the new Hapsburg emperor, the poor condition of the Belgian army, and the lack of success in gaining recognition of Belgian independence from the maritime powers, van der Noot and the Statist regime made a second appeal to the French in early March. Lafayette, angered by their intransigence and unwillingness to heed his advice, now attacked the Statist government in the National Assembly, and the deputies returned van der Noot's letter without reply.[42]

Yet still hoping to maintain Belgian independence, on 20 March Lafayette sent van der Noot a plan for integrating the Vonckists into the Belgian government, but the Statist leader instead ordered a Vonckist purge. General van der Mersch was arrested and replaced as commander of the Army of the Belgian Congress by the Prussian representative in Brussels, General Schoenfeldt, demoralizing an already weakened army and triggering a full-scale civil war between the two factions.[43]

This situation was made worse when on 23 May the Belgian army, apparently launching a preemptive strike to annihilate the Austrian forces in Luxembourg, was defeated. The Austrian victory not only further debilitated the Belgian army but also reduced the government's bargaining power in negotiations with neighboring sovereigns for recognition and aid.[44] The position of the Belgian Congress now rested solely on hopes that Austria would not attempt a military restoration and that Prussia would recognize and support Belgian independence. The Prussians, however, issued a stern warning. If the Belgians were to maintain the independence they had struggled so valiantly to win, they would have to unite the independent Belgian provinces and Liège, create a central government, settle their differences with the Vonckists, and build a national army.[45] In response, van der Noot went to Liège in early May to discuss possible unification with the leaders of the revolutionary government there. Given that his ideology of privilege di-

rectly opposed the democratic principles they had embraced and that his regime was at that time purging the Vonckists with whom they identified, he was received coldly.[46]

Lafayette, loath to entirely abandon the cause of Belgian independence, made one last attempt to reconcile the Vonckists and the Statists, inviting leaders of both factions to join him in a meeting on 31 May at the home of Cornet de Grez, Lafayette's friend and emissary in Belgium. During the meeting, however, reports arrived of renewed violence in Brussels and the government's arrest and imprisonment of eighty-two Vonckists, ending all hope of reconciliation.[47]

By this time, Dumouriez had already become involved with Lafayette, Tort de la Sonde, Torfs, and Cornet de Grez in the Franco-Belgian negotiations to reconcile the Statists and Vonckists and prevent an Austrian restoration.[48] On 2 May, when it became known that Prussia might join the other European powers in supporting Leopold's military intervention, Dumouriez had written to Lafayette of the urgency of the problem of Belgian independence.[49] Then on 2 June the Belgian Congress, realizing that the increasing Austrian military presence in Luxembourg meant an invasion was imminent and desperate to rebuild Belgium's depleted military forces, appealed to Lafayette once again, asking him to send a French "officer of distinction" to investigate the condition of the Belgian army and defenses. Although the letter suggested the Chevalier de Ternant, already known and trusted by the Belgian government, the position was quickly sought by Dumouriez, soon to become France's strongest advocate of Belgian independence.

To Lafayette, Dumouriez affirmed his deep commitment to Belgian freedom and asked to provide the needed military and political expertise and serve as liaison between the Belgian government and Lafayette.[50] Enclosing a report demonstrating his considerable knowledge of the Belgian situation, Dumouriez advised Lafayette to send a French officer and troops and to work with the Congress to win the deputies away from van der Noot, whom he declared a "furious demagogue."[51] Because van der Noot's base of power was in Brussels, Dumouriez urged Lafayette to recommend that the Congress move to Ghent and negotiate with van Eupen, the Belgian secretary of state, to stop Vonckist arrests and to release General van der Mersch in return for French military aid. Above all, he argued, national defense must be the first priority of the new Belgian state. It was too late for the Vonckists to concentrate on broadening the representation of the third estate before helping the Statist-controlled government create a strong army, as the Austrian army was already on the Belgian frontier. In his letter, Dumouriez promised to work with the Belgians to build a national army capable of defeating its external enemies but advised speedy action before Austrian troops completely overran the provinces, with disastrous

consequences for France as well as Belgium. Despite Foreign Minister Montmorin's strong opposition, Lafayette chose Dumouriez for the mission and followed much of his advice. In a letter introducing Dumouriez to the Belgian Congress, Lafayette again urged the government to reconcile with the Vonckists to end domestic strife and immediately release van der Mersch from prison as a sign of good faith.[52]

Accompanied by Torte de la Sonde, Dumouriez arrived in Brussels on 9 July 1790 in the midst of the government's purge of the Vonckists. Over the next two weeks he made a thorough investigation of Belgian affairs and in late July grimly reported to Lafayette that Statists had established an oppressive government entirely controlled by the privileged classes, inequality was pervasive, and the principles supporting the Belgian Confederation were vague.[53] In what he described as an inquisition, the Statists justified their purge of the Vonckists as necessary for the defense of the Catholic Church. In Dumouriez's account, van der Noot and van Eupen tyrannized the Congress, van Eupen emerging as the greater villain, "a deceitful politician from head to toe, who is playing second fiddle in order to exert better the authority which he has usurped while allowing van der Noot the top position." The rabble loved van der Noot, who, despite having betrayed the revolution, continued to deceive the lower classes by claiming that foreign aid and victory were soon forthcoming. According to Dumouriez, the Congress seemed completely oblivious to its own interests; it had not created a public treasury and appeared unaware that it could be dissolved any day if, one by one, the Belgian provinces submitted to Leopold. Given the government's failure to establish adequate political representation, military strength, sound finances, or national cohesion, Dumouriez reluctantly concluded that France should not recognize Belgian independence.

Nevertheless, Dumouriez was determined to do what he could personally to help the Belgians maintain their freedom. In a report presented to the Belgian Congress on 22 July, its tone in marked contrast to that of his report to Lafayette, Dumouriez opened by declaring that he was Belgian by birth, had remained Belgian at heart, and would be forever devoted to the Belgian cause.[54] He could best serve that cause, he argued, as commander in chief of the Belgian army, which he would infuse with new strength and vitality. Although the Prussian commander, General Schoenfeldt, was a competent officer, he had already taken the position that the Belgians must remain passive while their fate was being decided by the Great Powers at the Congress of Reichenbach. Given an impending Austrian invasion, the Belgian army, though demonstrating great courage, was poorly administered and undisciplined. The infantry lacked officers and training, the cavalry was substandard, and all the troops needed weapons, uniforms, and supplies. Arguing that troops of a free people

should not resemble those under despots, Dumouriez called for immediate reforms in the army's organization, arms, tactics, discipline, criminal code, and salaries to reflect the dignity imparted by freedom and patriotism. Finally, he advised that the Congress create a department of war supported by a public treasury, suggested a general strategy for the defense of Belgium, and pledged that, as commander in chief, he would double the size of the armed forces and reduce the cost of maintaining them.

The Belgian government turned him down. Van der Noot, van Eupen, and the Congress believed him too democratic to lead their army and did not dare dismiss General Schoenfeldt because of their continued hope for Prussian support. In a cordial letter to Dumouriez dated 7 August, J. van der Meersch, the president of the Congress, praised his assessment of Belgium's military needs but told him that the Congress disagreed with his reformist suggestions. Perhaps in deference to Dumouriez's apparent sincerity and influence in France, van der Meersch closed eloquently: "You wish to devote yourself to the Belgians, but one does not always serve one's country best with a sword. Franklin shared Washington's laurels. May you, sir, be our Franklin in France. Plead our cause, send us advice, get us recognized as free and independent by the French nation."[55]

For their part, the Vonckists, hoping to save at least some of the gains of the Revolution, supported Dumouriez's recommendations and continued to press the Statist government for democratic changes.[56] In May, Vonck and Verlooy had founded a new secret society, Pro Patria, to rally Belgians to an effective defense and propagate democratic principles. In response, the Statists had launched a vicious propaganda campaign against the Vonckists. The primarily Catholic peasant population neither understood nor was interested in the ideological differences separating the Statists and Vonckists, but Statist propagandists, primarily monks and priests, were able to convince them that the democrats were anti-Catholic allies of the ungodly French revolutionaries and therefore traitors to the Belgian nation. Van der Noot, on the other hand, was referred to as "God's spokesman for the Belgian people."[57] In a movement known as the Summer Terror, peasant bands combed the countryside looking for Vonckists, murdering or imprisoning some and driving the rest into exile. By mid-August most of the democrats had fled, making any rapprochement impossible. Belgians, especially in Brabant, joined in patriotic and religious demonstrations in support of van der Noot's regime.

Rallying the Belgians around an uncompromising anti-Austrian stand, the Statist regime accused the Vonckists of planning a reconciliation with Leopold. And in fact, as of mid-May Vonck and Walckiers, having given up all hope for the establishment of a democratic Belgian Republic, had begun secret negotiations with Leopold to return as a constitutional monarch.[58] In these negotiations with a representative of the former

governors-general of Belgium, Archduke Albert and Archduchess Marie-Christine, Vonck outlined terms for a reconciliation between the Belgian democrats and Leopold, based on a constitutional monarchy. They would guarantee Belgian individual rights, allow the establishment of a popularly elected National Assembly, and extend the representation of the third estate in the provincial estates, most of which Leopold had offered in his manifesto of 2 March. These negotiations reflected pragmatism rather than perfidy on the part of the Vonckists, as they took place against the backdrop of a conference among the Great Powers concurrently meeting at Reichenbach. On 27 July, the Triple Alliance, fearful of the revolutionary threat, agreed to support an Austrian restoration in Belgium, by force if necessary.

Refusing to bow to the inevitable, the Belgian Congress frantically appealed to Frederick William to honor his promises of aid, declaring that his pledge of support had been one of the motivations for the Belgian revolt.[59] In a brief caustic reply, the Prussian sovereign denied having encouraged Belgian independence.[60] In September, the Congress allocated 80,000 florins for van der Noot and van Eupen to send envoys to Berlin, London, and The Hague in a last attempt to obtain foreign recognition.[61] When all efforts had failed, the Congress sent the Count de Thiennes to Paris for support. But Louis XVI, apparently believing that an Austrian military presence in Belgium would help bring about his restoration, instructed Montmorin to dismiss the Belgian agent and reassure Mercy-Argenteau, the Austrian ambassador, that France supported the Declaration of Reichenbach.[62] In the National Assembly, the deputies had long since withdrawn support for the repressive regime in Belgium, and its purges of the Vonckists had strengthened their resolve. After conferring with Mirabeau and the Diplomatic Committee, Thiennes reported that the deputies refused to deal with the Statist regime until it became more representative of the Belgian people.[63] Lafayette completely dropped the Belgian cause, convinced that the Belgian government was a "monstrosity of privilege, a conspiracy of nobles and clergy against the rights and liberties of all Belgians" and concurred with Montmorin's policy of noninterference in Belgian affairs.[64] Again, the Belgian Congress received no support from France. In late August 1790, in accordance with the Declaration of Reichenbach, Frederick William withdrew the Prussian forces from the Silesian border, allowing Leopold to order 30,000 troops from the Austrian eastern frontier to reinforce his army in Luxembourg under Marshal Bender should the Belgians resist the Austrian restoration.[65] This prompted alarm throughout the provinces and led to wholesale desertions from what remained of the Belgian army. Yet the Statist regime, oblivious to its desperate plight, continued to cling to its position. The Statist newspapers, *Journal historique* and *Vraie Brabançonne,* continually urged resistance to Austria, and the

Congress continued to defiantly re-proclaim Belgian independence.[66] When General Schoenfeldt resigned his command of the army, the Congress voted to build a force of 60,000 men under van der Noot's leadership, but as van der Noot preferred to seek foreign military assistance, Belgium's neglected army never exceeded 20,000 men, consisting of what LeBrun contemptuously referred to in the *Journal général* as "a crowd of armed rabble."[67]

In September, at Leopold's invitation, representatives of the Triple Alliance and of the Belgian Congress met at The Hague to deliberate on returning the Belgian provinces to Austria as agreed upon at Reichenbach.[68] The mediating ministers urged the Belgian representatives to advise unconditional capitulation by the Belgian Congress and thereby avoid unnecessary bloodshed, promising that the provincial constitutions would be restored but warning that the Austrian restoration would be accomplished with or without their consent.[69] On 8 October, the Belgian diplomats declared that their government would never relinquish Belgian independence, leading Leopold to issue a less conciliatory manifesto than that of 2 March, although promising to restore the provincial constitutions and grant a general amnesty to the rebels if they would end resistance by 21 November.[70] On 29 October, the mediators announced the final Declaration of The Hague, which provided for a general amnesty if the provinces did not resist Austria, although the Statist leaders would not be exempt from punishment, and promised that Britain, the United Provinces, and Prussia would guarantee the Belgian provincial constitutions.[71]

When the Belgian delegation stalled in giving a reply, the mediating ministers demanded that the Belgians accept The Hague Declaration by midnight of 21 November or they would sanction a military restoration of the Austrian regime.[72] All eyes then turned to Brussels.

The citizens of that war-torn city had been conditioned by promises of foreign support, but none was forthcoming. Nevertheless, van der Noot and van Eupen persisted in their unrealistic view, dramatically swearing on a crucifix before the Belgian Congress that they would never deal with the Austrian emperor. The terrified deputies requested an extension of the deadline, and when that was rejected, elected Leopold's third son, the Archduke Charles, as the hereditary grand duke of Belgium in a last attempt to avert the threatened invasion.[73] But time had run out. The following day Austrian troops in Luxembourg crossed the Meuse and poured into Belgium and Liège. The helpless citizens gave way without a struggle, their armies simply dissolving before the Austrian legions. Within fifteen days, all of Belgium and Liège were reduced to submission. Marshal Bender marched triumphantly into Brussels on 2 December, the Belgian government collapsed, and van der Noot and his associates fled abroad.[74]

During these events, Dumouriez had continued to promote a plan for Belgian liberation following his return to Paris after the failure of his Belgian mission in July. Although he had been greatly disappointed by the response to his proposal, Dumouriez recognized that it had been rejected only by the Statists and, remaining loyal to the cause of Belgian freedom, enthusiastically accepted the role that the Belgian Congress had assigned him, seeking official French support to help the floundering state maintain its independence. Informed of Belgian affairs through the Vonckist leaders Cornet de Grez and Tort de la Sonde, who remained in Brussels, for many months he believed it possible to maintain Belgian independence by democratizing the Statist government or, if that failed, by creating a constitutional monarchy based on popular sovereignty under a Hapsburg ruler.[75] Dumouriez appealed to Montmorin from the perspective of French self-interest, pointing out that the Great Powers' exclusion of France from the Reichenbach Conference was ominous for the French revolutionary government, as a Hapsburg restoration would likely be followed closely by the restoration of Bourbon absolute rule.[76] As this was just what the king and court secretly wished, Dumouriez's arguments fell on deaf ears.

When in October it had appeared that the conferees at The Hague would agree to a military restoration in Belgium and Liège, Dumouriez again urged Montmorin to initiate negotiations for a Franco-Prussian alliance to maintain Belgian independence, which he believed would be acceptable to Frederick William if the Belgians agreed to a constitutional monarchy with one of Leopold's sons as sovereign. Within the framework set out by Dumouriez, a constitution would guarantee a national representative assembly based on popular sovereignty, which Leopold had already offered in his manifesto of 2 March 1790. Dumouriez also suggested the return of the Vonckists from exile; the election by universal manhood suffrage of a Belgian Estates General to draw up a new Belgian constitution; the establishment of freedom of the press; compensation by the Church for all Belgian debts incurred for a Belgian defense force and to all those who had suffered for supporting the principles of liberty and equality; the arrest and punishment of all those responsible for the Vonckist purges; the appointment of one of Leopold's sons to exercise the executive power and reside in Brussels with the hereditary title of Duke of the Circle of Burgundy; and finally, the unification of Liège and the Belgian provinces.[77] Montmorin did not respond to Dumouriez's proposals.

In November Dumouriez, realizing that reconquest was imminent, changed strategies and asked Lafayette to quickly mediate a settlement with Leopold incorporating the provisions that he had outlined to Montmorin and to request a suspension of the invasion while the Hapsburg emperor considered the proposal.[78] Such a settlement, Dumouriez pointed out to Lafayette, would have major advantages for Austria, Belgium, and

France. The emperor would avoid the expense and bloodshed of the invasion and, by establishing sovereignty with the consent of the Belgians, prevent their alienation and avoid sparking another revolution within the year. For the Belgians, the plan would ensure a constitution and National Assembly representing a broad constituency under a legitimate sovereign and abolish the illegal tyranny of van der Noot and the Statists. For France, it would reduce the growing fear of a counterrevolutionary invasion from the Belgian provinces. Lafayette, by this point agreeing with France's official policy of noninterference, demurred. In any case, Leopold rejected the Vonkist proposal. In December, Dumouriez wrote bitterly of the Austrian reconquest and the events that had preceded it. The Statist government, he declared, had betrayed its people by refusing to strengthen the Belgian army and defenses and by maintaining up to the last minute that the United Provinces, Prussia, and Great Britain would send aid and convince Austria not to invade.[79]

Despite the hopes of Dumouriez and the Vonckists, after the invasion Leopold established a conservative regime in Brussels, apparently swayed by Marie-Christine's arguments that the Vonckists were affiliated with the French revolutionaries and did not represent majority Belgian sentiment and that a national assembly was inimical to Austrian rule. On 1 December, in a proclamation to the Belgian Estates, the emperor announced the return of his sister, Marie-Christine, and her husband, Albert, as governors-general and of Mercy-Argenteau as Austria's minister plenipotentiary in Brussels. The new regime not only favored the nobility and clergy but ignored the third estate's requests for reforms that the emperor had promised in his earlier manifestos. The first and second estates acquiesced to Leopold's rule as long as he did not threaten their privileges; indeed, they were content, for his rule brought stability and security to the Belgian provinces.

Although Leopold issued a general amnesty to the revolutionaries, Statist leaders such as van der Noot and van Eupen were not included, and most Statists preferred exile to Austrian rule. From exile, the Statists continued to organize opposition. As Dumouriez wrote with alarm, "It is known for certain that van der Noot and van Eupen and the priests are meeting again in Breda, that they are being joined by many malcontents, that this party, which is growing larger every day, is openly maintained by the Princess of Orange, and that it announced that it will be supported by the Prussians."[80]

In contrast, the democrats remaining in Belgium had welcomed Leopold's promise to listen to their plans for reform. In Brussels they formed a new association, the Society of Friends of the Public Welfare, and proposed broadening popular representation by doubling the number of the third estate's delegates.[81] But the Austrians ignored them, rejected reform, and

reestablished the old regime. Disillusioned with Austrian rule, the democrats now joined the third estate and openly opposed the privileges and power of the Church and privileged classes. From their exile in Lille, Vonck and his small band of followers continued to work for an insurrection with French aid, independence from Austria, and the establishment of a new government based on popular sovereignty.[82] On 17 January 1792, Vonck received a letter from General Miacksynski, one of Dumouriez's most trusted friends and comrades-in-arms, telling Vonck and the Belgian democrats to take heart and wait for the eventual return of Dumouriez to help the patriots reclaim their independence: "Dumouriez loves order and the happiness of the Belgian people. You know him as well as I do."[83]

With the Austrian restoration of a conservative regime in Brussels and Liège and the resurgence of the Statist party at Breda, Dumouriez solidified his plans for the creation of a Belgian Republic based on the overthrow of the Austrian regime by a popular Belgian Revolution with French military support. He remained convinced that somehow Prussia could also be persuaded to support the liberation of the Belgians, as he had no means of understanding the strength of the accords reached at Reichenbach and The Hague by late 1790. With or without Prussian support, however, Dumouriez's plans for Belgian liberation and popular sovereignty would neither undergo further variation nor make further concessions to the Statists, to the Austrian monarch, or to international politics.

From late 1790 to early 1792, therefore, both Dumouriez and LeBrun, working with the Belgian Vonckists and the Liégeois patriots, had independently developed clearly articulated plans for a mutual project for a united, independent, and democratic Belgium. In the spring of 1792, striking changes within the French revolutionary government would allow the two men and their allies to collaborate in the French foreign ministry and establish the liberation of Belgium and Liège as official French policy.

CHAPTER 3

The Legislative Struggle for Control of French Foreign Policy, 1789–1792

By early 1791, LeBrun and Dumouriez were back in Paris following the failure of the independence movements in Liège and the Belgian provinces. Disappointed but undeterred, the two continued their efforts to influence French policy toward keeping alive the revolutionary prospects of the two peoples. But before they could move from the periphery of French revolutionary politics to the helm of foreign policy and put their Belgian project into action, a dramatic shift in the exercise of revolutionary foreign policy was essential. As this drama played out against the backdrop of a growing counterrevolutionary threat, the Assembly would wrest control of foreign policy from the king, with advantageous results for Dumouriez and LeBrun.

During the early months of the Revolution, the National Assembly had necessarily been preoccupied with domestic issues, writing a constitution and elimincaating *ancien régime* abuses. Fortunately, the European monarchs had at the time been preoccupied with internal concerns and rivalries among them that, while leading to the failure of the Belgian and Liégeois Revolutions, had left France undisturbed to consolidate its revolutionary government without fear of external intervention. In the apparent absence of an immediate counterrevolutionary threat, the Assembly had willingly left matters of foreign policy to the king. This seeming oversight was in fact consistent with Enlightenment theory, as most *philosophes,* such as Montesquieu, considered foreign policy a royal prerogative. And

the deputies had no precedent for and little idea of how to apply popular sovereignty to the formulation and conduct of foreign policy. Moreover, the general *cahiers* of 1789, representing public opinion on the eve of the Revolution, had given the deputies no mandate for controlling foreign affairs. The more liberal of the deputies had taken issue with this view, arguing that the linkage of the crown to the Great Powers of Europe represented a counterrevolutionary danger and that leaving foreign policy in royal hands inevitably threatened the revolutionary government itself. They, following Rousseau and Condorcet, also wished to end what they regarded as the fundamental cause of war in Europe: dynastic rivalry for international power and prestige. Ideologically, therefore, the National Assembly was divided over which branch should control foreign policy, with traditionalists accepting monarchic control and liberals advocating legislative authority.

This struggle over foreign policy had begun in earnest during the period of LeBrun and Dumouriez's involvement in the Liégeois and Belgian Revolutions, when the deputies had challenged the king's authority in their debates over recognizing Belgian independence in December 1789. But it had broken out openly over the Nootka Sound Controversy that erupted between Spain and Britain in May 1790.[1] Both Spain and Great Britain had claimed the Nootka Sound, an inlet on the west coast of Vancouver Island, and when Spain seized three British ships for trespassing, the two powers had severed diplomatic relations and war seemed certain. The Spanish prime minister, Floridablanca, then asked for France's unequivocal endorsement of the Family Compact, the alliance between the Bourbon crowns. Foreign Minister Montmorin, reflecting the king's position, favored strict adherence to the Compact, both to check British colonialism and to strengthen the king's bargaining power at home. On 14 May he presented his case to the National Assembly, unexpectedly sparking a constitutional crisis. By choosing to inform rather than consult the deputies, Montmorin had indicated that the French position was decided and that he merely wished the Assembly's support by approving the naval subsidy necessary if France were to come to Spain's defense.

To the deputies, this had raised two vital issues: whether the legislative or the executive power had the right to declare war and conclude peace, and whether the new government was bound by old regime alliances.[2] Many deputies disagreed with the royal stance just on constitutional grounds. Liberal and radical Jacobins, however, also suspected the king's intentions, fearing his decision would lead France to war and enable him to turn the army into a counterrevolutionary force to reestablish absolute power.[3] Yet in the view of the traditionalists—the royalists and constitutionalists—Louis had merely taken normal precautionary measures.[4] Five days of fierce debate resulted in a proposal to create a Diplomatic

Committee with power to review France's foreign relations and direct the activities of the foreign ministry. The resulting decree of 22 May 1790 vested in the nation the right to decide on war or peace and authorized the legislature to make such decisions, meaning that all treaties and conventions would continue to be initiated and concluded by the king but hereafter must have legislative ratification. Although the king retained control of the armed forces, the right to inform the legislature of national defense requirements, and the authority to appoint ministers and ambassadors to conduct diplomatic relations, as a safeguard a provision was included by which ministers or other royal agents who began hostilities in response to "a culpable aggression" could face legislative prosecution. The decree also explicitly renounced all wars of conquest and the use of armed force against the liberty of any people. The May decree represented the revolutionary Assembly's first, albeit limited, application of popular sovereignty to foreign policy.

The new division of power was soon tested by an escalation of the European counterrevolutionary movement as the absolutist rulers put aside their dynastic enmities to turn their attention to their common foe—revolutionary France. The Austrian Emperor Leopold II expressed his concern for and loyalty to his sister, Marie-Antoinette.[5] The Spanish crown had grown hostile to French domestic politics as early as February 1790. Prussia joined forces with its rival Austria in July, and Sweden and Russia put aside centuries of animosity to sign a peace treaty on 14 August 1790 directed against revolutionary France. The Swedish king conceived a plan, later approved by the Russian empress, Catherine II, to lead a "royal crusade" against France, crush the Revolution, and restore Bourbon absolutism.[6]

Much of the tension between the European powers and the French revolutionary government was fueled by *émigré* nobles who had fled France after 1789. It became common knowledge in Paris that the king's brothers, the Counts d'Artois and de Provence, and the Prince de Condé were actively orchestrating a counterrevolutionary plot in most of the European courts. With the blessing of King Victor Amadeus III of Piedmont-Sardinia, they had founded a counterrevolutionary council at Turin to unify the opposition for suppression of the Revolution and the return of Bourbon absolutism. With the secret approval of Louis, who publicly supported the constitutional monarchy, members gathered to exchange intelligence, negotiate with foreign courts, and plan uprisings in the French provinces.[7]

Two specific events forced the National Assembly to face the growing European counterrevolutionary threat. The first came from the Rhineland nobles in Alsace, legal vassals of the Holy Roman Emperor who held property as fiefs from the king of France. Several months earlier, in response to the Assembly's contention that its decrees abolishing feudal dues and

seigneurial rights in France applied to the properties of the German princes in Alsace, the princes had filed a protest warning that they would seek the emperor's military support if the French government enforced the decrees.[8] When the situation remained unresolved, on 15 May 1790 the princes had appealed to the Imperial Diet of the Empire, which a year later issued a *Conclusum* upholding the princes' claims and increasing the threat of war.

The second event and source of tension had been the popular revolt of 1790 in the papal enclaves of Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin and the majority vote of the population there to seek annexation to France.[9] The National Assembly had initially denied their request, partly out of concern that annexation would jeopardize negotiations with Pius VI to obtain his consecration of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which provided for the state confiscation of church lands in France and required that all clergy take an oath of loyalty to the constitution.[10] Their position changed in March 1791 when the pope officially condemned the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and severed relations with the French government. The Assembly then sent commissioners to Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin, who reported that a fair vote for annexation to France had been taken and legally ratified by an assembly of elected deputies, leading the deputies to decree their annexation to France.[11]

These international events had led the deputies on the Left to charge that France was surrounded by enemies: Britain and Spain threatened war over the Nootka Sound Crisis, the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia harbored *émigrés* and mobilized troops on their border, the pope was alienated by French intervention in Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin, and the Alsatian nobility and French *émigrés* in the Rhineland were calling the empire to arms against France. As tensions between France and the counterrevolutionary powers increased, so did the revolutionary government's anxiety about its diplomatic isolation. These fears played a pivotal role in the deputies' decision to act in response to Austria's attempt to crush the Belgian and Liégeois revolutionary governments that summer. On 27 July, Dubois-Crancé, a deputy from the Ardennes, protested a decision of Louis to allow Austrian troops free passage through French territory and accused the king and his ministers of intentionally neglecting the Franco-Belgian border to make it easier for counterrevolutionary forces to invade France. In response, Montmorin insisted that the free passage of Austrian troops was sanctioned by treaties between France and Austria and that the Franco-Belgian border was adequately fortified. At the leftist deputies' instigation, the Assembly chose six commissioners to investigate Montmorin's claims, who the next day reported that the cited treaties did not provide for reciprocal passage of French and Austrian troops, and the Assembly voted to annul the royal order. On 29 July, despite strong rightist

opposition, the Assembly constituted the Diplomatic Committee proposed in May, charging the six deputies selected with studying the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and considering making the foreign minister responsible to the Assembly. The committee was also to advise the deputies of the French diplomatic position on European affairs and to take "cognizance of the existing treaties between France and the foreign powers, and of the obligations resulting from them."[12] Mirabeau, known for his knowledge of foreign affairs, was appointed committee spokesman.[13]

In a circular chain of causation, the deputies' fear of foreign intervention led to a decline in royal power that had in turn made the European crowns increasingly hostile to the French revolutionary government.[14] This development contributed to the king's secret decision to more closely embrace the counterrevolutionary movement. The Assembly had not only severely encroached on his executive power in foreign affairs but also profoundly humiliated him by forcing him to approve, against his conscience, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy.[15] In November, he appointed the Baron de Breteuil his secret and personal representative to the courts of Europe, telling him, "I approve of everything you may do to achieve my proposed goal, namely the reestablishment of my legitimate authority."[16]

Outside France, the *émigrés* continued to organize, forging relations with Leopold II and the German princes. By early February 1791, German newspaper reports estimated their military strength at 100,000 troops, with 260,000 German troops pledged in reserve and 40,000 royalists inside France promising support.[17] In May, the Count d'Artois met with Leopold II in Mantua to seek Austrian assistance for the restoration of the king and to obtain a promise to help the royal family escape if Louis officially denounced the Revolution and protested his loss of power.[18] According to their agreement, if the king formally requested aid, Leopold would issue a manifesto demanding Louis XVI's return to power and organize a concert of crowns to prepare for war. These efforts dovetailed with those of Louis's agents to enlist immediate military support from other European powers for his flight from Paris and restoration.[19] On 2 May, Louis learned that the Austrian emperor had ordered 5,000 troops to Luxembourg, and the king of Sweden promised Louis his full support.[20] A day later, Spain moved troops to the Franco-Spanish border, and the king of Piedmont-Sardinia mobilized 10,000 troops.[21]

Despite the king's attempts at secrecy, rumors and troop movements had led many deputies to suspect Louis XVI of conspiring with the European monarchs to escape from Paris and to return at the head of an allied army to suppress the revolutionary government.[22] In response to these rumors, the people of Paris grew increasingly hostile toward the king and his family and on 18 April forcibly prevented Louis from leaving the city to receive Easter Communion from a refractory priest at Saint-Cloud. This

opposition strengthened the king's resolve to escape, and his planned flight took place on 20 June 1791. To meet Leopold's conditions, Louis had arranged for a royal manifesto to be distributed after the family's departure from Paris, in which he complained that most of his authority over foreign affairs had been taken from him, blamed the Jacobins and revolutionary journalists for encouraging public unrest that made it impossible to solve the nation's problems, and invited the people to join him in shaping a new constitution for France. The following day, the Assembly, now convinced that it was no longer possible to entrust the king with foreign policy and that France was encircled by counterrevolutionary forces preparing to invade, went into emergency session. It ordered increased fortifications for the frontier towns, placed both the army and the National Guard on alert, and set up an elaborate network of country-wide surveillance.[23]

Within a few days, the king and his family were arrested at Varennes and escorted back to Paris by the National Guard. Their flight produced a storm of antiroyalist sentiment, including angry political demonstrations in Paris and calls in the Assembly to remove the king and proclaim a French Republic. The largest protest, encouraged by Danton and Marat's radical Cordelier Club, was held on 17 July 1791 on the Champ de Mars, where approximately 6,000 petitioners demanded Louis's abdication and called for a public referendum on whether he should be replaced. Neither the National Assembly nor the government of Paris were ready for such a radical move, and afraid of widespread civil insurrection, the mayor declared martial law and sent Lafayette and the National Guard to disperse the demonstrators, sixty of whom were killed and many more arrested. Although the Massacre of the Champs de Mars was a failure for the protestors, it ignited further support for the republican movement that would culminate the following year in the 10 August Revolution, and earned Lafayette the lasting enmity of antiroyalists in and out of the Assembly.

Outside of France, by late summer, Leopold assumed the leadership of the counterrevolution, motivated by his familial relationship with the French royal family and even more by his concern over revolutionary opposition to the restoration of the Austrian regime in Belgium and Liège.[24] The 1789 revolution in the Belgian provinces had been costly for Austria, and even after the emperor's restoration in December 1790, the omnipresent fear of the French revolutionary influence gave him no confidence in the acquiescence of the Belgians and Liégeois. Leopold was joined by Frederick William II, who had already pledged his support to the *émigrés* and was firmly committed to the Bourbon cause.[25] Territorially ambitious for Prussia, he saw opportunities for obtaining compensation in return for assisting the French king. On 27 August, Leopold II and Frederick William signed the Declaration of Pillnitz urging the other European powers to join

them in "the most effective means in relation to their strength to enable the King of France to consolidate, in perfect freedom, the bases of a monarchical government."[26] They implied that although their armies remained on alert, neither monarch would take action until other European sovereigns joined them in concert.

The Declaration of Pillnitz was broadly seen in France as a declaration of war against the Revolution. In the *Journal général,* LeBrun wrote, "The atrocious and absurd agreement of Pillnitz is the declaration of war of despots allied against the freedom of nations. The die is cast. We must fight to preserve the new French constitution."[27] The flight to Varennes and the Declaration of Pillnitz left no doubt of the king's duplicity and the gathering clouds of war, emboldening the National Assembly to secure even greater control over foreign policy by requiring the foreign minister to present frequent reports on the state of international affairs.

Increased legislative control over foreign affairs was demonstrated by the Assembly's vote on 14 September, despite the pope's angry protests, to annex Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin.[28] This articulated a doctrine new to the European experience, expanding the principle of the self-determination of peoples to three instances: a people's struggle for liberation, their protection against forced annexation, and their desire to be united with another political entity. Although the annexation of the papal enclaves advanced the Assembly's power and established a significant new principle in foreign relations, it further antagonized the European monarchies, accelerating the formation of a coalition of crowns that autumn.

The National Assembly's increasing control of foreign policy, now clearly critical to the revolution's survival, was also evidenced in the constitution it approved, which affirmed the Principles of 1789 and the growing power of the legislative branch. In foreign affairs, the constitution formalized the arrangements contained in the decree of 22 May 1790: The king maintained the power to declare, prepare for, and direct war, to conduct peace, and to negotiate treaties, and the legislature retained the authority to ratify all declarations of war and peace and to review and revise treaties. The Diplomatic Committee now officially conducted the legislature's surveillance of the ministry of foreign affairs through frequent meetings with the king's foreign minister, whose policies were to be reviewed by the whole Assembly. Constitutionally as well as practically, the king was no longer in sole control of foreign policy. On 13 September 1791, Louis officially sanctioned the constitution, although privately he loathed it, as it removed much of his power and international prestige. Secretly he worked through his agents for the formation of a military coalition of his European allies to end the constitutional monarchy. Through this subterfuge he preserved the small degree of authority left to him as he waited for the day of his liberation and restoration to absolute power.[29]

While the Assembly incrementally took over foreign policy to protect itself from the counterrevolutionary threat, Dumouriez had returned to France determined to influence that policy. By establishing connections with important policymakers, the ambitious general sought a military or diplomatic post from which he could further his plans for restoring independence to the Belgians. Through the offices of Lafayette and LaPorte, Dumouriez was nominated for the post of commandant of Lyon in December 1790 when the previous commandant, General Lachapelle, was implicated in an *émigré* conspiracy. But when Brissot prematurely published Dumouriez's appointment in the *Patriote français* before the king had confirmed it, Louis vowed that he would never "permit the Jacobins to interfere in the appointments of my generals" and appointed someone else.[30]

Remaining in Paris, Dumouriez continued to make powerful contacts both in the Assembly and at court. He was recognized and respected for his military and diplomatic expertise, although the constitutional monarchists in the Assembly believed him a revolutionary and thus potentially "either extremely dangerous or extremely useful."[31] In the spring of 1791, Dumouriez approached the banker Saint-Foy, an old friend at court and an adviser to the Duke d'Orléans, who introduced him to Mirabeau and his circle.[32] This acquaintanceship became a pivotal connection for Dumouriez, as Mirabeau's circle dominated the Assembly before the rise of the Girondins that fall. An intellectual hub of Parisian policymakers, its members gladly welcomed a general loyal to Enlightenment thought and the Revolution into their midst. Mirabeau, in particular, became Dumouriez's patron and confidant and valued his expertise and literary abilities. The two frequently discussed their views on foreign policy, including Mirabeau's project of making fundamental changes in the foreign ministry and diplomatic procedures. Based on these discussions, at Mirabeau's request Dumouriez wrote a *Report on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,* which he presented to the Constitution Committee of the National Assembly for approval in early April 1791.[33] In it, Dumouriez outlined a model for the conduct of foreign policy and diplomacy consistent with the Principles of 1789 and called for a complete reorganization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On 26 April, he read it before the Jacobin Club, whose members were so impressed that they ordered it printed and sent to the departments as the "Manifesto of Jacobin Diplomacy," further expanding Dumouriez's distinguished reputation and revolutionary credentials.[34]

The previous month, Mirabeau, hoping to make use of Dumouriez's diplomatic skills to mitigate the growing tensions with the Great Powers, had offered him the ambassadorship to Prussia in March 1791. Dumouriez, however, requested and was promised the post of minister plenipotentiary to Mainz, believing he could successfully negotiate a settlement with the German princes in Alsace.[35] But when Mirabeau died suddenly

on 3 April, Dumouriez lost his patron and could not obtain the royal appointment. Instead, Lafayette and Minister of War Duportail appointed Dumouriez president of the War Council, a committee of the War Ministry formed by the king to reform the army's organization and staff so as to stave off the National Assembly's threat to replace all existing army officers with new ones elected by the troops. In this new capacity, Dumouriez wrote a military report establishing guidelines by which a new army, "representing a free people," was to be constituted.[36] He intended to achieve for the army what he also envisioned for foreign policy—true representation of revolutionary principles by rejecting the standards of the *ancien régime*. Echoing the military recommendations he had earlier produced for the Belgian army, Dumouriez specified the duties of each rank from general to private, prescribed the relationship that should exist among "soldier citizens" and between soldiers and civilians, and required each soldier to swear loyalty to the nation and the principles for which it stood. These reforms, he believed, would produce an army motivated by patriotism.

Impressed by Dumouriez's credentials and contributions, Duportail granted his request for promotion to major-general in early June 1791 and attached him to the Twelfth Division, commanded by General Verteuil at Nantes in the department of Vendée, which had seen an outbreak of counterrevolutionary activities.[37] There Dumouriez worked closely with the future Girondin leader Armand Gensonné, sent by the Assembly as part of a commission to investigate and recommend ways to reestablish order and public safety in the area. Over the next two months, Gensonné and Dumouriez became friends, and Gensonné and Gallois, the second commissioner, recommended to the National Assembly that the troops under Dumouriez's command be increased to deal with the counterrevolutionary threat. Upon Gensonné's return to Paris, he and Dumouriez maintained an active correspondence, and Gensonné became Dumouriez's contact with the newly elected Legislative Assembly called for by the Constitution of 1791.

As the Legislative Assembly met for the first time on 1 October, the deputies were aware of Louis's unhappiness with the constitution and suspected the king and court of collusion with the counterrevolution, and the legislators' struggle against the crown therefore resumed on a new level of mutual hostility. Almost immediately, the deputies addressed the counterrevolutionary activities of the *émigrés* and the rulers of Europe and their suspected connections to Louis. A primary challenge was the king's continued control over French diplomacy, which the new division of governmental authority made distinct from foreign policy, now subject to legislative oversight. Every major European court was confounded by the presence of three rival French ambassadors: an official ambassador representing the

constitutional monarchy; a fully accredited emissary of the king's émigré brothers claiming that, because Louis XVI was actually a prisoner in Paris, the official French ambassador did not represent him; and secret emissaries of the king whose mission was to convince monarchs to join a military concert against the revolutionary government.[38] The resulting confusion, miscommunication, and heightened fear of the king's collaboration with the counterrevolution led Brissot and Gensonné and their followers to press the Legislative Assembly to quickly constitute the enlarged Diplomatic Committee called for in the new constitution, which they did on 14 October. Their anxiety increased with the accelerated counterrevolutionary activity of the *émigrés* and European monarchs in response to the convening of the Legislative Assembly and growing hostility to the king. In October, the Counts de Provence and d'Artois mobilized an army and formed an elite officer corps in Brabant, Belgium for the invasion of France.[39]

The collective thinking of the deputies was dominated by the specter of an armed coalition of crowns and *émigrés* methodically surrounding the country. In his *Journal général,* LeBrun wrote that news from all over Europe evidenced an armed coalition against France. "The most reliable reports from the North and from Germany agree in seeing the project actually arranged between some of the principal powers," he warned:

> We are receiving letters from Frankfurt and Vienna, which all serve to increase our alarm and to confirm our suspicions. . . . Our enemies' plan appears to be to encircle the kingdom with troops and to dictate to us the conditions desired by the Congress, which will be sure to take place at Aix-la-Chapelle or at Coblenz.[40]

In the Assembly, the deputies' discussions manifested a siege mentality.[41] On one side of the debates over how to deal with the counterrevolutionary menace and the king's suspected collusion were the Feuillants, who supported the constitutional monarchy and Louis XVI. On the other were the Jacobins, now comprising two fluid but identifiable groups, the Girondins emerging from Brissot's circle and the Robespierrists. The Girondins, who had become the dominant group in the Assembly, took the most bellicose stand, arguing that revolutionary France should take the offensive, declare war, and eliminate the European counterrevolutionary forces, leaving the king unable to harm the revolution.[42] The Robespierrists, in contrast, feared that such a war would enable the king to form an alliance with the European monarchs and with their help bring down the revolutionary government. They strongly opposed war as long as Louis XVI was king of France.

The Girondin position reflected the most fervent hopes of Dumouriez, LeBrun, and the Belgian-Liégeois patriots. The rise of the Girondins in

the Legislative Assembly paralleled the development of Dumouriez's relationship as adviser and friend to the influential deputy Gensonné.[43] Gensonné, regarding himself as a foreign affairs novice, increasingly came to rely on Dumouriez's advice, which he then shared with his Girondin compatriots. As Gensonné wrote to Dumouriez in September 1791,

> I will neglect nothing in order to keep you informed of the course of events. There is obviously going to be a change, and I am convinced that the first three months of our legislature are going to decide the fate of the revolution. I am counting heavily on the instructions that you have promised me; I need, as it were, to be led by the hand, and only the certainty that you have given me in this matter can console me for the fact that I have been put on the stage without adequate time to prepare myself for it.[44]

In October, Gensonné's influence in foreign affairs increased when he was appointed to the Diplomatic Committee. As he gave Dumouriez news of the Assembly and asked his advice, Dumouriez became the Girondins' unofficial foreign policy adviser and military strategist.

That fall, the increasingly acrimonious debates in the Legislative Assembly focused primarily on French policy toward the *émigrés* and the foreign princes who harbored them. The chief Girondins—Brissot, Vergniaud, Condorcet, and Isnard—argued that the counterrevolutionary conspiracy led by the *émigrés* posed the greatest threat to the Revolution and demanded that the Assembly declare war on the German princes and attack the *émigré* forces gathered in the Rhineland. On 3 November, Gensonné wrote to Dumouriez,

> If the king is in good faith, he will get rid of all that vermin, which is only trying to seduce the government and to bring about imperceptibly a friendly agreement with the émigrés. That is quite obviously the reason why not even the first steps have been taken to disperse them. You would be right in thinking that I am far from believing everything that is said, my method has always been that of methodical doubt, but it is difficult not to believe that some plot is being hatched and that we are on the verge of seeing it break open. Heaven will see to it that everything is exposed.[45]

On 9 November, the Assembly decreed that the *émigrés* would be prosecuted and their property confiscated if they did not return to France by 1 January 1792 and instructed the Diplomatic Committee to propose measures for the king to take against states that protected *émigrés*. Two days later the king publicly complied in writing, officially instructing his brothers to return and fulfill their duties to the constitutional monarchy though covertly informing them that he would veto the decree of 9 November and continue to subsidize them and the other *émigrés.* The brothers did not

return.[46] When the king did veto the decree on 12 November, the Jacobins and the Paris press accused him of using his constitutional power to destroy the government.[47] To soften the political impact of his veto, Louis appointed a new foreign minister, Antoine DeLessart, replacing Montmorin, a royalist whom most of the deputies despised. This did not have the desired effect of appeasing the deputies, who viewed the king's action as simply replacing one puppet with another.[48]

The king's veto initiated the final conflict over his constitutional prerogative and marked a turning point in the Assembly's debates on foreign policy. In the seventeen days that followed the royal veto of 12 November, the Girondin-dominated Diplomatic Committee, reflecting the embattled mood of the Assembly, quickly seized the initiative by formally recommending that France undertake a short, preemptive war against the *émigrés.* They argued that war would rally the nation, expose all traitors, and defeat the counterrevolutionary forces before they became too strong.[49] On 26 November, the Assembly decreed that the king issue an ultimatum: Either the German princes disperse the *émigrés* within three weeks or the French army would do so. Isnard, in a now-famous speech, indicated the majority sentiment in the Assembly: "Tell Europe that if the cabinets involve the kings in a war against the people, we will involve the people in a war against the kings."

The king's ministers, faced with a pro-war legislative majority, had lost most of the Assembly's support. Louis and the court, aware of the mood in the Assembly and the popular enthusiasm for war, could not afford to lose further support, particularly since the king intended to veto the decree against the refractory clergy.[50] Therefore the king publicly adopted a war policy intended to identify himself with the Revolution against the *émigrés* and thereby strengthen his faltering position in the Assembly. Perhaps he hoped to employ this turn of events to his advantage, reasoning that the German electors would refuse to disperse the *émigrés,* France would declare war, and the European powers would join the electors to defeat the revolutionary government and reestablish him as ruler of a repentant nation.[51] There can be little doubt that this was his ultimate goal. In a letter of 3 December 1791, Louis told Frederick William that, although he had officially accepted the constitutional monarchy, he supported factions that sought to destroy it.[52] He urged the Prussian king to form a concert with Catherine, Leopold, and the kings of Sweden and Spain to halt the "sedition-mongers," reestablish stability in France, and prevent the Revolution from spreading. He outlined an identical strategy in a subsequent dispatch to Gustavus III encouraging the Swedish king to join the military concert being formed to help him.[53]

Louis introduced his pro-war policy on 5 December 1791 by replacing Minister of War Duportail with the ambitious and charming Count de

Narbonne. Narbonne was, in many ways, a dramatic and conciliatory choice, the first royal minister to reflect the majority will in the Assembly. Narbonne, a sincere supporter of the constitutional monarchy, intended to improve relations with the Assembly, reform the army, popularize the monarchy, and, above all, restore public confidence in the government by leading France to war.[54] His pro-war position, supposedly representing royal wishes, intensified debate on the issue and heightened the war-charged atmosphere in Paris during December and January. The rest of the Feuillant leadership, though supporters of the king's prerogative, steadfastly opposed war, warning the court that war would associate all monarchs, including Louis, with the foreign enemy. Narbonne's appointment implied that Louis was prepared to see France declare war on the Hapsburg monarchy and its allies over the *émigré* question. On 3 December, Leopold challenged this position by ratifying the Imperial Diet's *conclusum* upholding the German princes' claims against France and warning the French government that he would give military assistance to the princes. This was followed by Louis's 14 December announcement to the Assembly that he had accepted its 29 November ultimatum against the *émigrés* and had informed the elector of Trier that he must either disperse the *émigrés* on his lands by 15 January 1792 or face war.[55] Although the king publicly maintained he would begin military preparations to enforce this demand, on the same day he secretly instructed the Baron de Breteuil to continue negotiations to form an armed coalition of European crowns.[56]

Narbonne's first address to the deputies set an energetic, warlike tone, informing them that he would visit the northeast frontier to inspect fortifications and superintend military preparations and asking for and receiving their approval for funds to prepare for an invasion. Narbonne's war plan was based on the Girondin strategy: A quick assault on the *émigrés* and the German princes in the Rhineland, followed, if necessary, by a defensive war against Austria. This position not only split the Feuillants but intensified the opposition between the Robespierrists and the Girondins over their differing perceptions of the counterrevolutionary threat.[57] At the heart of the issue was the king's loyalty. Not swayed by Louis's apparent willingness to wage war, the Robespierrists held to a firm antiwar stance that allied them with the antiwar Feuillants.[58] They feared the king's power even more in war than in peace, believing that in the event of war, the king would collaborate with the counterrevolution. So strong was their distrust that when the Girondins advised the Assembly to cooperate with the king's war policy, the Robespierrists accused them of conspiring with a treasonous court.[59] For his part, Brissot found himself in the unlikely position of agreeing with the Count de Narbonne and, by association, with the king. Although he was antimonarchic and suspicious of the king, he did not believe that Louis's pro-war stance concealed

a counterrevolutionary plot. He and his fellow Girondins advocated a limited, local war in the Rhineland to disperse the *émigrés* and end the counterrevolutionary threat. He predicted that this would also further the ideological crusade for liberty as the French armies were welcomed everywhere as liberators, sparking a general revolt of peoples against their iniquitous rulers.

These war debates intensified the deputies' siege mentality even as they revealed their striking differences. Finally Gensonné, speaking for the Diplomatic Committee on 26 December, argued that in view of the danger of encirclement and invasion, the policymakers must stop their factional fighting and take measures to defend the country before it was too late. He gave a favorable report on Louis's war message of 14 December and Narbonne's request for 20 million livres for war preparations. The deputies, agreeing that France had no alternative but to prepare for war, approved the subsidy. At Condorcet's suggestion, they also reaffirmed the oath of 22 May 1790 to renounce all wars of conquest.

Throughout these events, Dumouriez had continued to advise the Girondins through Gensonné. On the same day as Gensonné's war speech, he confided in Dumouriez that most deputies opposed the changes that DeLessart was making in the foreign ministry's staff and that he intended to challenge DeLessart directly. Gensonné implied that he and fellow Diplomatic Committee member Chevalier de Jaucourt were working to remove DeLessart and create opinion favorable to Dumouriez as his replacement.[60] In January, Gensonné would directly promise the position to Dumouriez, telling him that "We are going to press [DeLessart] vigorously. If, as I think probable, there is a changeover in the ministry of foreign affairs, you are absolutely certain to get it in spite of the Château. Those people [in the foreign ministry] must take action or leave, and it is impossible for DeLessart to hang on."[61] Replacing DeLessart would eliminate the strongest advocate for peace in the government and pave the way for Dumouriez and the Girondins to pursue their mutual war aims.

A stunning turning point in the posture of the Assembly and in Dumouriez's prospects was the disclosure of the Kaunitz dispatch, a letter from Austrian chancellor Kaunitz to Noailles, the French ambassador to Vienna, written on 21 December 1791. When the dispatch reached Paris on 31 December, DeLessart jubilantly notified the Assembly that Leopold had backed down and ordered the electors of Trier and Mainz to disperse the *émigrés*.[62] More significant to the deputies, however, was that the rest of the dispatch was hostile. It warned that if the French attacked the Rhineland, the emperor would order Marshal Bender, the imperial general of the Austrian Netherlands, to come to the electors' aid. The emperor wanted to prevent this extremity, Kaunitz asserted, as did the "other sover-

eigns gathered in concert to maintain public order and the safety and honor of crowns"—thereby confirming that a concert of crowns did exist. The immediate effect was to expand the scope of the proposed war, shifting its focus from the *émigrés* and the German princes to Leopold as leader of the opposition to France. The pro-war revolutionaries dropped their support of a quick, limited war in the Rhineland to advocate a preemptive strike against Austrian troops in Belgium and Liège, as the revolutionary movements in those territories had long urged. The Kaunitz dispatch, followed by reports of Leopold's troop movements to the Franco-Belgian border and notifying Louis of his intention to come to his assistance, greatly increased the deputies' sense of urgency about taking control of foreign policy. The Diplomatic Committee moved quickly to consolidate its power.[63] Girondins attacks focused on a new target: the ever-tightening grip of the counterrevolutionary crowns encircling France that had to be broken before France was invaded.

The exiled Liégeois and Belgian patriots, under the leadership of LeBrun and Walckiers, quickly grasped this opportunity to further their plans to liberate their now-allied countries. Two weeks before the Kaunitz dispatch arrived in Paris, LeBrun and the Liégeois patriots had used their connections with Bonne-Carrère in the foreign ministry and the Girondin Diplomatic Committee to arrange for their successful appearance before the Assembly on 18 December seeking support for the creation of a Liégeois legion. In the *Journal général,* LeBrun urged France to declare war on the Hapsburg Empire and reported that Austrian troops were reinforcing Belgian fortifications. He argued that it was necessary to take advantage of the revolutionary ferment in Belgium and Liège, maintaining that a French invasion would be followed by a revolt against the hated Austrians, whom they would defeat together.[64]

The Girondin campaign against Leopold coincided fortuitously with Dumouriez's Belgian project. Indeed, Dumouriez had greatly influenced the campaign in the Assembly to wage war against Austria, advising Gensonné as early as September that war between France and the "counterrevolutionary league" was certain.[65] In this he was urged on by the Vonckist Théophile Le Clair Benoit, who, writing to him from exile in London, argued that a French war with Austria was inevitable and that the French government must seize the initiative by striking first in Belgium and Liège to ignite a revolution that would ensure Austria's defeat. He pleaded: "You alone, sir, can save them. You alone can make Belgium free."[66] After the Kaunitz dispatch, Dumouriez sent Gensonné a long analysis of the deteriorating Franco-Austrian relations vis-à-vis the Belgian provinces and outlining his recommendations concerning the crisis this created for France.[67] It was, in all its essentials, Dumouriez's plan to

liberate Belgium, and became the Girondist war strategy as they pressed for a French declaration of war on Austria throughout the late winter and spring of 1792.

In his analysis, Dumouriez argued that Austria presented the greatest threat to France and that the reestablishment of the Austrian regime in Belgium and Liège had made these territories a foyer for the European counterrevolutionary movement. He maintained above all that, in the spirit of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, France had a moral duty to protect the rights of the Belgians and Liégeois.[68] France, he advised, should immediately demand that Leopold reduce the Austrian military establishment in her Belgian territories, as without assurances on this point, France could never feel secure. If Leopold refused, Dumouriez recommended a French preemptive strike against Austria in the Belgian provinces, insisting, as LeBrun and his delegation, that the oppressed Belgians and Liégeois would revolt, form an army of 6,000 men, and join the French army once it crossed the border. A preemptive strike would restore freedom to the Belgians and Liégeois and check the growing strength of the counterrevolutionary coalition planning to invade and dismember France. As precedent, Dumouriez alluded to Frederick the Great's invasion of Saxony in 1756 when he "saw that the storm was inevitable."

As 1792 dawned, the war debates continued in the Legislative Assembly, the Jacobin Club, and the Paris press.[69] Minister of War Narbonne pressed for a war against Austria, believing that it alone would save the constitutional government.[70] After making a personal reconnaissance of the disposition of the French Army on the northern frontier, he presented an enthusiastic if overly optimistic report to the Assembly on 11 January, his purpose clearly to convince the deputies of the army's readiness. According to Narbonne, the morale of the garrisons was high, the troops and officers loyal, and the major fortresses along the frontier excellently prepared.[71] Although admitting that the regular army was short of its quota, recruitment was at a standstill, and more officers were needed, he claimed that these problems mattered little, given the high troop morale. He spoke only of the Army of the North, failing to mention the status of the armies of the Rhine and Center, the regular army units, and the National Guard.[72] Unfortunately, there were no experienced military voices among the Assembly's leaders to challenge his misleading assessment.

As a member of the king's council, Foreign Minister DeLessart openly approved Narbonne's announced foreign policy, which was to isolate Austria by detaching Prussia from her Austrian alliance and seeking the neutrality of Great Britain, yet secretly undermined the efforts of Narbonne's agents to negotiate with those nations. Although the king had publicly declared for war, DeLessart covertly worked to maintain peace with Austria. As leader of the antiwar Feuillants, DeLessart presented a formidable

barrier to the pro-war Girondin-led coalition despite the overwhelming bellicose war sentiment in the government. Thus the Girondin-dominated Diplomatic Committee resolved to impeach DeLessart and replace him with their own candidate, Dumouriez, who they believed could provide France with a foreign policy and war strategy that would defeat Austria and the counterrevolutionary forces.

In the Assembly on 14 January, Gensonné, speaking for the Diplomatic Committee, presented its report on the Kaunitz dispatch of 21 December. It accused Austria of leading a European concert to overthrow the French constitution and restore Louis's absolute regime and recommended that the king demand a precise explanation of Leopold's intention to intervene in France's domestic affairs. Gensonne's report closely echoed Dumouriez's analysis, down to his allusion to Frederick the Great. On 17 January, Brissot demanded that the threat of the "coalition of despots" be dealt with immediately and that the king confront Leopold directly. Vergniaud and Isnard supported Brissot's position. When Mathieu Dumas, speaking for the Feuillants, protested that a declaration of war by the Assembly violated the king's constitutional prerogative of 1791, he was booed and shouted down.

That night at the Jacobin Club, the majority approved a Girondin pro-war circular for distribution to the departments, even though Robespierre denounced Brissot as a traitor and warned that a war would restore the triumphant generals, the aristocracy, and the treasonous king.[73] The war debates further polarized the Jacobin factions, their growing rancor leading each to cast suspicion on and defame the opposing faction.[74] In response to a Girondin attack on Robespierre on 12 January, Jean Nicolas Billaud-Varenne observed that Robespierre was not, as the Girondins claimed, the only antiwar Jacobin, but that others, including Georges-Jacques Danton, François Paul Antoine, Camille Desmoulins, Antoine Joseph Santerre, Etienne Jean Panis, and Billaud-Varenne himself, agreed with Robespierre even if they were not as vocal. In early February this was followed by a Robespierrist diatribe, *Jean-Pierre Brissot Exposed,* in which Desmoulins called Brissot a police spy, scoundrel, vile imposter, and traitor. He went so far as to charge that by their pro-war position, Brissot and the Girondins had done more harm to the revolution than the French aristocracy.[75]

The war debates further magnified the deputies' fear of betrayal from within and encirclement from without. To deal with the external counterrevolutionary threat, on 25 January 1792 the Legislative Assembly issued a decree accepting most of the Diplomatic Committee's recommendations, demonstrating the legitimate fears and pro-war sentiment of the deputies and their determination to seize power over foreign policy.[76] In response, Louis vetoed the decree on the grounds that the deputies had overstepped

their constitutional authority in presuming to advise the king on the conduct of foreign affairs. As with the 9 November decree on the *émigrés,* the Assembly had taken decisive action only to have its decision nullified by a king who did not have the confidence of the majority.

The deputies then moved swiftly to seize the initiative. The Diplomatic Committee decided that it alone would deal with the question of the indemnities owed to the German princes holding land in Alsace and that it would seek to remove the Feuillant minister of foreign affairs.[77] The Committee opened its attack on DeLessart on 10 February, demanding that he submit a complete report on his correspondence with the European capitals.[78] The next day DeLessart told the Committee that the news he had received from his envoys in Vienna, Berlin, Coblenz, and Brussels had been vague and noncommittal and thus did not "permit the assumption of anything definite on the part of the foreign powers."[79] Hoping to forestall war, he did not mention the weekly reports of Austrian troop increases in Belgium and Liège that he had been receiving from the French *chargé d'affaires* in Brussels, LaGravière.[80] In his next report to the committee on 23 February, DeLessart stated that he had received new dispatches from Berlin, The Hague, and Stockholm, but that those powers remained noncommittal about their relations with the French revolutionary government.[81] None of the foreign minister's incomplete reports revealed the true state of French foreign affairs.[82]

This became clear when on 27 February DeLessart reported to the Diplomatic Committee that he had received Austria's reply to the Assembly's 25 January decree. As DeLessart read the second Kaunitz dispatch, dated 17 February, the committee's members discovered that he had withheld some of his recent correspondence with Austria and demanded that he immediately prepare a report to the Assembly on the entire Franco-Austrian correspondence.[83] Led by Gensonné, the Girondins increased their attacks on DeLessart, accusing him of duplicity in his dealings with the Committee and the Assembly. Bonne-Carrère, now DeLessart's secretary, suggested to the foreign minister that General Dumouriez, a protégé of the Girondins and a former classmate of DeLessart's at the College of Louis-le-Grand, might be able to help the foreign minister extricate himself from his difficulties with Gensonné and the Diplomatic Committee.[84] Bonne-Carrère also noted that the general's extensive knowledge of foreign affairs could help DeLessart in his negotiations with Vienna on behalf of the king and the Assembly.[85]

Under heavy fire, the foreign minister followed Bonne-Carrère's recommendation and solicited advice from Dumouriez, who had just been promoted to lieutenant general and recalled to Paris for reassignment by War Minister Narbonne. Shortly after the general arrived in Paris on 26 February, DeLessart consulted him about his problems with the Diplomatic

Committee and the Girondins in the Assembly. He described his delicate negotiations with Chancellor Kaunitz and showed Dumouriez the complete Franco-Austrian correspondence, in which the general discovered that DeLessart's desire to maintain peace with Austria had led him to withhold from the Diplomatic Committee two of the four dispatches from Kaunitz, one a hostile note of 6 January 1792 and the other DeLessart's obsequious reply of 21 January. Dumouriez then advised DeLessart to fully disclose the Franco-Austrian correspondence to the Legislative Assembly.

It is probable that the general provided this information to Gensonné, as the Diplomatic Committee subsequently demanded that DeLessart fully disclose the Franco-Austrian correspondence to the deputies.[86] On 1 March DeLessart made a dramatic appearance before the Legislative Assembly to report on all four dispatches of the Franco-Austrian correspondence, confessing that he had previously deliberately withheld two of them. He began by rereading the Kaunitz dispatch of 21 December 1792, which contained the original Austrian threats to use Marshal Bender's troops if France invaded the Rhineland and referred to a "concert of crowns" allied against France. Then DeLessart read the two pieces of correspondence that he had withheld. The first was a sharp note from Kaunitz, dated 6 January 1792, protesting the menacing declarations against the European sovereigns that had been published in the French revolutionary newspapers and applauded in the Legislative Assembly and warning that if the French invaded the empire, Leopold would resist with all his forces. The second was DeLessart's pacific reply to Kaunitz dated 21 January, in which he had reported that Kaunitz's threatening tone had caused much consternation in Paris. Attempting to persuade Kaunitz that a military move against France would be inadvisable, DeLessart claimed that the Constitution of 1791 had become a kind of religion for most Frenchmen, who would defend it against any assault, and that the *émigrés* had exaggerated French discontent, which was in reality, merely a "few soapbox orators and hack writers." The saner part of the French nation, he asserted, desired peace. DeLessart's indiscretion infuriated the deputies, who believed he had transgressed the limits of his office by discussing the internal affairs of the nation with an enemy power and misrepresented the position of the Assembly's majority.

The final piece of correspondence DeLessart read to the Assembly, the second Kaunitz dispatch of 17 February, again produced a strong negative reaction. In it, Kaunitz had proclaimed that the Declarations of Padua and Pillnitz in July and August were justified because the king had been made a prisoner after Varennes, adding that the phrase "concert of crowns" had been inserted in the first dispatch to discourage further threats to the liberty, honor, and safety of the king and the royal

family. He claimed that the pernicious revolutionary doctrine of the French government was contagious and threatened all monarchs, and that France's ills were caused not by the *émigrés* or European powers but by republicans who, believing their cause would fail if domestic and foreign peace prevailed in France, encouraged internal dissension and deliberately provoked the European powers to war. Until France returned to sanity, Kaunitz warned, Austria and Prussia would continue to act as joint guardians of European peace. As DeLessart read the note, murmurs of anger and outrage resounded throughout the hall. The deputies were further provoked when the foreign minister disclosed a note from Count Goltz, the Prussian ambassador in Paris, announcing that Frederick William II fully supported the Austrian position.[87] Further enflaming the situation, DeLessart the next evening told Blumendorf, the Austrian ambassador in Paris, that he very much approved of Kaunitz's dispatch of 17 February.[88]

To many deputies, DeLessart's report of 1 March conclusively proved rumors that the French court had conspired with Vienna and confirmed the worst of what they had suspected and feared for months: that France was surrounded by sworn enemies and that officials at the highest levels in its government were probably disloyal to the Revolution. In the Assembly that very evening, the Girondin deputy Rouyer took the first step toward DeLessart's impeachment, accusing the foreign minister of betraying the nation and registering his outrage "that a treacherous minister should come here to show off his work and attribute it to a foreign power." The deputies met Rouyer's words with cheers and repeated applause and approved his motion for a report on the foreign minister's treasonous conduct.

On 7 March at the Jacobin Club, the Girondin Sillery, recognizing that the incident could be useful in increasing the Assembly's control over foreign affairs, blasted DeLessart's asking for peace after having falsely announced to France's enemies "that our army is undisciplined; that our finances are in the most alarming state; that we are being devastated by internal troubles." "Surely," he suggested, "we have no reason to doubt that the Assembly will scrutinize this guilty letter most carefully, and if ministerial responsibility is not a vain dream, does the Assembly not have the right to apply it for the first time at this very moment?"[89] Two days later, the Assembly decreed that thereafter the minister of foreign affairs must not only report on but send copies of all correspondence with foreign courts to the Diplomatic Committee.

While proceedings against DeLessart were under way, the king considered dismissing Narbonne, even though the minister's war policy had been successful in the Assembly. DeLessart and Bertrand de Moleville, minister of the navy and colonies and Louis's chief adviser, had always opposed the pro-war Narbonne's appointment, and on 9 March they per-

suaded the king to dismiss him because of his connections with the Girondins. When the king did dismiss Narbonne, even the Feuillant deputy Dumont observed that "people were surprised that the king should still venture upon inflicting this kind of disgrace," and the deputies decreed that Narbonne "left the ministry of war with the regrets of the Assembly."[90] Because of his ties with many camps, Narbonne's ministry had offered a gleam of hope for reconciling the many interests and factions in the government. By dismissing him, Louis lost the one minister who had done more than any other since the outbreak of the Revolution to make the king an accepted leader, and after 9 March the king was effectively cut off from any connection to the majority in the Legislative Assembly.[91]

Narbonne's failure to maintain the support of the other ministers and the king ensured the fall of the entire Feuillant ministry. On 10 March, the king announced the appointment of Chevalier DeGrave to succeed Narbonne. In quick succession the deputies Ramond, Cambon, and Girardin attacked the remaining ministers, and Brissot followed with a formal accusation against DeLessart. The Assembly overwhelmingly accepted Brissot's articles of impeachment and summoned DeLessart before the national high court at Orléans. Bolstered by the majority opinion in the Assembly and confident of Dumouriez's expertise in foreign affairs and military strategy, the Girondins' move to take control of French foreign policy was accomplished on the same day when the deputies impeached DeLessart and replaced him with Dumouriez. The other ministers, also under attack, quickly resigned. The Girondins had effectively purged the entire ministry. The king had no choice but to name new ministers who had the confidence of the Girondin-dominated Assembly, granting de facto ministerial responsibility to the legislative branch. Thereafter the foreign minister would look to the Legislative Assembly, not the king, for approval of his foreign policy. And with the backing of the Girondins and his appointment as foreign minister, Dumouriez was now in position to implement his plans for Belgian liberation and independence.

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CHAPTER 4

Revolution in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March-June 1792

The daring with which the Girondins impeached Foreign Minister De-Lessart, and the approval with which it was met by the Parisian sections and clubs, demonstrated to the king that he could protect his position and regain public confidence only by collaborating with the powerful legislative faction. In addition to Dumouriez, the slate of new ministers immediately drawn up by the Girondins and recommended to the king on 12 March retained the newly installed Pierre-Marie DeGrave and added fellow Girondins Etienne-Clément Lacoste, Etienne Clavière, Jean Marie Roland, and Pierre Duranthon. The Girondins willingly tolerated the appointment of DeGrave, whom the king had already named to replace the dismissed Narbonne as minister of war, until they had sufficient reason to remove him. In the interim, DeGrave's appointment served Dumouriez's purposes. Dumouriez, a long-time friend, recognized that DeGrave's inexperience, timidity, and poor health ill-suited him for the rigors of his new post, as borne out by his deference to his more assertive and able colleague.[1] As Etienne Dumont observed, DeGrave "suffered himself to be governed by Dumouriez, while the latter was in the ministry; and from Dumouriez's well-known activities, which absorbed everything, the most fortunate circumstance that could occur to him was to be taken in tow by that minister."[2] Thus Dumouriez became in effect minister of war as well as minister of foreign affairs, further strengthening his position in the government.[3]

The Belgian Vonckists and Liégeois patriots exulted over the appointment of Dumouriez, their champion. Once minister, Dumouriez did not

disappoint them, immediately appointing the Vonckist van der Steene to advise the Diplomatic Committee as a representative of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois. The jubilant van der Steene wrote to Vonck of Dumouriez's commitment to their cause:

> On the subject of this minister, I can tell you that he is a loyal patriot and fully informed about all that happened here during the [Belgian] Revolution, having been busy at the time trying to arrange a union between the democrats and the aristocrats. Since the latter tricked him, it is not only his principles but also a certain feeling of resentment that makes him favorably inclined towards the former. I can also tell you that his rank and occupation do not prevent him from regular attendance at the Jacobin Club, of which he is a member; moreover, he has not been one of the last to show his desire to declare war on Leopold's successor. All of this revives us, and will doubtless inspire you with new courage.[4]

The Girondins were also confident in their choice of Dumouriez as foreign minister, which in their view was the most important position in the new ministry. As Brissot told Etienne Dumont, "We must save the country, and we cannot overcome the Austrian Cabinet unless the minister of foreign affairs is a man on whom we can depend."[5] In announcing Dumouriez's appointment in the 14 March edition of *Patriote français,* the Girondin leader praised the general's considerable intelligence, military talents, knowledge of foreign affairs, and support among all patriots. Referring to Dumouriez's earlier proposals for overhauling the foreign ministry and diplomatic affairs, Brissot assured his readers that Dumouriez would replace the Machiavellian foreign policy of the old regime with a new diplomatic system based on the Principles of 1789.[6] Other members of Brissot's coterie echoed his sentiments. Dumont observed that Dumouriez's enormous talents and energy made him a more able statesman than even Brissot, and the Girondin deputy Barbaroux characterized him as extremely capable and ambitious.[7] Madame Roland described Dumouriez as diligent and brave, a good general who expressed himself with ease and "capable of great undertakings," and with the experience and sophistication to deal with "the ministerial intrigues of a corrupt court."[8] Dumouriez, acceptable to both the king and the Assembly, widely respected, and experienced in the crucial areas of war and diplomacy, seemed to all an ideal choice to direct the foreign policy of France and wage war against the Austrian menace.[9]

In many respects the Girondin-Dumouriez ministry of March-June 1792 was a unique experiment in parliamentary government. Its ostensible acceptance by the king (despite his ulterior motives) made cooperation between the legislative and executive branches possible for the first time

since constitutional rule began in 1791. On 22 March, Louis grudgingly recognized the new principle of ministerial responsibility to the legislative branch when he told the Assembly that, although he preferred to appoint ministers who were "commended by their high principles," he realized that he must settle for men who reflected the views of the dominant party.[10] It was this institution of ministerial responsibility that enabled Dumouriez to become a predominant force in the French government. Lord Gower, writing to Lord Grenville, the British foreign secretary, observed that during this period Dumouriez exercised the power of a prime minister and undoubtedly would have taken that title had it been provided in the constitution.[11]

The new ministers' recognition that they served with the support of the Assembly, particularly the Girondin faction, gave them a new confidence and unity. Their adherence to the constitution was tempered by their desire to "execute it with popularity" and to interpret it as best suited their purposes, one of which was to increase their influence.[12] With Girondin support and the king's apparent cooperation, the ministers did indeed gain considerable power, individually and collectively. Several observers, including Madame Roland, confirmed this ministerial solidarity.[13] To ensure their mutual cooperation, Dumouriez recollected they met before each session of the king's council:

> At this period the six ministers lived together on friendly terms. They had agreed to dine with each other by turns, during the three days in every week when the council assembled, and to admit no other company. Each produced his dispatches, they talked over the business about to be submitted to the king, and they discussed every article minutely, to prevent any disputes before him, and also to form one common opinion.[14]

Perhaps their intentions were best expressed by Clavière in a letter to Roland: "It is essential that we move together, and that we never show ourselves divided on important matters."[15] This dedication to working as a single voice made it easier for Dumouriez to unite the full ministry in support of his foreign policy decisions.

During his ministry, Dumouriez would formulate and direct foreign policy according to his own goals, methods, and rationale. He immediately set out to implement his Belgian plan: to procure a declaration of war against Austria and launch a preventive strike into Belgium and Liège; to negotiate the neutrality of Britain, the United Provinces, and Prussia, leaving the Hapsburg regime isolated; and to send revolutionary agents into the Belgian provinces and Liège to organize an insurrection against the Austrian regime. After the resulting defeat of the Austrian army and the overthrow of the regime, his agents and the Belgian-Liégeois revolutionaries

would assume the responsibility for uniting the two territories, creating an independent Belgian Republic, democratically organized and allied to France.

The Girondins and most of the deputies, unaware that the principal objective of Dumouriez's foreign policy and military strategy was Belgian liberation and independence, accepted his plan as part of a crusade for universal liberation,. By framing his policies in ideological terms and as in France's own interest, Dumouriez led the foreign ministry with the full confidence and support of the Legislative Assembly and the Jacobins; neither Left nor Center opposition to his proposals appeared in the press or in the private correspondence of French policymakers.[16]

Dumouriez's foreign policy was based on a new diplomatic system grounded in two strains of Enlightenment thought, one moderate, the other more radical. Moderates such as Voltaire and Montesquieu held that the progress of reason would make rulers aware of the natural laws of international politics and that their mutual interests were complementary rather than conflicting. Diplomacy would be frank and open, since rational goals cannot be hidden, and wars would disappear. But more radical thinkers, such as Rousseau, Mercier de la Rivière, Condorcet, Le Trosne, and de Mably, believed that a monarch's concerns are necessarily egotistic and irrational, making secret diplomacy, intrigue, and war inevitable within a system of monarchic states. Therefore, they concluded, foreign policy should be under national rather than dynastic control, as only then could reason eliminate international conflict, initiating a "golden age" of international relations.

The Assembly's growing disagreement with the king over foreign policy led the majority to shift to the radical Enlightenment view of international relations espoused by Dumouriez. In the proposals he had presented to the Paris Jacobin Club the previous April, he had called for a new foreign policy and diplomatic system that would embody revolutionary principles, arguing that they should be subordinated to those principles, as had other public institutions such as the church, the armed forces, and the government's financial apparatus.[17] Because the Revolution was founded on liberty, equality, and individual dignity, it promised happiness and unlimited prosperity to future generations. All that remained was to recast the nation's position in international affairs.

To do that, Dumouriez declared, France must base its foreign policy on the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and the decree of 22 May 1790 renouncing all wars of aggression and conquest. According to Dumouriez, there were only two justifications for warfare: to defend French frontiers, and "to repel oppression, tyranny, or the spirit of conquest of an ambitious nation ready to invade a weak nation that called for our help." By following those principles, Dumouriez predicted, France

would fight only short wars that entailed no indemnities or territorial acquisitions. Under this new system, reason, good faith, and strength would replace the Machiavellianism and artifice of *ancien régime* diplomacy. By conducting open and honest negotiations with other nations, French diplomats would dissipate doubts about the good faith of France's international politics.

Diplomacy, Dumouriez's manifesto maintained, must no longer consist of the secret, willful acts of an arbitrary monarchy dependent on alliances and dynastic power politics. Alliances between nations presupposed a common enemy, and after the Revolution, France had no enemies except opponents of its constitution. Dumouriez predicted an eventual "golden age" in which all Europeans would be free, all national interests would be compatible, and international politics would be concerned with treaties of commerce and friendship dictated by natural law. Just as the French constitution had established civil equality in France, political equality among nations would surely follow.

Dumouriez, like the radical *philosophes,* was careful to distinguish between "the peoples," who were natural allies, and their despots, and he claimed that, despite France's friendly declarations intended to inspire confidence abroad, despotic rulers and aristocrats were inciting all Europe against it. He argued that to counter their false claims would require a complete change in the personnel, methods, and goals of French diplomacy. Thus he proposed revolutionizing the diplomatic corps to accurately represent the revolutionary character of the government abroad by replacing aristocratic ministers and ambassadors with diplomats chosen from the people to reassure the courts that, despite the claims of the *émigrés,* the king had consented to the French constitution and was not a prisoner.

Anticipating that the greatest objection to this complete turnover in the diplomatic corps would be the new personnel's inexperience, Dumouriez pointed out that under the old regime, men of high rank but little expertise in international relations were often promoted to ambassadorial posts over their more experienced and well-educated secretaries. Many of these "agents of the second order," he stated, were qualified for the highest positions, could represent France with skill and dignity, and by standing clearly for the interests of revolutionary France, would substitute truth and justice for the pretensions and vanity of *ancien régime* diplomats. "It is according to these principles, which are exactly analogous to our constitution, that we are drawing up a new plan or organization for the diplomatic corps, one which must contain dignity, simplicity, and economy."

Finally, Dumouriez asserted, the minister of foreign affairs must be a man of recognized patriotism, "like the wife of Caesar." There must be no doubt of his loyalty, integrity, strength, sense of justice, and knowledge of men. His duty was to communicate all dispatches vital to the

national interest to the Diplomatic Committee, which would in turn inform the National Assembly, and failure to do so should be considered the crime of *lèse-nation*. Dumouriez concluded that if the conduct of foreign relations were revolutionized in this manner, the foreign ministry would "regain the esteem and confidence that it has lost, and when all Europe is persuaded of our justice and of our moderation, we will become the arbiters and pacifiers of Europe."

As foreign minister, Dumouriez now quickly implemented this reorganization. To maintain tighter control of the foreign ministry, he replaced its two political bureaus with six bureaus subordinated to a director-general and established a new administrative bureau, called the secretariat, directly responsible to him.[18] He then purged the ministry at every level, replacing royalists with Jacobins he could trust to implement his Belgian plan. Evincing the primacy of that plan to his foreign policy, he chose men closely connected with the Belgian-Liégeois revolutionary movement for the three most important positions in the ministry. As director-general, his second-in-command, he appointed his friend and ally Bonne-Carrère. Since having been rejected by the prince-bishop as French minister to Liège the previous year, Bonne-Carrère had served as unofficial liaison between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the exiled Liégeois and Belgian democrats in Paris and Lille.[19] The next-highest post was given to Pierre LeBrun, to whom he had been introduced by Bonne-Carrère the month before. Familiar with LeBrun through his influential newspaper, Dumouriez valued his knowledge of European politics and his close ties with the Belgian-Liégeois patriots and gave him responsibility for the foreign ministry's official correspondence with Belgium, Liège, Great Britain, the United Provinces, the Hanseatic towns, and the United States. The last of Dumouriez's major appointments went to Hugues-Bernard Maret, whom Bonne-Carrère had introduced to the Belgian and Liégeois patriots in Paris the previous spring and who was now posted to Lille as the liaison between the ministry and the Belgian-Liégeois patriots in France, Belgium, and Liège.[20] The remaining positions in the ministry were filled with loyal Jacobins known and trusted by Dumouriez, Bonne-Carrère, or LeBrun. These appointees and their subordinates constituted the permanent staff of the ministry and ensured continuity in revolutionary foreign policy.

The new foreign minister's revolutionizing of the diplomatic corps was as sweeping as that of the ministry. He retained only four ambassadors then in service, and replaced the other fourteen with men loyal to him and the Revolution, many of them secretaries to ambassadors under the old regime. In his voluminous instructions to them, he stressed the importance of substituting republican sobriety and virtue for the traditional aristocratic style. He wrote to Antoine-Bernard Caillard at Ratisbon that the new government must "adopt the diplomatic system that corresponds

to our Constitution and displays all the majesty of a free, just, and great nation."[21] He explained to Nicholas de Bays, secretary to the legation in Berlin, that "the political system that I adopted on entering the ministry is frank, honest, and constitutional" and asked Jean-François de Bourgoing at Madrid to speak "the energetic and decisive language that befits the representative of a free and just people."[22] Similarly, Robert de Pons at Bonn and Noël-Gabriel Villars at Mainz were advised "to sustain the dignity of the French name and to speak in the name of a free nation."[23]

His instructions to the diplomats reflected Dumouriez's awareness of the duplicity and lack of credibility that hampered relations between revolutionary France and the European powers. To François Barthélémy in Switzerland, for instance, he wrote that "the negotiations of a free nation, in fact, affect general interests and are devoid of the petty passions and personal interests that govern the negotiations of despots."[24] He instructed Bays that "The ideas of liberty and constitution demand that the rule of secret politics and mysterious diplomacy be banished; and that is a prerequisite for the dignity and strength of a free nation."[25] Caillard he urged to "communicate openly in order to avoid using the path of espionage, which does not suit the minister of a sincere and free nation."[26] To Audibert-Caille, *chargé d'affaires* in Turin, he announced that France had adopted an open policy of conciliation and good will and wished to avoid any breaks with the Europeans.[27]

Some French diplomats, eager to prove their republicanism, appear to have taken Dumouriez's advice too much to heart, jeopardizing negotiations. François Bernard Chauvelin, official minister plenipotentiary to Great Britain, developed such a pronounced sense of his republican dignity that British aristocrats considered him rude. His manner was so distasteful that he was unable to maintain even moderately civil relations with the British foreign secretary, Lord Grenville.[28] The French ambassador at The Hague, Emmanuel de Maulde, behaved in a similar fashion, his diplomatic style *àla républicaine* creating such a scandal that the British ambassador, Lord Auckland, placed him in diplomatic quarantine.[29]

With his reorganization of the foreign ministry and the diplomatic corps underway, Dumouriez quickly moved all three fronts of his Belgian strategy. The first was to press for an immediate declaration of war on Austria for the purpose of invading the Belgian provinces and Liège. Within a week of his appointment, Dumouriez reported to the Diplomatic Committee that Belgium and Liège had been transformed into "a formidable military state" by Austria's continued troop reinforcements there, which Leopold claimed necessary to contain popular unrest,[30] Reminding the Committee that France had never agreed to the Hapsburg reconquest, he argued that France should now demand that Francis II, who had succeeded Leopold on 1 March, "pay attention to the legitimate protests of

the Belgians, give them back their former rights, and not make use of the legitimate resistance of these people in order to assemble formidable armies within reach of our frontiers." To back up these demands, France should advise the new emperor that if he did not recall most of his troops without delay and discontinue further military preparations, French armies would march into Belgium and Liège. If a coalition existed to invade and dismember France, he argued, "then it is better to forestall them than to await them." The Committee members were won over by Dumouriez's arguments. Knowing that Francis II would never agree to demilitarize Belgium and Liège, they concluded that war with Austria was inevitable.

On 22 March, only ten days after his appointment, Dumouriez presented the council of ministers with a detailed strategic plan for a preemptive war in Belgium and Liège.[31] On France's northern frontier, Dumouriez retained the three armies that Narbonne had created in December 1792: the Army of the North under Marshal Rochambeau, the Army of the Rhine under Marshal Luckner, and the Army of the Center under General Lafayette. In the south Dumouriez established a fourth army—the Army of the Midi—under the command of General Montesquiou to defend the southern French borders and, if necessary, invade Savoy to destroy their arsenal. Once war was declared, according to Dumouriez's plan, the Armies of the North and Center would attack Belgium and Liège, while the Armies of the Rhine and the Midi would remain on the defensive. If French forces accomplished their mission in Savoy, he would transfer thirty battalions from the Midi to the north to reinforce the French forces invading Belgium and Liège. He assured the ministers that a French invasion would spark a general Belgian-Liégeois revolution:

> As soon as the French army enters the Belgian provinces, it will be helped by the people, who are ashamed of their own futile revolutionary efforts of [1789–1790]. They will join forces with our troops and will easily drive the dispersed hordes of Austrian mercenaries from their towns or scatter them. Paris will be defended on the banks of the Meuse. For the Country of Liege, the one most worthy of freedom of all those who have raised its flag, our negotiators will depart to dictate a wise peace, which we will under no circumstances spoil by the spirit of conquest.

So certain was he of the revolutionary ardor of the Belgians and Liégeois that he promised that the French strike could be achieved in "one quick march."

Reporting to the Diplomatic Committee the same day, Dumouriez, in an argument clearly intended to address the severe financial problems and related domestic unrest facing the government, asserted that France would be able to use the resources of the Belgian provinces to help them win a war against Austria. For years, he pointed out, the Belgians and Liégeois

had been providing the Austrian emperors with military reservists; by supporting their revolutionary ambitions, France would not only gain their allegiance but deprive the emperor of his best means of waging a successful war against France.[32] Thus Dumouriez's public argument for his preemptive war strategy was not Belgian-Liégeois liberation for its own sake. Rather it was that Austria, as leader of the "concert of crowns," had militarized Belgium and Liège as part of the counterrevolutionary plan to invade neighboring France and restore Louis XVI to absolute power.

The new foreign minister also undertook a diplomatic offensive to prepare for war. On 19 March, through Noailles, the French Ambassador in Vienna, he sent Austrian Chancellor Kaunitz an ultimatum: Paris would break off negotiations with Vienna if the Austrian government did not agree to withdraw a sizeable number of troops from the Belgian provinces by 15 April.[33] When Dumouriez had received no response from Kaunitz by 11 April, he met with the other ministers to argue for an immediate invasion of Belgium and Liège, declaring that "everything seems to prepare for war; it even seems as though absolutely nothing could prevent it."[34] Given France's precarious position, he insisted, Austria must be defeated quickly. Dumouriez estimated that if they delayed, the Austrian army—already 120,000 strong—would be supplemented by at least 60,000 Prussians and Serbs and approximately as many French *émigrés.* France must not give the enemy time to concentrate on its borders nor wait to be attacked; the Belgian strategy must be carried out before the enemy became too powerful. After Dumouriez explained his military plans to the other ministers and left the room, according to Dumont,

> Dumouriez was gone, but the table was covered with maps of the Austrian Netherlands, the Low Countries. Dumouriez had explained to the others . . . his campaign plan. They looked serious and embarrassed. DeGrave had a personal dread of the responsibility, and Roland and Clavière were neither of them warriors. . . . Brissot was radiant with joy, and said that war alone, by showing who were the friends and who were the enemies of the constitution, could place liberty on a sure foundation. DeGrave anticipated danger from the army; he feared the desertion of the superior officers, for most of the military men of any talent had already emigrated. Neither, however, dared oppose Dumouriez, who by the ascendancy of his energetic mind, obtained all he wished. He saw resources for carrying on the war in the Low Countries, and represented, in the strongest light, the necessity of counteracting the plans of the House of Austria and the other sovereigns of Europe, before they had time to concert the means of carrying them into execution.[35]

Thus he obtained the support of the full ministry for his war plans, which were submitted to the deputies and the king for their approval.

On 20 April, Dumouriez achieved his ardently sought-after declaration of war when the king read Dumouriez's report to the Legislative Assembly and proposed a declaration of war against the "king of Hungary and Bohemia." The Assembly ratified the proposal overwhelmingly with only seven deputies, all Feuillants, dissenting. Mathieu Dumas alone of the dissenters publicly warned against the Belgian strategy. While sharing in the consensus that a preemptive war was inevitable, Dumas favored the earlier war plans of Narbonne, arguing that France should instead have declared war on the German electors. He warned that the French invasion of Belgium and Liège would be a grave mistake because it risked provoking a full-scale war when a limited war in the Rhineland would have been feasible:

> The political crime is to have ignored this reality, despite full knowledge of the facts, in order to cling to the fanciful vision of the sudden invasion of Belgium. . . . The Belgian strategy is without even a probable excuse. Never did the frenzy of party spirit produce such a blindness; politics does not excuse it, and philosophy, humanity, and true love of liberty all condemn this plan of revolt, announced without shame, prepared by odious means, the immorality and dishonor of which ought, in the eyes of posterity, to be associated only with the names of those who conceived it.[36]

Unaware that Dumouriez himself was the impetus behind the Belgian strategy, Dumas accused the Girondins in the Assembly of masterminding the declaration of war and the preemptive strike to defeat Austria. The deputies ignored his warning.

The Legislative Assembly based its almost unanimous decision for war on the military threat facing the revolutionary government and a perception that war was part of a larger ideological struggle. Having gained ascendancy in the Assembly, the Girondins had surrendered the foreign policy prerogative to Dumouriez, accepting his leadership and war plans to ensure their predominance in the government. Dumouriez had convinced the policymakers that his preemptive strategy was the best means of winning that war and in the best interest of France.[37] This strategy, essential to Dumouriez's Belgian plan, suited the Assembly's fear of encirclement and the militarization of Belgium as well as the Girondin justification of the war as part of a crusade for European liberation.

The second front of Dumouriez's Belgian strategy was a diplomatic effort to isolate Austria and to gain the neutrality, if not the alliance, of the major European powers. As he relentlessly pursued a declaration of war on Austria, Dumouriez also sought to divert the concert of crowns from providing crucial support to the emperor by obtaining British and Dutch neutrality and detaching Prussia from its Austrian alliance. The Belgian

plan would not succeed if Britain and its closest ally, the United Provinces, joined the coalition against France. He also sought the neutrality of the imperial princes of the empire, the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, Spain, and the Swiss Confederation. This strategy was based on the earlier plan he had conceived to preserve the independence of Belgium and Liège after the Reichenbach Conference in 1790.[38]

In early 1792, then-Minister of War Narbonne had pursued a similar diplomacy with Prussia and Great Britain, but DeLessart had sabotaged the mission to obtain Prussia's neutrality. Yet Narbonne had met with more success in London. On 10 March, Talleyrand, his unofficial envoy to the Court of St. James, had returned to Paris encouraged by private assurances of British neutrality and hopeful of a Franco-British alliance.[39] Nevertheless, when Dumouriez became foreign minister in March of 1792, it was not Austria but France itself that was diplomatically isolated and French foreign policy was at a standstill.[40]

In his first two months in office, Dumouriez accomplished many of his objectives on this front. He obtained unofficial assurances of neutrality from Great Britain, the United Provinces, the empire, Spain, and the Swiss Confederation, although the British and Dutch left their ultimate intentions unclear. He failed to detach Prussia from its Austrian alliance but remained hopeful that eventually Prussian neutrality—and perhaps a Franco-Prussian alliance—could be negotiated. Although Piedmont-Sardinian belligerence posed a threat to a successful Belgian invasion, Dumouriez's strategy had anticipated this contingency.

The third front of Dumouriez's Belgian plan had begun with preparations for the anticipated insurrection of Belgian and Liégeois patriots.[41] Under his orders, LeBrun, Maret, and Bonne-Carrère coordinated the efforts of secret agents and the Belgian and Liégeois patriots to foment revolution against Austria and to aid the French army. In a later report to the War Committee of the National Convention, LeBrun described the activity and collaboration on this front:

> The moment that war was declared on the House of Austria, Belgian and Liégeois patriots who had formed the generous plan of making their country free planted on our northern frontier a flag around which they invited the Belgian and Liégeois people (those of their compatriots whose hearts had remained republican and free) to come and unite to fight the enemies of the Belgians, the Liégeois, and the French. The minister of foreign affairs, Dumouriez, supported and sponsored the Belgian and Liégeois refugees' plans and promised and gave them help.[42]

By mid-April, anticipating that a French declaration of war on Austria was imminent, they covertly planned to send secret agents into the

Austrian-controlled Belgian provinces and Liège to organize revolutionary parties for insurrection.[43] Their intelligence sources persuaded Dumouriez that, if suitably organized and directed, the patriots would revolt against the Hapsburg regime once the French armies crossed the Franco-Belgian frontier.[44] To lead this effort, Dumouriez had named LeBrun the Paris-based coordinator of Belgian-Liégeois operations and Maret the principal liaison to the revolutionaries inside Belgium and Liège.[45] Their primary mission was to coordinate the efforts of the Belgian-Liégeois forces at Lille in northern France with the invading French army and to foster conditions for a second revolution within the occupied territories.

Among Maret's chief responsibilities was uniting the revolutionary parties in Belgium and Liège. Assisted by Jean Ruelle, the newly appointed French *chargé d'affaires* in Brussels, Maret contacted the leaders of the major revolutionary parties in preparation for the approaching invasion and convinced members of the Belgian Estates to refuse approval of the annual subsidy of 70 million florins due to the imperial government.[46] Dumouriez used this agreement as another justification for an immediate invasion, telling the Council, "Any delay, under any pretext whatsoever, in the invasion plan would give the Austrians money to make war on us, would compromise people who have put their trust in us, would deprive us of the resource of much cash which we are short of, and would reduce us to a defensive position which would be morally and physically much more dangerous at the beginning of this war."[47]

After the French declaration of war, Maret redoubled efforts to foment the insurrection.[48] Another of Maret's major responsibilities as chief of the Belgian agents was the organization, recruitment, and funding of the Belgian-Liégeois legions in Lille.[49] A new republic, Dumouriez argued, must act quickly to organize a strong military to preserve its independence against European powers hostile to republicanism.[50] Dumouriez sent Walckiers and Smits to Givet to help Maret form a recruitment committee.[51] Dumouriez initially financed the legions from secret discretionary funds placed at his disposal by the Legislative Assembly on 26 April.[52] In May, Maret was elected president of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois at Lille, and he and Vonck concluded an agreement that the French government would arm and equip two legions that would temporarily become part of the French army and then be turned over to the revolutionary authority following the defeat of the Austrian army.[53] Maret also served as liaison between the French armies and the Belgian-Liégeois revolutionaries, explaining the foreign minister's military strategy to the revolutionaries and informing the generals of the revolutionaries' activities so as to coordinate the French invasion and the anticipated revolution. Maret worked tirelessly for the Belgian-Liégeois cause, requesting finan-

cial support, arms, and supplies from Dumouriez and giving assurances that his efforts were succeeding.[54]

Despite Dumouriez's call for openness and honesty in French foreign policy, the exigencies of war required him to establish a network of intrigue, propaganda, and espionage to defeat the *ancien régime* powers. Among Dumouriez's secret agents working in Belgium and Liège was Charles-Marie Fortair, whose mission, with Maret, was to unite all the Belgian patriot parties: "Let there be neither Vonckists nor Vandernootists nor federationists anymore; let them all be solid patriots and friends of liberty."[55] Recognizing that driving out the Austrian regime would be for naught if the divided Belgian parties did not unite to bring about their common goal, Dumouriez's instructions emphasized that all agents must "learn to apply the lessons of the past to the future—this is what you must keep repeating to the Belgians." Another valuable secret agent was François Deshacquets, secretary to the French legation at Brussels until Dumouriez replaced him with Ruelle on 12 April 1792. Deshacquets's discharge was made to appear as a dismissal to allow him to remain in Brussels as an undercover agent, posing as an embittered exiled French bureaucrat. In this capacity, he gathered important information without attracting the attention of the Austrian police. Louis Nicolas Sta, procureur-syndic of Lille, played an important part in inspiring revolutionary ardor among the Belgians. An ardent democrat and founder of the Jacobin Club at Lille, Sta was a close confidant of Vonck and well acquainted with Belgian customs and politics. His major contribution to the Belgian cause was the printing and distributing of democratic propaganda throughout Belgium and Liège, including thousands of copies of LeBrun's *Manifesto of the United Belgians and Liégeois* to the Belgians."[56]

Dumouriez now appeared to have in position all the necessary elements for the successful execution of his Belgian plan. With the approval of the king and Assembly, he promptly ordered an immediate strike. Speed was essential, as the plan's success depended on a decisive victory over the Austrian army within fifteen days. General Lafayette and Marshals Luckner and Rochambeau and their troops were mobilized on the northern frontier, from Dunkirk to Strasbourg, with a combined force of 164,000 troops.[57] Lafayette's Army of the Center would launch the major thrust of the invasion, marching from Givet to Namur and then seizing Liège. Rochambeau's Army of the North would make two simultaneous advances: the first, under General Biron, advancing to Quiévrain with Brussels as its final objective; the second, under *Maréchal de Camp* Theobald Dillon, marching on Tournai as a decoy.[58] These movements would provide the basic support for Lafayette's assault on Liège.

Unknown to Dumouriez, however, the royalist sympathies of both Lafayette and Rochambeau made them extremely reluctant to implement

this strategy. Loyal to Narbonne's limited Rhineland strategy, they were not convinced that an invasion of Belgium and Liège would prompt a revolution. They also doubted the success of an invasion because of the poor condition of their armies. The armies and troops lacked essential equipment, the aristocratic officers and their men distrusted one another, and many of the soldiers were untrained volunteers.[59] Also threatening the success of Dumouriez's strategy was the continuing clandestine power struggle between the crown and the revolutionary government. As soon as the Legislative Assembly had declared war, the king had insisted that Dumouriez meet privately to reassure Marie Antoinette of his loyalty to the monarchy and the constitution. At that meeting Dumouriez described the strategy that he had presented to the other ministers, who still served at the king's discretion.[60] With the king's support, the queen began secretly passing this and later French war plans to the Austrian minister at Brussels, the Count Mercy-Argenteau, and to Count Axel von Fersen, a Swedish officer attached to the embassy in Paris and the queen's admirer.[61]

Despite the generals' misgivings, on 28 April the French armies followed orders and invaded Belgium. The strike proved a disaster. A false warning of a sudden Austrian attack caused Biron's troops to panic, fleeing in confusion to Valenciennes. Dillon's troops marched from Lille to Tournai, but when an Austrian army was sighted near Marquain, Dillon, in full view of the advancing enemy, gave the order to retreat. As terror overcame his men, what began as an orderly retreat became a rout back to Lille; when Dillon attempted to rally his soldiers, they murdered him. The failure of both offensives under his command led Marshal Rochambeau to resign. Meanwhile, Lafayette had marched toward Namur accompanied by a Liégeois legion and three members of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois.[62] On 30 April, he learned of the reverses at Quiévrain and Marquain and of the resignation of Rochambeau and, on the pretext of awaiting new orders from Paris, immediately suspended his attack on Liège. The Committee members later claimed that with Lafayette's superior forces, the French could have taken Namur easily and triggered the anticipated Liégeois insurrection and general revolution throughout Belgium.[63]

In Paris, the humiliating defeat of the armies was a staggering blow to the Legislative Assembly. No one blamed Dumouriez directly, even though he had planned and implemented the Belgian strategy. Rather, the Girondins became the scapegoats for the reverses, both in the Assembly and at the Jacobin Club.[64] On the night of 30 April Robespierre, struggling to gain the floor at the Jacobins, launched a furious attack on Girondin leaders and their policies, charging that the Jacobin Club had become the innocent "instrument of a cabal."[65] Continuing his attack the following day, Robespierre accused the ministry of treason and criticized the Girondins

for insisting on declaring war unprepared and for leaving nobles in command of the armies.[66]

The unsuccessful prosecution of the war also renewed the Robespierrist attack on the royal couple's collusion with the enemy. In desperation, the Girondins, with their positions of power at stake, turned on the crown as well, accusing the king and court of treason. They claimed that a mysterious Austrian counterrevolutionary committee, centered around the queen and composed of Montmorin and the Feuillants, was responsible for the defeats.[67] On 15 May, Isnard opened the Girondin salvo in the Assembly. Analyzing the cause of the "evils" that threatened France, he declared that the enemies of the government were to be found at court, that Louis favored the aristocracy to regain absolute power, and that he allowed "a secret committee to function that, without consulting him, is working without respite to bring about the success of a counterrevolutionary plan." Isnard further accused the court of attempting "to destroy the Constitution by following the Constitution," bringing about financial ruin by inciting an expansion of the war, promoting animosity between the Assembly's parties, and sowing seeds of anarchy throughout France.

The accusations were true. Since July 1789, Louis and the queen had maintained opposite public and private positions concerning the French Revolution. When the National Assembly had demanded that Louis accept the Constitution of 1791, he had publicly pledged his support while privately seeking to overthrow the government it prescribed. His considerable financial support of the *émigrés,* his secret memorandum of 20 January 1790 encouraging his brothers to continue their oppositionist policies, his authorization in June 1791 of Artois and Provence to act in his name at the foreign courts, and his flight to Varennes all confirmed his determination to destroy the Revolution with the help of other European monarchs. After the April defeats of the French army, the royal family, alarmed by the insurrectionary temper in Paris, had grown increasingly anxious about the king's position in the government and their safety, leading to their final and fatal betrayal of the revolutionary government. In a series of suggestions sent to Mercy-Argenteau in Brussels, the queen proposed the idea of an Austro-Prussian manifesto to the French government that would demand the safety of the royal family.[68] The king then sent Jacques Mallet du Pan, a Swiss royalist and editor of the *Mercure de France,* on a secret mission to the allies to propose that the proposed declaration be published by the Duke of Brunswick, commander-in-chief of the invading armies. Although the resulting manifesto would not be made public until 25 July, it left no doubt that the king was directly allied with the European counterrevolution.[69]

Not to be deterred, on the first week of June Dumouriez ordered a second invasion of the Belgian provinces.[70] This time, however, not only

General Lafayette but Minister of War DeGrave opposed his plans. When Marshal Rochambeau resigned, Lafayette had asked to be appointed commander of the Army of the North, but Dumouriez, angered by his refusal to attack Liège in the first invasion, instead appointed Marshal Luckner, who on 3 May had written to the foreign minister to pledge his support.[71] This rejection so offended Lafayette that he now openly opposed the Belgian strategy.[72] In correspondence with Lafayette, Minister of War DeGrave also expressed reservations about Dumouriez's plan, maintaining that the Belgians and Liégeois were unlikely to revolt.[73] Aware of these misgivings, Dumouriez persuaded DeGrave to resign, and on 9 May the Girondins announced the appointment of one of their own, Joseph Servan, as minister of war. Servan then directed the army commanders to proceed with the second invasion.[74]

Lafayette, observing with growing bitterness the increased influence of the radical Jacobins in the Assembly, opposed Servan's replacement of DeGrave. While Dumouriez was urging him to launch a second offensive into Liège, Lafayette feared that the growing public outcry against the king for the defeat of the French troops would lead to an armed insurrection of Parisians that would end the constitutional monarchy and whatever public order remained. On 16 May, these fears led Lafayette to send an emissary, the ex-Jesuit Lambinet, to Mercy-Argenteau at Brussels, proposing a truce so that he, with the support of the French generals in the field, could march on Paris, suppress the Jacobin Left, and strengthen the king's position by adding an aristocratic upper house to the Legislative Assembly.[75]

Meanwhile, Luckner, the new commander of the Army of the North, had changed his mind and decided unilaterally to oppose Dumouriez's war strategy. Arriving at Valenciennes on 15 May, he called Rochambeau and Lafayette to a council of war in which he bitterly reproached the king for declaring war with an unprepared army.[76] The three generals secretly agreed to oppose Dumouriez's offensive war plan by waiting until they could be certain where the enemy would strike and then developing an appropriate defensive strategy. Luckner's proposed stalling tactic was to shift the Army of the North to the western Franco-Belgian frontier between the Lys River and the sea and attack the Austrian army by advancing from west to east, from Courtrai to Ghent to Brussels, while Lafayette's Army of the Center advanced from Maubeuge to Mons.[77] Writing to Dumouriez from Valenciennes on 26 May, Luckner concealed these intentions, instead complaining that morale was low after the disasters at Quivrain and Marquain and that he lacked officers, equipment, and provisions. He requested more time and means to wage a successful war.[78]

On 17 May, however, the Jacobin Chépy, temporarily assigned as commissioner of war to the Army of the North, warned Brissot of Lafayette's

intention to defy Dumouriez, "on whom depends the safety of the state."[79] According to Chépy, Lafayette "slanders the plans of the Belgian and Liégeois people; he lied despite the evidence and despite his heart. What is the secret of this behavior? It is as follows: Lafayette knows quite well that the offensive war, by overthrowing the House of Austria, would prepare the way for the emancipation of Europe, and by ensuring the independence of the Liégeois and the Belgians, would encircle France with a girdle of Republicanism." Calling the general a traitor who would turn his army on the Jacobins and on the Assembly if they did not acquiesce to his dictatorship, Chépy advised Dumouriez to immediately dismiss Lafayette and "carry on, at whatever cost" with the Liégeois and Belgian Revolutions.

Dumouriez, angrily declaring that he would not be relegated to the position of *premier commis,* promptly ordered Luckner and Lafayette to combine forces and launch a second invasion as soon as possible.[80] Whatever the condition of their troops, he assured them, a Belgian and Liégeois insurrection would take place as soon as their armies crossed the frontier and would allow them to defeat the Austrian army within fifteen days. He stressed the importance of timing, arguing that in another month the Prussian army would join the Austrians in the Belgian provinces, and in that event, no offensive strategy would succeed; perhaps even a defensive one would fail. Lafayette, stalling to continue his secret negotiations with the Austrians, responded to Dumouriez on 29 May that his army was so poorly equipped that he could not immediately execute the Belgian strategy and that he and Luckner had discovered that "an inexplicable indiscretion had up till then been revealing the foreign minister's plans to his enemies." For these reasons, they claimed, a French defensive position would be a more practical option.[81] On 7 June, Luckner sounded a similar note, writing to Servan that he intended to wait "in the camp" until his army was sufficiently supplied and reinforced.[82] But in response to the generals' earlier complaints about insufficient resources, the minister of war had been working tirelessly to reinforce their armies and had ordered the frontier fortresses strengthened with 15,000 national guardsmen.[83] The armies had in fact been considerably strengthened, leading General Biron to praise Servan for those effective measures.[84]

Luckner, in an attempt to go over Dumouriez's head, had also written to the king and the council of ministers requesting new orders, and on 7 June he received a curt history lesson from Servan, reminding the general how thirty-five years earlier Marshal de Saxe had managed under similar conditions to defeat the British, Austrians, Dutch, Bavarians, Hessians, and Hannoverians and conquer "the same country which has today become the theater of war."[85] Two days later, on 9 June, the minister of war sent new orders to Luckner, again demanding that the commanders execute the Belgian strategy.[86]

Dumouriez, incredulous that the commanders had neither opened hostilities nor given any indication of their intention to do so, resolved to leave Paris to inspect the armies on the Franco-Belgian frontier and to spur them to action.[87] Although he had risen to the most powerful position in the revolutionary government and succeeded in securing a French declaration of war, his Belgian plan could not succeed without the cooperation of his generals. Having done all that he could to advance his cause as foreign minister, he would now have to find another way to command the prosecution of the war.

CHAPTER 5

Consolidating Control of the Belgian Plan, May-August 1792

In late May, the military reverses on the frontier, threat of an enemy invasion, and fear of civil war prompted the Girondins to call for decisive action against all traitors, hoping thereby to revive their declining political fortunes. The very real dangers facing the revolutionary state led to a temporary truce between the Robespierrists and the Girondins, and the deputies quickly passed three defense decrees: one against the refractory clergy, a second disbanding the king's Constitutional Guard, and a third creating an armed camp of national guardsmen near Paris.

The first of these, the decree of 27 May, was intended to weaken or immobilize the counterrevolutionary movement inside France by ordering the deportation of refractory priests who refused to take the oath to the nation. The king, who continued to resist all such efforts as a matter of conscience, immediately vetoed the decree. Not to be deterred, over the next few days the Assembly passed the second Girondin proposal, abolishing the king's Constitutional Guard and impeaching its commander, Colonel Brissac, on the grounds that the guard was a counterrevolutionary force. The king opposed this measure to disarm him, but sanctioned it on 31 May at the urging of several of his ministers, hoping that abandoning his guards would reduce suspicion of him and make his veto of the decree against the refractory priests easier for the Assembly to accept.[1]

The third Girondin decree, proposed on 4 June by Minister of War Servan, summoned the National Guard, the *fédérés,* to Paris to protect the capital against an invasion and provide reserves for the armies on the frontier. The decree was also meant to reassure the frightened Parisians and

thereby reduce the likelihood that they would resort to violence or insurrection to combat the counterrevolution. Servan had obtained the approval of Roland and Clavière before presenting it to the Assembly, though not of the other ministers or the king. Although the Assembly passed it on 8 June, the Robespierrists were reluctant to place such a weapon in the hands of their opponents, claiming that the new force might become "a blind instrument of a Caesar or a Sulla."[2] Even some of the Girondins opposed these decrees as over-reaching, leading to a split in the ministry between Roland, Servan, and Clavière, who supported all the decrees, and Duranthon and Lacoste, who supported none of them. Dumouriez, who favored the first and third of these decrees but, wishing to keep the support of both the court and the Assembly in pursuit of his own policies, opposed the second, and thus stood apart from either of the two ministerial factions. The king, fearing an influx of armed citizens into Paris, vetoed the third decree as well.

In response to the vetoes, Roland presented a letter of protest to the king, instructing him to sanction the decrees.[3] When the king did not respond, Roland read the letter aloud in the Council of State, an extreme action because its preemptory tone was offensive to the king. During the reading of the letter, according to Dumouriez's memoirs, "The king listened with admirable patience, and contented himself with observing, 'Monsieur Roland, three days ago you sent me this letter; so it was useless to read it in Council, inasmuch as it ought to have remained a secret between us two.' "[4] Louis, irritated and humiliated, privately called on Dumouriez for advice on how to respond.. Dumouriez, expressing ministerial unity, suggested that the king dismiss the entire ministry, but Louis XVI wished to retain those ministers who offered any support for his positions, Dumouriez, Lacoste, and Duranthon.. Later that day, 13 June, the king dismissed Roland, Servan, and Clavière and persuaded Dumouriez to replace Servan as minister of war.

Dumouriez agreed, confident that Bonne-Carrère and LeBrun would continue his policies in the foreign ministry and that as minister of war he could advance the prosecution of the war and ensure the success of his Belgian strategy.[5] Doing so, however, placed Dumouriez in an impossible situation, as his acceptance implied that he had the king's confidence and approved of the king's dismissal of the other Girondin ministers. These dismissals outraged the deputies and destroyed all possibility of reestablishing constitutional relations between the king and the Legislative Assembly. In support of Roland, Servan, and Clavière, the Assembly decreed that the ex-ministers were leaving their posts "with the esteem and regret of the nation." The Girondins, moreover, broke with Dumouriez as well as the king, and Brissot began attacking him in the *Patriote français* as "the vilest of intriguers."[6]

But Dumouriez, confident that he could make sweeping improvements in the ministry of war that would benefit the war effort, immediately presented his report charging fraud and disorganization in the ministry's supply section and giving a dismal account of the state of France's frontier fortifications, attributing all these previously undisclosed shortcomings to his predecessors in the war ministry—Narbonne, De Grave, and Servan. Given Servan's popularity and the deputies' sudden suspicion of Dumouriez, his speech destroyed any credibility he had left with the Assembly, and the radicals proceeded to attack him on the floor.[7] Lacuée, a member of the Military Committee and a confidant of Servan, found it astonishing that Dumouriez, having urged the declaration of war, now should report to the Assembly that France was severely handicapped in waging it. Guadet asked how Dumouriez, having obtained the dismissal of the "patriotic ministers," could presume to lecture the Assembly. The deputy Paganel charged that Dumouriez must have known France was unprepared and was therefore either a slanderer or a traitor. The Assembly ended the discussion by requiring that the minister substantiate his report within twenty-four hours. Brissot took this opportunity to again attack both Dumouriez and Bonne-Carrère in the *Patriote français,* which was echoed the following day in the *Révolutions de Paris*.[8]

Dumouriez was greatly disturbed by the king's intransigence, his breach with the Girondins, and the army's reverses in the Belgian provinces, all of which threatened the success of his Belgian plan. Maret had already urged him to resign from the government and take command of the Army of the North himself, and on 15 June Dumouriez followed his advice and resigned his post.[9] As he explained to Gensonné, the Assembly's attacks and lack of confidence in him had destroyed any effectiveness he could have as minister of war.[10] In an agreement with the king, Dumouriez was then attached to the Army of the North under the command of Marshal Luckner, to report for duty at Lille on 1 July.

To the majority of Jacobins, the dismissal of Roland, Clavière, and Servan, patriots who had the Assembly's support, was further evidence that the king was conspiring with those within and without France who desired to restore the old regime. This intent was seemingly substantiated on 18 June when Louis appointed a largely Feuillant ministry to replace Dumouriez and the dismissed Girondins. Any meaningful communication between the king and the Assembly collapsed.

Adding to the growing fear of counterrevolutionary forces was Lafayette's very public support of the king. When his secret proposal to march on Paris was rejected by Francis II, Lafayette turned directly to Paris.[11] On 16 June, he wrote an open letter to the king and Legislative Assembly in which he urged the king to take a firmer hand in asserting royal power, implied that the army supported the king, and denounced the Parisian

clubs for fomenting unrest among the lower classes, all of which confirmed widespread suspicions that he was planning a military coup.[12] In response, both the Girondins and the Jacobin Left attacked Lafayette in the Assembly and at the Jacobin Club, and a decree was introduced ordering Lafayette to appear before the bar of the Assembly.[13]

Although the decree was defeated, the general's letter further enflamed the republican movement in Paris. The Parisian lower classes, who had suffered greatly from worsening economic conditions and food shortages throughout the spring and summer, had never accepted their exclusion from direct involvement in politics, and political activists such as Danton and the Cordeliers Club had been able to mobilize this discontent into a popular republican movement. On 20 June, a crowd of as many as 20,000, beginning to call themselves *sans-culottes,* invaded the royal palace to protest the king's recent actions. There they proceeded to surround Louis XVI and force him to drink a toast to the nation. He put on the cap of liberty, but refused to rescind his vetoes or replace his royalist ministers, and the demonstrators went home. Although the uprising failed in its immediate purpose, its audacity emboldened the Paris radicals and signaled the entry of the Parisian sections into national politics.[14]

In spite of the uprising, the king still refused to sign the Assembly's defense decrees, and in early July the Assembly circumvented the veto on the establishment of a National Guard camp near Paris by authorizing the *fédérés* to come to Paris to attend the Federation ceremony on 14 July, the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille. So confident was Louis that the Austro-Prussian forces would soon reach Paris and restore his absolute power that he ignored the pleas of his advisors and Lafayette to flee the capital.

This threat to the king led Lafayette to again write to the Assembly denouncing the outbreak of violence. But this time, vowing to Luckner that he would "fight the tyranny of the factions to the death," he left his command and rode to Paris, determined to end the radical opposition to the constitutional monarchy and to pledge his support of the king.[15] Addressing the Legislative Assembly on 28 June, he condemned the popular threat to the monarchy, called for the destruction of the treasonous "authors and instigators of the events of 20 June," and demanded that the Assembly assure the army that it would prevent attacks on the constitution from within while they shed their blood in its defense abroad. The Assembly's response to Lafayette was hostile, and although an attempt to censure him for deserting his post during wartime was defeated, the Jacobins began demanding that the Assembly try the king for treason.[16] The day after his impassioned speech, Lafayette tried but failed to enlist the National Guard in a royalist coup d'état. Spurned by the Assembly, the *fédérés,* and the royal couple, Lafayette left Paris and returned to the front, distraught but still determined to save the monarchy.

The political events in Paris also shaped the direction of foreign affairs. When Dumouriez resigned, the king had appointed the Marquis de Chambonas as minister of foreign affairs, although he had no previous experience in the diplomatic service. Serving under Lafayette in the American Revolutionary War, Chambonas had become a confidant of "the hero of two worlds" and had risen to the rank of *maréchal de camp.* In early March 1792, Narbonne had appointed him commandant of Paris. Chambonas's association with these known royalists alienated him from the Assembly, which was heightened by Lafayette's open letters to the king and the Assembly the day after Chambonas's appointment, associating him in the minds of the deputies with Lafayette's suspected royalist plot.

Lacking confidence in the new foreign minister, the deputies revived the functions of the Diplomatic Committee, which had remained dormant during Dumouriez's ministry. At the request of the Diplomatic Committee, on 30 June Chambonas presented a confidential report on French foreign policy in which he concluded that "We have many enemies, few reliable allies, and very few friends."[17] Chambonas pointed to signs of increased Prussian hostility and maintained that it was useless for France to continue negotiating with that power. Sardinia, he observed, was hostile toward the French government and collaborating with the enemy, although Sweden and Spain could be counted on to remain neutral. Chauvelin, the French ambassador in London, had informed Chambonas that Britain would be receptive to an alliance if France would pledge not to interfere in the internal affairs of neutral nations, and Chambonas recommended that France attempt to make such an alliance.[18]

Chambonas also urged that France initiate peace negotiations with "our former ally" Austria, indicating that the new foreign minister was entirely unaware of Dumouriez's Belgian plan. He was isolated from the permanent staff at the ministry, which was entirely Jacobin and loyal to Dumouriez, Bonne-Carrère, and LeBrun. Chambonas did not dare replace the personnel at the ministry for fear of repercussions in the Assembly; conversely, the members of the permanent staff, fearing dismissal, became covert adversaries of the royalist foreign minister. As a result, it was actually Bonne-Carrère, with the support and complicity of the ministry's permanent staff, who directed foreign policy immediately following Dumouriez's resignation as foreign minister.

The Girondins reacted quickly to Chambonas's report by attacking the king and the new ministry. On 5 July, Vergniaud accused the king of treason and proposed a decree formally proclaiming a state of emergency, the decree of *patrie en danger,* which would give the Assembly more power to defend the nation.[19] When on the same day Chambonas told the Assembly of intelligence reports describing the advance of the Prussian army toward the Rhine frontier, Gensonné attacked him for not having informed the

Assembly sooner. Brissot demanded that Chambonas be impeached, and Condorcet denounced the royal couple and all the ministers as traitors. On 10 July, threatened with impeachment, all the Feuillant ministers except Lajard resigned.

With the collapse of the Feuillant ministry, the king's remaining power evaporated, and the Assembly's Commission of Twelve, appointed to oversee national defense, became the effective executive power of France. Bonne-Carrère continued to determine policy with the support of LeBrun and the permanent staff at the foreign ministry. Because of his long-standing feud with Brissot, Bonne-Carrère dealt entirely with the Commission of Twelve, not with the Diplomatic Committee, although on important foreign policy matters, members of the Diplomatic Committee attended the Commission's meetings.[20] According to Bonne-Carrère, he "refrained especially from taking dispatches to the king; never did I speak to him, nor to the queen, nor to any of their entourage."[21] At the ministry of foreign affairs, Bonne-Carrère and LeBrun continued to give the Belgian plan top priority.[22]

Thus the threat of invasion and distrust of the king and his ministers, particularly Chambonas, had brought down the last Feuillant ministry and rendered the crown powerless. The Paris sections seethed with unrest, and the arrival of approximately 20,000 *fédérés* provided them with a significant source of armed support. The sections became strong enough to declare their committees in permanent session by late July, an emergency action supported by the Legislative Assembly.

On the military front, June had passed with little progress. Earlier that month, a Belgian-Liégeois legion under Colonel Fyon had been attached to Lafayette's Army of the Center and Lafayette was ordered to advance into the Belgian provinces as far as Liège. But the Austrians had defeated Lafayette at Grisoelle and his army had remained inactive at Maubeuge, allowing the unchecked Austrian army to advance to Courtrai. Lafayette had no intention of executing Dumouriez's Belgian strategy, believing it more important to closely monitor events in Paris. After stalling for several weeks, Marshal Luckner finally ordered the Army of the North to invade Belgium. His force, which included a Belgian-Liégeois legion led by Count Charles-Joseph de Rosières, had successfully captured Menin on 17 June and Courtrai the next day. But on 19 June, learning of Dumouriez's resignation as war minister, Luckner halted his offensive at Courtrai instead of advancing as ordered. Luckner justified his actions to Lajard by claiming that the Belgian-Liégeois legion was not battle-ready and that he saw no prospect that the Belgians would support French troops. "The Belgians," he wrote, "are not showing their support in sufficient numbers, and I ought not to move forward unless the revolutionary party guarantees me by force of arms a free passage of the Lys."[23]

According to the foreign ministry's Belgian and Liégeois agents, however, the Belgians had everywhere received their liberators with joy and enthusiasm. Working through the Committee of the United Belgians and Liégeois, Dumouriez, Bonne-Carrère, LeBrun, and Maret had cultivated a great deal of support for a general insurrection. In fact, after Luckner's victories, deputies from Bruges and Ghent had given him formal assurances that the Belgian patriots would revolt as soon as the French army marched upon their cities.[24] On 27 June, Luckner withdrew his troops from the Belgian provinces, claiming he feared an attack on his rear by a reinforced Austrian army at Tournai even though he had been preparing Lajard for a withdrawal a week before it took place. One of his staff officers, General Amiel, later wrote that Luckner and his royalist staff had objected to Dumouriez's role as "prime minister" and that as soon as Luckner had heard about Dumouriez's resignation, he was determined to disobey his orders and retreat from Belgium, "cursing the disgraced minister and complaining that it was [Dumouriez's] fault for getting him into such a mad enterprise."[25]

After the elaborate preparations and raised expectations of the Belgian plan's proponents, Luckner's retreat from the Belgian provinces appeared a disaster. Their efforts were further set back when Jean Jarry, the French *maréchal de camp,* ordered the suburbs of Courtrai burned to the ground to protect the withdrawal of his rear guard.[26] From Belgium, Deshacquets described Luckner's retreat to Lille as a tragic mistake and reported that the conduct of the French army had hurt the Franco-Belgian cause, observing that "the enthusiasm of the Belgian patriots for insurrection had already grown cold."[27] (Jarry's actions did serve to create intense sympathy in France for the Belgians, however; outraged, the Legislative Assembly decreed on 3 July that all the victims be indemnified and Jarry put on trial.)

Despite the setbacks on the battlefield, intelligence from Belgium continued to encourage Dumouriez and LeBrun to continue their Belgian strategy. In early July, Deshacquets, who reported having been in conversation with Dumouriez, informed LeBrun that the time was right for another invasion: Walckiers had raised the hopes of the Belgian-Liégeois patriots with the promise that the Principles of l789 would triumph in their provinces, and the French could count on the patriot parties to overthrow the Austrian regime.[28] Writing to Dumouriez, Ruteau maintained that the Belgian plan could have been carried out successfully had the French generals held their ground, on 16 July sending him a detailed description of the Austrian military disposition in Belgium, town by town, and supplying figures on Austrian deserters and estimates of the strength of the Belgian-Liégeois patriots. Throughout the summer, Rutteau would continually press Dumouriez, Bonne-Carrère, and LeBrun to accelerate French operations for the conquest of Belgium and Liège, confident that the Belgian-Liégeois patriots would stage an insurrection as soon as the French invaded.[29]

While Luckner was retreating from Belgium, Dumouriez was en route to Lille to join the Army of the North. Arriving on 1 July, the former minister was greatly surprised to learn of Luckner's withdrawal from Courtrai, a decisive blow to his Belgian strategy and one that would allow the combined Prussian and Austrian forces to invade France from Belgium.[30] His fears were well grounded, as the two-pronged attack on France being formulated by the Prussians and Austrians included having the Duke of Saxe-Teschen advance on Lille from Belgium with 50,000 Austrian troops. Simultaneously, a Prussian army of 42,000 led by the Duke of Brunswick was to march from Coblenz to Luxembourg, where it would join an Austrian force of 15,000 under General Clerfayt for an invasion of France with the immediate objective of seizing Longwy and Verdun.[31]

Upon Dumouriez's arrival at Lille, Luckner and his staff ignored him. On 5 July, Luckner and Lafayette met at Valenciennes to devise a new war plan. Anticipating that the Prussian army would attack not from the north, as Dumouriez believed, but on the Franco-German border through the middle Rhine and Meuse regions, the two generals decided to move their respective armies to new headquarters closer to that zone. Luckner and his Army of the North would march from Lille to Metz, where his army would be renamed the Army of the Center, with responsibility for defending the region from Metz south to Besançon. Simultaneously, Lafayette and his Army of the Center would march from Maubeuge to Montmédy, where his army would be renamed the Army of the North. According to this *chassé-croisé* strategy, the two marching armies would intersect at La Capelle, about 120 miles from Paris. Dumouriez would command a small holding force of six battalions and five squadrons at the Camp de Maulde and join Luckner's forces on 20 July.[32]

This plan was militarily dangerous, as it would leave the Franco-Belgian frontier vulnerable to attack, but the motives of Lafayette and perhaps Luckner were political rather than strategic. After the failure of his efforts to suppress the revolutionary clubs and sections in the capital, Lafayette had devised a new strategy. Instead of simply exchanging command over each other's armies, by marching them to different positions he would, with the complicity of Luckner, retain his own loyal troops and move his army within striking distance of Paris so as to be able to defend the safety of the royal family.

In the Legislative Assembly, news of the Prussian-Austrian advance on the French frontiers led to the adoption of the *patrie en danger* decree on 11 July. Suspicious and fearful of Lafayette's intentions, the deputies began an inquiry into the *chassé-croisé* strategy and summoned Luckner to Paris on 12 July to testify about Lafayette's activities. Interrogated by the Assembly's Commission of Twelve and Military Committee, the marshal was asked directly if he knew whether it was Lafayette's intent to march on

Paris and rescue the king and if Luckner's army was coordinating its actions with those of Lafayette to execute this plan. In his broken French, he denied any knowledge of "intrigues," but his testimony further compromised Lafayette and failed to free himself from suspicion.[33] The fear that the seemingly imminent invasion of France would be accompanied by royalist military action by the French armies only accelerated the growing sense of crisis in the capital.

Meanwhile, the allies were slowly but effectively beginning their offensive against France. Brunswick's forces were advancing steadily toward the Rhine. In Belgium, on 15 July the Duke of Saxe-Teschen captured Orchies between Lille and Valenciennes and Austrian troops moved into Tournai, threatening to cut communications between the Army of the North and the Army of the Center and surprising the French forces on the frontier. Panic-stricken municipalities in the threatened areas demanded stronger protection against possible enemy attack. In the Legislative Assembly, Gossuin, a deputy from the department of the North, read a letter from Douai expressing the citizens' fear of an Austrian attack from Belgium. Official delegations from Lille and Dunkirk also protested the vulnerability of the French borders.

The state of emergency along the Belgian border provided Dumouriez with a justification for defying Luckner's orders to march his command south to Metz on 20 July, arguing that given the Austrian threat, it was essential to keep his troops on the northern frontier. He believed that his troops, combined with those of the Belgian patriots and with the help of the insurrection that would be triggered by their invasion, could defeat the Austrian army. In mid-July, Dumouriez wrote to the president of the Legislative Assembly to explain why he had defied Luckner's orders, stating that the *chassé-croisé* strategy exposed France to an Austrian invasion from Belgium and that he therefore refused to take the army's rear guard south to Metz, intending instead to remain at his headquarters at the Camp de Maulde to ensure the safety of the fortifications along the northern frontier in case of an Austrian attack. After the Austrian army crossed the Franco-Belgian frontier and seized Orchies and Tournai on 16 July, Dumouriez quickly wrote to Paris explaining in detail his opposition to the *chassé-croisé* strategy. Arguing that the Austrian army's success had confirmed his opposition, he requested that he be made commander in chief of the Army of the North with carte blanche to defeat the Austrians and be sent fifteen battalions to reinforce his troops.[34]

In the Legislative Assembly, Dumas, a royalist member of the Military Committee, argued against Dumouriez's request and that the general's insubordination threatened French security. Dumas had consistently opposed Dumouriez in the Assembly, maintaining that Dumouriez was motivated solely by his Belgian strategy.[35] The other deputies on the committee

supported Dumouriez, however, arguing that his insubordination was secondary to the primary aim of preventing an invasion of France. The Assembly closed the discussion by sending Dumouriez's dispatches to the Commission of Twelve and the Military Committee.

On 18 July, Dumouriez wrote to Lafayette, refusing to march south to Metz with the rear guard of the Army of the North.[36] Both Lafayette and Luckner complained bitterly to Lajard of Dumouriez's insubordination, which made the *chassé-croisé* strategy impossible, and demanded that the minister of war order Dumouriez to carry out Luckner's orders.[37] Reflecting the chaotic state of the French government, Lajard wrote to Luckner that he agreed with them but that the ministry could not enforce the marshal's orders to Dumouriez, asking Luckner to enforce them himself.[38] Lajard resigned the next day, and the king replaced him with d'Abancourt, a Feuillant and nephew of the king's former Comptroller-General, Calonne.

On 23 July, Dumouriez held a council of war at Valenciennes presided over by General Arthur Dillon, second-in-command of the Army of the North. The council, attended by six *maréchaux de camp,* concluded that the Austrian strikes from Belgium necessitated a strong defensive force on the northern frontier and unanimously supported Dumouriez's decision to defy Luckner's orders.[39] Yet Dumouriez's assignment remained undetermined, and on 27 July he wrote to d'Abancourt requesting that he be allowed to remain at the Camp de Maulde, arguing that "My presence in this country does some good because I was born here and my compatriots have shown their confidence in me."[40]

On 28 July, Luckner sent Dumouriez an ultimatum: If Dumouriez did not obey his orders immediately, Luckner was authorizing General Beurnonville to take command of his forces.[41] The Austrian army had remained stationary after the seizure of Orchies and Tournai, and Luckner made the decision to remove Dumouriez from his command even knowing that the Assembly had been besieged by demands for greater protection from the frontier towns and that the war council at Valenciennes had affirmed that the rear guard of the Army of the North could not afford to leave the Franco-Belgian border. As General Dillon wrote to Luckner on 30 July, "I could not oust Dumouriez now when he is protecting the harvest against enemy incursions without losing the confidence of the inhabitants of this frontier and without harming the national welfare."[42]

On 31 July, Dumouriez wrote again to the king and new minister of war requesting a decision on his command.[43] D'Abancourt had settled the matter a day earlier, writing to Luckner that although Dumouriez's conduct was extremely reprehensible, he and the king's council would not oppose the decision of his war council at Valenciennes.[44] Because of the insufficiency of military forces on the northern frontier, Dumouriez's troops

would remain at the Camp de Maulde. However, d'Abancourt left it up to Luckner and Lafayette to determine whether Dumouriez would remain at the Camp de Maulde or be transferred to Metz. Assuming responsibility, Lafayette ordered Dillon to replace Dumouriez: "As for M. Dumouriez, neither Marshal Luckner nor I wish for him to remain in my army; he has had the marshal's order telling him to leave. This general has even written to the king to lodge a formal complaint against M. Dumouriez, and since he is no longer employed in my army and since I have no command to offer him, you are not to employ him and you are to order him to leave."[45] In his *Mémoires,* Dumouriez claimed that Lafayette had also asked Dillon to arrest and imprison him but that Dillon "had the wisdom not to try to carry out this order and the loyalty to keep it a secret."[46]

Despite Luckner and Lafayette's orders, Dumouriez retained his command at the Camp de Maulde. When d'Abancourt expressed astonishment that Dumouriez remained with the Army of the North, Dumouriez declared on 5 August that orders to remove him "cannot be upheld and I predict to you that it will be destroyed either by circumstances or by the foresight of the National Assembly. . . . With perseverance, I will have the good fortune to be one of the saviors of my country, whatever obstacle my personal enemies bring to bear."[47] Convinced of the urgency of carrying out the Belgian plan, Dumouriez defied Marshal Luckner's orders and perhaps saved the French government from a royalist coup d'état. Yet opposition from Luckner and Lafayette and an ineffectual minister of war had placed his position in jeopardy, and Dumouriez's ambitions appeared at a standstill.

Meanwhile, the Girondins had become increasingly alarmed at the growth of republican sentiment among the *sectionnaires* of Paris, which they viewed as dangerously radical, and toward the end of July tried to put themselves in a position to save the monarchy.[48] According to the British ambassador, Lord Gower, General Montesquiou had testified before the Extraordinary Commission that if the Assembly moved to deprive the king of his crown, the entire army would resist.[49] Believing it imperative to take the initiative if the constitutional monarchy were to survive and civil war was to be avoided, some Girondins secretly approached the king to suggest that he restore the ministers he had dismissed in June. Although the king made no promises, he gave them some hope that he would follow their suggestion, and on that expectation, they fought the republican movement in the Assembly. In doing so, however, they became vulnerable to charges of being accomplices of the king. When Brissot gave a speech on 26 July that was interpreted as forcing the king to accept Girondin leadership and policy, cries of *"à bas"* and *"l'homme à double face"* followed him to his seat. From that day, by speaking in opposition to the known convictions of the Jacobin and Cordelier Clubs, the *fédérés,* and

most of the Parisian sections, Brissot and the Girondins lost their remaining influence with the Paris Left. Although the Girondins continued their heated debates with Robespierre and his allies in the Assembly and at the Jacobin Club, their attempt to ally with the king failed when Louis rebuffed their efforts, still convinced that the Austro-Prussian armies would soon arrive in Paris and restore him to full sovereignty.

Then on 28 July, the Brunswick Manifesto reached the city, threatening "exemplary and forever memorable vengeance, by delivering up the city of Paris to a military execution and total destruction" should the royal family be harmed.[50] In response to this threat, which left no doubt about the king's duplicity or the retribution that would surely follow a counterrevolutionary victory, the Assembly authorized the distribution of arms to the citizenry and opened membership in the National Guard to all who would serve. Petitions from forty-seven sections and demands from increasing numbers of *fédérés* for the dethronement of the king and the impeachment of Lafayette became more strident. Preparations for an insurrection had already begun among the leaders of the *fédérés,* the Cordelier's Club, and the sections, including Danton, president of the Théâtre-française section, and Antoine Santerre, a colonel in the National Guard, who organized two military columns poised to seize the Tuileries palace and overthrow the king.

On 8 August, the deputies refused to indict Lafayette, and the Parisians determined to revolt. In the early hours of 10 August, the new municipal government of Paris, the Revolutionary Commune, rang the tocsin and thousands of *sans-culottes* and *fédérés* took to the streets, successfully storming the Tuileries in a bloody battle that left hundreds dead. The royal family fled to the Legislative Assembly, where they were taken into custody, and the deputies suspended the monarchy until a National Convention could be elected to create a republican constitution.[51] The monarchy had fallen to popular revolution in Paris.

After 10 August, the three hundred or so deputies of the Legislative Assembly who remained in Paris faced momentous challenges: dealing with the rival power of the Commune, establishing a legitimate national government for the new republic, and organizing the defense of France from a threatened allied invasion. The Assembly, recognizing the new power of the Commune, adopted measures designed to placate the *sectionnaires*. Invoking the doctrine of popular sovereignty as the legitimizing principle for the new government, the deputies convoked a National Convention to be elected on the basis of universal manhood suffrage to write a republican constitution. During the Interregnum between the Revolution of 10 August and the meeting of the National Convention on 21 September, the Parisian radicals found it expedient to accept the Legislative Assembly as the temporary government of France. The deputies, fearing the growing

militancy and strength of the *sans-culottes,* agreed to a power-sharing arrangement between the Assembly and the Commune.

The president of the Assembly, Vergniaud, proposed that the king's authority be replaced by a Provisional Executive Council of six ministers. The Council elected by the Assembly included three former Girondin ministers—Roland as minister of interior, Clavière as minister of finance, Servan as minister of war—and Pierre LeBrun as minister of foreign affairs. The Revolution of 10 August had the unintended effect of bringing the Girondins temporarily back into power in the Assembly, even though the rebellion had been directed against them as well as the king. In addition, Monge was named minister of the navy, and, as a gesture of reconciliation with the Paris Commune, Danton was elected minister of justice. As a member of the Executive Council, Danton would serve as a mediator between the Commune and the Girondist-dominated Assembly until the Convention convened on 21 September.[52]

On 11 August, LeBrun informed Dumouriez of his new position, offering the general his full support, asking for his advice on foreign affairs, and promising to continue Dumouriez's policies, therefore providing continuity in French revolutionary foreign policy.[53] The closeness of the two men's collaboration and their mutual devotion to the liberation of Belgium and Liège is reflected in Dumouriez's reply three days later:

> One of the greatest pleasures that could happen to me, my dearest friend and brother, is to see you become minister of foreign affairs and to receive this news from you personally. Yes, you will help me to make the Belgians free and through them to save France and to overwhelm that infamous House of Austria, the cause of our misfortunes. I must be the Commander-in-Chief, and you will see by my letter to the minister of war what items are necessary for the success of my plan. My dear, good friend, I am going to cut you a good political plan with my sword, and I hope you will put me in charge of signing the peace treaty at Liège. You may always count on my patriotism and on my friendship.[54]

Upon his election as minister of foreign affairs, LeBrun, retaining the organization and staff put into place by Dumouriez, would formulate French foreign policy for the next eight turbulent months, with the support of the Executive Council and the Legislative Committees.[55] The foreign ministry remained staffed with supporters of the Belgian plan, with one notable change, the departure of Bonne-Carrère. Bonne-Carrère, the principle figure in the ministry after Dumouriez's resignation as foreign minister, had never gained the support of Brissot. In early August, Brissot influenced the Assembly to deny Bonne-Carrère's appointment as ambassador to the United States, had seals placed on Bonne-Carrère's personal

papers and his correspondence at the foreign ministry, and even tried to have him imprisoned.[56] Immediately upon his election as minister of foreign affairs, LeBrun defended Bonne-Carrère against Brissot in the Legislative Assembly, and the next day he, the chiefs of the six sections, and twenty *commis* wrote to the Assembly proclaiming Bonne-Carrère's innocence. Yet the pressure of the Girondin attack was apparently too great. Bonne-Carrère resigned his post on 15 August, and on 18 September LeBrun would give him a full discharge from his responsibilities in the ministry.[57] Although the Girondins managed to drive Bonne-Carrère from the foreign ministry, LeBrun remained incontestably in control of the ministry.

The very nature of his office allowed LeBrun to exercise a far greater degree of authority than the other ministers. The foreign minister commanded an army of subordinates, including ambassadors, foreign ministry officials, and secret agents, domestic as well as foreign. Taking control of the foreign ministry, LeBrun quickly established a new bureau for intelligence activities, the Central Bureau, under which he created a small but well-organized domestic spy network of approximately 180 agents throughout France. These included approximately thirty new agents operating throughout the frontier regions bordering the Belgian provinces, the Rhine, the Alpes-Maritimes, and the Pyrenees. These agents distributed government literature, attempted to shape opinion along republican lines, and gathered information on the armies' morale and opinions and the sentiment of the commanders and chiefs of staff. They collected intelligence on the enemies' armies and troop dispositions and corresponded regularly with the Central Bureau. LeBrun also sent agents to areas of potential domestic counterrevolution activities—the Vendée, Brittany, Lyon, Marseille, Toulon, and Bordeaux—to report on the degree of agitation in their respective areas. And LeBrun established a "surveillance of Paris" through agents who reported to him on public opinion in the streets, cafés, and clubs as well as in the corridors and meetings of the National Convention, the revolutionary tribunal, and the Palais Royal.[58] Foreign agents were also under the direction of the ministry's Central Bureau, most of them corresponding directly with LeBrun. In both foreign and domestic affairs, LeBrun's ministry would maintain a high level of secrecy that, if justified during a time of war, allowed it to avoid accountability to either the legislative or executive branches of the new government for its actions.[59]

Events following the 10 August Revolution also advanced LeBrun and Dumouriez's Belgian plan by increasing the revolutionary government's commitment to the liberation of other European countries. After the overthrow of the Bourbon monarch, the mood of the Parisian radicals was ebullient, and on 12 August representatives from the Commune proposed to the Assembly a declaration of France's willingness to aid the peoples of Europe to free themselves from royal despotism.[60] As a revolutionary ide-

alist and a sincere republican, LeBrun was certain that the Principles of 1789 would eventually triumph and be adopted by majorities everywhere, and he and Dumouriez were supremely confident that the Belgians and the Liégeois would be in the vanguard of this movement and serve as shining models for other European peoples.[61]

On 18 August, LeBrun sent out a diplomatic circular explaining and justifying the Revolution of 10 August to all of Europe, affirming that it was solely a domestic revolution and as such should not offend neutral European nations, since the result of the Revolution was the suspension of a government that had lost the confidence of the French nation.[62] In his first overview of French foreign relations to the Legislative Assembly on 23 August, he claimed that France's situation vis-à-vis the European powers had not changed significantly since Chambonas's earlier assessment and that France could still depend on the neutral nations to remain neutral. His speech reflected a confidence in the diplomatic position of France that was intended to forestall alarm and preserve revolutionary enthusiasm.[63] On a motion by Girondin deputy Guadet, on 26 August the Legislative Assembly repeated its renunciation of all conquests and its desire to "fraternize with all peoples," reaffirming the nonaggression pledge of revolutionary France to Europe.

The republican revolution also had a dramatic impact on the military front. Dumouriez, heartened by the appointment of LeBrun as minister of foreign affairs and the restoration of the Girondins, immediately wrote to his former Girondist colleagues serving on the Provisional Executive Council and to Condorcet, president of the Extraordinary Commission and of the Legislative Assembly, urging that he be appointed commander in chief of the Army of the North.[64] He again outlined his Belgian strategy for defeating the combined Prussian and Austrian armies and assured the policymakers that when the French armies invaded Belgium and Liège under his command, the inhabitants would revolt against the despised Austrian regime, and that with their aid the French armies would be victorious. Dumouriez told Servan that he needed carte blanche in his movements to profit from "the plans of the Belgians and the Liégeois to establish war in Belgium and Liège and remove it from our frontiers, which are being worn away by this process."[65] He reassured Servan that "the special study of matters that I have been making for the last three years, the detailed knowledge that I have of this department where I was born, which I have just saved, and in which I have confidence, are my justification for the advice that I am giving to my superior."

When Lafayette learned of the overthrow of the king, he followed the provisions of the Constitution of 1791 specifying that in an emergency which destroyed the central executive government, troops of the kingdom could act only at the request of local administrative authorities. Accordingly,

he sought support from the towns of the department of the Ardennes to form a general council at Mézières, believing he could eventually rally all of France behind him through the general councils of the towns. Ultimately he planned to convene a congress of departments at Châlons to oppose the insurrectionary forces of the capital and reinstate the king. The mayor and municipal council of Sedan and the general council of the Ardennes at Mézières allied with Lafayette and took an oath to the Constitution of 1791. The general council of the Ardennes defied the new government by refusing to publish the decrees of the Legislative Assembly after 10 August.

In Paris, the Provisional Executive Council responded quickly to contain the military threat posed by Lafayette and his followers. On 10 August, the Assembly passed a decree to send twelve commissioners to the armies to ensure the loyalty of the French military forces, inform them of the forthcoming convocation of the National Convention, and suspend and replace generals according to their findings. On 14 August, the Provisional Executive Council, while acknowledging that its power over military appointments could not be exercised simultaneously with that delegated by the Assembly to its commissioners, nevertheless took the decisive action of dismissing Lafayette and appointing Dumouriez the new commander in chief of the Army of the North.[66] On 19 August, as Lafayette reviewed his troops, he called upon them to take the oath to the Constitution of 1791. Instead they shouted, "*Vive l'Assemblée!*" The obvious mutiny of his troops forced the general, his chief of staff, and twenty-one officers to defect to the Austrians.[67]

The following day, Commander in Chief Dumouriez wrote to LeBrun, restating his plans for an offensive strike into Belgium and Liège. Supremely confident that the Belgians and Liégeois would revolt against Austria once the French army had invaded their provinces, Dumouriez asked LeBrun to continue to champion their cause in the Executive Council.[68] He also wrote to Roland, Clavière, and the president of the Legislative Assembly expressing gratitude for his new command, expressing special gratitude to Clavière, the interim minister of war, for having confidence in him.[69] In his 18 August letter to the president of the Assembly, Dumouriez proclaimed, "I will be concerned with the noble enterprise of carrying our righteous arms and our liberty into the provinces of our frontiers that are groaning beneath the yoke of despotism—Belgium and Liège. In like manner did the Romans take an army into Africa, while Hannibal was at the gates of Rome. This is the way we will save the French Republic. I need 36,000 men at my disposal, several millions, and carte blanche. I will answer for everything."[70]

CHAPTER 6

Advancing the Belgian Plan, August–November 1792

Upon becoming commander of the Army of the North, Dumouriez lost no time implementing the Belgian plan. Two Belgian-Liégeois legions had been under his authority at the Camp de Maulde since before 10 August, and with the assistance of Maret and other agents and LeBrun's support, he moved to reinforce them with suitable arms and supplies. Maret reported to LeBrun on 13 August that he had expended 200,000 of the 250,000 livres LeBrun had entrusted to him for the legions and that the Belgians were "eager to follow the good cause."[1] Dumouriez made Maret a liaison officer for the legions with responsibility "to coordinate the military measures necessary to increase the strength and resolution of the United Belgian and Liégeois troops."[2] On 23 August, the officers of the legions and the Committee thanked LeBrun for his support, reporting that "the news which has succeeded in reviving us and which gives us complete satisfaction is that our good friend, brave Dumouriez, is coming to take command of the Army of the North."[3]

In late August LeBrun sent Dumouriez an additional 600,000 livres for "Belgian affairs," intended to cover the full expenses of the 2,000 Belgian-Liégeois legionnaires.[4] This and the earlier financial aid that LeBrun directed to the Belgian-Liégeois patriots was questioned only once in the Legislative Assembly, by two deputies who had wanted to stop financial support for the Committee so as to "have the National Assembly dedicate itself again to the principle of the sovereignty and the liberty of nations by making it declare in particular that we will not interfere either directly or indirectly in any change in the Belgian constitution."[5] On the

other hand, Duhem, the Robespierrist deputy from Lille, on 3 September spoke enthusiastically for the "revolutionary war in Brabant." In fact, domestic affairs so preoccupied the Assembly that it gave very little oversight to LeBrun's expenditures. . LeBrun, writing to Dumouriez, reaffirmed their close collaboration on the implementation of the Belgian plan:

> You have taken on a splendid task in concerning yourself with the affairs of the Belgians and the Liégeois; I am quite sure they will add to your fame. They are your children: you will attend to their education, their political and military organization, while I for my part will do what I can to encourage and support your work and their enthusiasm by my influence in the Council and by the monetary means that are at my disposal. I will be only too happy to have helped in removing from slavery a nation that seems destined for liberty and is fortunate enough to have as their *Protector* such a talented man, on whom the whole of France pins its dearest hopes.[6]

From Belgium, Rutteau, the foreign ministry's chief informer in Belgium, urged LeBrun to expedite Dumouriez's plans, claiming that conditions were advantageous for an invasion and that LeBrun could have complete confidence in Dumouriez.[7]

Dumouriez's military intentions were clear and unequivocal: to invade Belgium as soon as possible. Then on 19 August, the Prussian army, supported on both flanks by Austrian contingents, invaded France. By 23 August, the allies had captured the fortress of Longwy and approached Verdun. Victory there would give the allied army an open road to Paris, and the bulk of the French army, still confronting the main Austrian force on the Belgian frontier, was in danger of being outflanked by the Prussians. Despite the fall of Longwy, Dumouriez informed Servan that he was preparing to invade Belgium rather than fight defensively against the Prussians on French soil between the Sambre and Meuse.[8] In response to the immediate danger, Servan argued that Dumouriez should postpone his Belgian plans and concentrate on blocking the Prussian advance on Paris. "The moment of crisis has come," Servan observed, trusting that "with courage and constancy we will see it through."[9]

Unwilling to delay an invasion of Belgium, on 29 August Dumouriez held a council of war at Sedan with Lieutenant-Generals Dillon and Chazot and six other officers, who unanimously rejected Servan's defensive strategy of intercepting the Prussians and adopted Dumouriez's offensive plan.[10] They were convinced by their commander's belief that the Belgian invasion would force the Austrians to withdraw their units accompanying the Prussian forces, leaving the Prussians too weak to continue the invasion of France.[11] Dumouriez urged LeBrun to persuade his fellow ministers to accept the Belgian strategy, which would open the

gates of Brussels and ignite an insurrection that would overwhelm the Austrians:

> The enemy is too well armed and we are too disorganized and have too few troops, too few resources of all kinds to hope to succeed in a defensive war, which is the most difficult of all wars. As for the city of Paris, I think that it is too well guarded by the courage and the number of armed men who will assemble there to fear that it may be taken by the Prussians. All these motives together must be presented by you with the conviction of which you are capable. I repeat once more, my dear friend, that the safety of France lies in the invasion of Belgium and Liège. The longer we put off this expedition, the more difficult it will be to carry it out.[12]

On 1 September, the Executive Council approved Dumouriez's plan. Having expressed his reservations, Servan left the military decision to Dumouriez, recognizing that the general "was above all in a hurry to invade the Austrian Low Countries. This was his dominant thought; it had driven everything else out of his mind. He wanted to take Belgium, this beloved object of his ambition; he desired it ceaselessly and had sacrificed everything to it."[13] Announcing the decision to Dumouriez, Servan stipulated only that he was not to invade until the war ministry had concentrated 30,000 men at Châlons-sur-Marne.

The Executive Council's acceptance of Dumouriez's plan is especially notable considering the increased alarm and violence that the Austro-Prussian invasion had generated in Paris. On 2 September, the Commune dramatically proclaimed that "the enemy is at the gates of Paris," and a rumor swept the city that with the French army at the front, counterrevolutionaries were plotting to free prisoners to massacre the unprotected Parisians.[14] This fear unleashed what came to be known as the September Massacres, the mass murder of Parisian prisoners by a radical minority who sought revenge for royalist resistance on 10 August. Since then, the prisons had become overcrowded and poorly supervised, and in the violence that continued without opposition until the evening of 6 September, some 1,400 prisoners were murdered.[15]

But despite Dumouriez's resolve and careful planning, his Belgian strategy had to be delayed once more when on 29 August Prussian forces under the Duke of Brunswick assaulted Verdun, which would surrender five days later. On 1 September, an Austrian army under the command of General Clerfayt marched into France south of Montmédy. These invaders now stood between Dumouriez's Army of the North at Sedan and the Army of the Center at Metz, whose command was transferred from Luckner to General François-Étienne Kellerman on 2 September.[16] Realizing that the fall of Paris would threaten not only the revolutionary government but his

own military plans, Dumouriez's new strategy included French strikes on the Austrian territories to the south and east. In the south General Anne-Pierre Montesquiou, commander of the Army of the Midi, following Dumouriez's original orders, invaded Savoy on 8 September 1792. General Amselme, his second-in-command, was to conquer Nice. To the east, General Adam-Philippe Custine commanded a corps of the Army of the Rhine stationed in Alsace. When the Duke of Brunswick's forces completely side stepped Alsace, Servan appointed General Biron commander of the Army of the Rhine and Kellermann commander of the Army of the Center and ordered both to combine their forces with Dumouriez's Army of the North to halt the invading Austro-Prussian army. Custine, given command of the new Army of the Vosges, was to remain at Landau in Alsace. Bitterly disappointed with what he considered an inferior command, Custine complained to Servan, who was advised by Dumouriez to have Custine strike the Palatinate at Spires, attacking the rear of Brunswick's forces and cutting off the enemy's major supply line.

On 1 September, Dumouriez's forces left Sedan for the Argonne forest, where he seized its narrow passages and temporarily blocked the allied advance on Paris. Near Sainte-Ménéhould, Kellermann joined Dumouriez, Duval, and the recently appointed Beurnonville, bringing the troops under Dumouriez's command to 53,000, outnumbering the allied army three to two. There the French blocked the road from Verdun to Paris for more than a week, waiting for the Prussians to attack or retreat.[17]

On 17 September, Brunswick tried to dislodge the French by cutting their line of retreat to the south, but the King of Prussia, spurred on by the French *émigrés* and believing that the volunteer French army would be unable to stand against professional soldiers, insisted upon attacking rather than waiting for a French withdrawal.. On 20 September, Brunswick attacked. Kellermann's troops were positioned below a windmill on the heights of Valmy, and as Brunswick's men marched steadily uphill, they could hear over the noise of the artillery the French citizen soldiers singing "*Ça Ira* " and shouting "*Vive la nation!*" During the morning cannonade, the French held their position and replied with effective artillery fire. As the Prussian infantry advanced, the French redoubled their fire. Convinced that he could not fight his way through a superior force in a commanding position, Brunswick broke off the engagement. Dumouriez and Kellermann withdrew to Sainte-Ménéhould and ordered that the roads and fields be wasted should the Prussians attempt a breakthrough. But Brunswick had retreated. The battle of Valmy stopped the Prussian advance, and the fledgling French Republic was saved. The author Goethe, accompanying the Prussian army as an observer, immediately understood that this victory was a critical turning point in both the war and the French Revolution, famously telling the Prussian troops after the battle

that "From this place and this time forth commences a new era in world history, and you can say that you were present at its birth."[18]

After Valmy, Dumouriez could have blocked the Prussian withdrawal and demanded an unconditional surrender from the Prussian king.[19] Instead, he allowed the Prussians to evacuate from France intact, a decision that would later lead to charges of incompetence and treason. But Dumouriez's actions after Valmy, which have long puzzled military historians, are explainable by his commitment to Belgian liberation. He and LeBrun had always believed that they could sever the Prussian-Austrian alliance, negotiate a separate peace with Prussia, and arrange a Franco-Prussian treaty that would guarantee the independence of Belgium and Liège.[20] As early as 3 September, despite the Austro-Prussian invasion of France, LeBrun had instructed Félix Desportes, his minister to the Duchy of Deux-Ponts, to initiate negotiations with Frederick William II of Prussia, his hopes for a Franco-Prussian alliance having been encouraged by Baron von Dohm, Prussia's *chargé d'affaires* at Cologne and an old friend from LeBrun's days in Liège.[21] During the battle of Valmy, Dumouriez captured Jean Lombard, the private secretary of the Prussian king, which he used as a pretext to initiate his own negotiations with the Prussians. On 24 September, he proposed separating Prussia from Austria and concluding a Franco-Prussian alliance that would guarantee Belgian and Liégeois independence.[22]

After Valmy, the Duke of Brunswick and Frederick William II were in a desperate position, knowing that Dumouriez's army could deal them another formidable, perhaps fatal blow. The Prussians therefore agreed to negotiate, and although the Austrians also offered talks, Dumouriez would negotiate only with the Prussians. Yet the Prussians, familiar with his distinguished service in the Seven Year's War and diplomatic corps, misunderstood Dumouriez's overture, assuming that it was possible to negotiate with the new French government on the position and fate of Louis.[23] On this assumption, Colonel Manstein, aide-de-camp to the king of Prussia, met with Dumouriez on 24 September, telling him that Fredrick William wanted neither to continue the war nor to interfere with France's constitution but simply to see Louis freed from prison and given some position in the French government.[24]

Later that day, Dumouriez reported his meeting to LeBrun, assuring him that official negotiations with the Prussians would not begin until he received approval from Paris:

> It is not only battles that have kept me busy, as you will see, my dear LeBrun. I have been pressed several times to take part in meetings by the Prince of Hohenlohe, an Austrian general, and by the king of Prussia. I have utterly rejected the Austrian insinuations, but profiting from the capture of

> a secretary of the king of Prussia, I had him transmit a memoir made by one of my aides-de-camp, M. Fortaire, according to the information I gave him . . . . The document from M. Manstein is not a negotiation and does not commit us to anything, but you can obtain the authority to reply to it, and it is this reply that can contain the basis for a negotiation.[25]

On 26 September, Dumouriez outlined for Servan the terms he had presented to Manstein: that Prussia recognize the French Republic, disengage from its Austrian alliance, and be satisfied with a peaceful intercession in favor of Louis; that the Alsatian princes negotiate a settlement with the French Republic; and, most important for the Belgian plan, that France and Prussia ally to grant freedom to the people of Belgium and Liège.[26] As he assured LeBrun, if "these points could be agreed upon, then the two nations would soon be united by a treaty of alliance that would grant the people of Belgium their liberty."[27] Dumouriez sought support for his Franco-Prussian negotiations from such policy makers as Pétion (president of the newly convened Convention), Danton, and Billaud-Varanne and from Clavière, whom Dumouriez asked to use his considerable influence among the Jacobins and the Convention to ensure that "the brave Belgians win their liberty and we their alliance."[28]

Although Dumouriez could have annihilated the allied armies at Grandpré on 30 September, entering into his decision to allow Brunswick's armies unhindered retreat during these negotiations was his preoccupation with the plans for the Belgian invasion that had been interrupted by the Argonne campaign. He assured Maret that during these negotiations, he continued to concentrate on "their revolutionary plans for Belgium and Liège."[29] Confident that he could negotiate a separate peace and alliance with the Prussians, he sent the greater part of his forces under General Beurnonville north to prepare for the invasion.[30] Kellermann, commander of the Army of the Center, was to escort the allied army to the frontier, and to avoid any interference with his Belgian strategy, Dumouriez ordered him not to pursue the allied army too closely.

During these negotiations, the Convention's 21 September decree proclaiming the first French Republic reached the Prussians. Shocked, the Prussians replied with a "second Brunswick Manifesto," declaring that Prussia would negotiate only with Louis and not until he was restored to the throne. Nonetheless, Dumouriez realized that the negotiations were expedient for the Prussian army, decimated by fever and dysentery and cut off from supplies by roads made impassable from heavy rains. So the Prussian command, vulnerable and eager to avoid another battle, encouraged continued talks.[31] LeBrun and Dumouriez believed that they could now shift the theater of war to Belgium and Liège while giving the Prussian negotiations time to bear fruit. As foreign minister, LeBrun made these

negotiations his top priority, reasoning that once France had made a separate peace with Prussia, Austria would be defeated and Belgian and Liégeois independence secured.[32] He was confident that once the "symbol of repression" was defeated in the Belgian provinces, future republics could be established, leading to a durable European peace. Thus he supported Dumouriez's diplomacy, directing him "to agree to preliminary guidelines to facilitate the Prussians' departure from France."[33]

To consolidate his control over the execution of his military plans, Dumouriez asked Servan to appoint him commander-in-chief of the French armies so as to prosecute the war under a unified command.[34] Servan, however, had resigned on 30 September, making LeBrun interim minister of war as well as minister of foreign affairs. LeBrun promptly gave Dumouriez command over General Labordonnaye's Army of the North, General Beuronville's Army of the Center, and General Valence's Army of the Ardennes, collectively now called the Army of Belgium.[35] Dumouriez was now so confident of conquering Belgium within the month that he told General Biron that he would "spend his carnival season in Brussels."[36]

LeBrun convinced the Executive Council that a Franco-Prussian alliance was possible and would enable France to defeat Austria quickly, and on 6 October the Executive Council ordered Dumouriez to invade and "free the oppressed Belgians."[37] The next day, a euphoric LeBrun wrote to Dumouriez that he had the ministers' full support and to proceed with the Belgian invasion immediately, "for glory awaits you. You are going to give freedom to your brothers and friends who are waiting for you. You will be their father after liberating them."[38]

Dumouriez's victory at Valmy had soon been followed by Montesquiou and Anselme's conquest of Savoy and Nice in late September and then by Custine's successful invasion of the Rhineland, which by 23 October had advanced as far as Frankfurt-am-Main. By early October the war to defend the Revolution had become offensive. Everywhere counterrevolutionary armies were in retreat. France, faced with almost certain defeat before the National Convention met for the first time on 21 September, had become a conquering power.

On 10 October, Dumouriez received a hero's welcome in Paris, where he had returned to discuss war strategy with the Executive Council. On 12 October, he grandly proclaimed to the Convention that he would soon free the Belgians and Liégeois, and the Executive Council voted him unlimited powers for his Belgian war.[39] Dumouriez's favorable reception and popular acclaim boded well for the Belgian plan. LeBrun promised that his army would be well supplied and equipped, and Dumouriez expressed appreciation for all that LeBrun had done and reaffirmed their close friendship and common goals.[40]

LeBrun continued negotiations with the Prussian government through October, still believing that they would produce a separate peace with Prussia, isolate Austria, and become the basis for an eventual quadruple alliance among France, Prussia, Great Britain, and the United Provinces. Except for Marat's *Journal de la République* and *Révolutions de Paris,* the Parisian press and the Executive Council supported negotiations with the Prussians.[41] Brunswick, recognizing the necessity of these negotiations in avoiding open conflict while on French soil, allowed his French escorts, Generals Kellermann and Valence, to believe that he would negotiate a Franco-Prussian alliance if granted free passage to the Franco-German border. Valence reported to Dumouriez that Brunswick had suggested a general armistice, to which he had responded that the French would negotiate on two conditions: Prussia must recognize the French Republic, and the Belgian provinces must be freed from Austrian control and recognized as a republic.[42] Dumouriez supported Valence's proposals and promised Brunswick that the fate of the French king, not yet put on trial, was negotiable.[43]

On 23 October, the Prussian Army crossed the Franco-German frontier accompanied by three salvos of French artillery. On 25 October, with the Prussians safe within the borders of the Empire, a peace conference met at Longwy. To negotiate with Kellerman and Valence, Brunswick was accompanied by the Prince of Hohenlohe-Kirchberg, an Austrian general, and two representatives sent by Prussian Prime Minister Haugwitz—the Prince of Reuss, the Austrian ambassador to Berlin, and the Marquis of Lucchesini, a former Prussian ambassador to Warsaw and confidant of Frederick William II.[44] When Kellermann suggested that the terms of peace include recognition of the French Republic and a hands-off policy with respect to the French king, the allied representatives requested time to discuss them, maintaining that they had agreed to negotiate only a general peace. Lucchesini then declared that further negotiations were useless because the French plan involved dividing the Austro-Prussian alliance and Austria's loss of the Belgian provinces, neither of which was acceptable to Prussia.[45] When Valence apprised Dumouriez that the negotiations had broken down, Dumouriez ordered him to return to his army and prepare for the Belgian invasion.[46]

Although Prussia's Frederick William II had been discouraged by the humiliating defeat at Valmy and retreat from France, he had never intended to break his alliance with the Hapsburg emperor. The Prussians had seized on the French eagerness for a Prussian alliance to evacuate their army intact and to use the negotiations as leverage in dealing with Austria. Even as the talks at Longwy were underway, Spielmann, the Austrian envoy, met with Frederick William and Haugwitz at Merle in Luxembourg to press for a future commitment to the war against France. But Haugwitz

declared that Prussia would continue to champion the cause of Louis only if all the European monarchs joined the anti-French coalition and the Empire formally declared war on France. Otherwise, he threatened, Prussia would withdraw most of its military support of Austria unless compensated immediately with Polish territory.[47] The Austrian emperor, recognizing that Austria could not support the war alone, reluctantly agreed to the Prussian demands, and the Austro-Prussian alliance was reinsured.[48]

Despite the breakdown of negotiations, LeBrun remained determined to gain a Prussian alliance, working through his secret agent, Mettra, to initiate further negotiations with von Dohm, now the Prussian minister-resident at Cologne.[49] LeBrun's agents Mandrillon and the Count de Geroni also approached Lucchesini about continued Franco-Prussian negotiations. These attempts failed when the Prussian king demanded assurances regarding the safety of the royal family and ordered von Dohm not to engage in any discussions with the French that referred to Austria.[50]

But the military success of the young French Republic and the failure of the counterrevolutionary cause had forced the allies to abandon their justification for the war. Without hope of restoring the French monarchy, Mercy-Argenteau observed, the war now seemed pointless.[51] Yet territorial compensation remained negotiable. Mercy-Argenteau wanted war to continue to safeguard Austrian control of Belgium and Liège so as to exchange them for Bavaria, while Prussia sought territorial compensation in Poland. Meanwhile, Great Britain maintained its strict neutrality despite the success of the French armies, and by late October the British cabinet was considering formally recognizing the French Republic.

In Paris, the National Convention had held its first session on 21 September, the day after the victory at Valmy. Despite the rejoicing over Dumouriez's victory, France faced overwhelming problems. Although the Convention had proclaimed a republic, France did not yet have a republican constitution. The government was, in effect, the National Convention, a body of 749 contentious deputies who debated and decided all legislative issues, leaving LeBrun and the other ministers of the Provisional Executive Council to carry on the executive functions with or without consultation.

Inefficiency and confusion reigned. The deputies elected a new president each month and, apart from the uncoordinated activities of special committees, had no apparatus for making immediate policy decisions. Responsibility was collective, and the floor of the Convention was in a perpetual state of disorder.[52] A constant flow of petitioners, patriotic demonstrations, and mob rowdiness from the galleries plagued the deputies.[53] The growing antagonism between the Girondins and the Montagnards, the radical Jacobins who sat in the upper benches of the Convention, disrupted their attempts to govern. Personal animosities, opposing attitudes

toward Paris, and the fight for control of the government were protracted and bitter, a continuation of the Robespierre-Brissot struggle that had developed during the Legislative Assembly. It was heightened when Robespierre had attempted to arrest Brissot and Roland during the September Massacres in an abortive attempt to remove them from power.[54]

The Girondins occupied the major positions on the Convention's special committees, having profited from their experience in the Legislative Assembly and their talents as speakers and writers. The most influential faction during the first five months of the republic, they sought to stabilize the government, preserve order, consolidate power, and moderate domestic policy.[55] In the Convention and the press, the Girondins attacked the Montagnard leaders, Robespierre, Marat, and Danton, as dangerous radicals seeking to reduce France to social, economic, and political chaos and establish a Paris-centered dictatorship. But neither group dominated the Convention, and to establish a stable government the Girondins needed the support of the majority in the Convention, whom the deputies referred to as "the Plain."

Conversely, the Montagnards were convinced that the Girondins would ultimately betray the Revolution and maintain their supremacy in the Convention by allying with reactionary forces. They abhorred the Girondin emphasis on local initiative rather than centralized government, and drew their strongest support from the Paris Commune and the forty-eight sections, largely dominated by the *sans-culottes.* The political and economic aspirations of the sections were often in conflict with those of the national government, and their growing power and independence during late 1792 and early 1793 intensified the friction between the two factions. The Girondins' attacks on Parisian influence on national politics and its assumption of political independence only solidified the alliance of the Montagnards and *sans-culottes.* The influential Montagnard press included Marat's *Ami du peuple* and Prudhomme's *Révolutions de Paris,* the most widely read paper in Paris and throughout France.[56]

On 16 October, the radical members of the Jacobin Club expelled Brissot and other prominent Girondins, and the breach between the two factions became open political warfare consisting of shrill personal attacks and continual interruptions of debates and calls for roll-call votes, reducing the Convention to deadlock and stalling legislation. In this hostile atmosphere, the Convention began proceedings to try the king, which now became the focal point of the Girondin-Montagnard battle.

Heightening the factional strife was France's worsening economic situation, especially in Paris. The steadily increasing requisitioning for the army contributed to the growing inflation and grain shortages that plagued France. These, along with lagging wages and unemployment, caused great

hardships for the *sans-culottes,* resulting in further riots and demonstrations. Wartime economic dislocations also caused considerable unrest in the provinces and insurrections in Chartres, Blois, Vendôme, Nogent-le-Rotrou, Le Mans, and Tours.[57] Although the Legislative Assembly had authorized emergency price controls in September, the Convention voted to discontinue them and ordered troops to restore order throughout the country.

Overwhelmed with these pressing domestic issues, the deputies debated foreign-policy issues but did not decide them. Consequently, LeBrun as foreign minister almost unilaterally formulated foreign policy and guided it through the Provisional Executive Council and the Diplomatic Committee of the Convention. The Diplomatic Committee reported to the Convention only after the Executive Council had already approved decisions that were then exposed to the harangues and political manipulations of the Convention's leaders, the irresponsible maneuvering of the factions, and the popular enthusiasm of the deputies, most of whom lacked experience in foreign affairs. Although the legislative record makes the French foreign policy of the time appear improvised and chaotic, it followed a consistent direction that reflected LeBrun's resolve.[58] The Girondins and Montagnards did not differ essentially on these issues and reached consensus on LeBrun's foreign policy. Robespierre's earlier opposition to the war had been expedient, not principled, and after the overthrow of Louis, neither he, Danton, nor Marat, could afford to court unpopularity by opposing the war.[59] LeBrun and Dumouriez had powerful allies in both factions, and the Montagnard *Révolutions de Paris* echoed support for LeBrun's policies.[60]

On 24 October, the Executive Council once again approved Dumouriez's strategy for conquering Belgium and Liège, even though it risked expanding the war to include the major powers of Europe. The French justification for war (like that of the allies) had also shifted, as a Belgian invasion was no longer necessary for the defense of France and the Revolution, which the French armies had clearly settled. Instead of continuing the war, France could have chosen to compromise with the Austro-Prussian coalition and conclude an armistice recognizing the partition of Poland and a Belgian-Bavarian exchange. But such a compromise would have been antithetical to LeBrun and Dumouriez's Belgian plan and was ideologically unacceptable to the majority of deputies, and thus the continuation of the war was never in doubt or debated in Paris. On 26 October, Dumouriez issued his manifesto to the Belgians promising to deliver them from Austrian tyranny, respect their rights, and allow them to establish a government based on popular sovereignty. "Belgians!" he wrote, "We are brothers; our cause is the same."[61] The Executive Committee's decree of 24

October and Dumouriez's manifesto, submitted to the Convention on 1 November, were unanimously adopted. The Belgian plan had become official French policy.

Continuation of the war and the invasion of the Belgian provinces were universally supported by the deputies, justified as a spontaneous appeal to the peoples of Europe against the "coalition of crowns." The absence of resistance to the advance of the revolutionary armies and the enthusiastic welcome of the French as liberators in Savoy and in the Rhineland cities confirmed the view that the Revolution was exportable and welcomed. The Principles of 1789, the ideological underpinning of the French Revolution, now shaped French foreign as well as domestic policy. Apostles of universal liberty such as Anacharsis Cloots and Camille Desmoulins promoted the moral regeneration of Europe through unlimited revolution. Revolutionary fervor and confidence intensified after Valmy and permeated the political clubs, the journals, the army, and public opinion. Deputies spoke with a revolutionary vocabulary and manner of expression that, as sincere as it may have been, soon also became part of the politics of survival: One must pay homage to it whether one believed it or not. Both factions continued to support the war as long as they could see it as a moral ideological struggle between liberty and despotism.

LeBrun and Dumouriez benefited from this highly charged atmosphere, as it allowed them to pursue a policy that would liberate Belgium and Liège and create an independent Belgian Republic.[62] As foreign minister, LeBrun could depend upon the powerful rationale of revolutionary ideology, the most influential general of the republic, and the well-organized Belgian and Liégeois patriots in the pursuit of his policies. LeBrun had made the decision and gained its acceptance; the Council, backed by the Convention, had cleared the way; and Dumouriez acted to implement it.

Dumouriez had left Paris on 18 October to begin his Belgian military campaign. After receiving a tumultuous accolade in Cambrai, his birthplace, he arrived at Valenciennes, headquarters of the Army of Belgium, on 20 October. As commander in chief, Dumouriez ordered General Labourdonnaye, named commander of the Army of the North on 4 November, to invade Belgium through Tournai. General Valence, commander of the Army of the Ardennes, would march on Namur. Dumouriez, leading his Army of Belgium, reinforced by the two Belgian-Liégeois corps, would attack Mons.[63]

Near Mons, Dumouriez's forces faced an Austrian army commanded by Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen, less than half its size, firmly entrenched on the heights of Jemappes. On 6 November, Dumouriez's dense columns broke through the thin Austrian lines and, despite heavy losses, won the battle of Jemappes. Dumouriez himself led his soldiers, armed with pikes and chanting the "Marseillaise." The aftermath of the battle was staggering. The Aus-

trian army retreated in panic along roads already choked with priests and nobles fleeing the approaching French scourge. The battle of Jemappes was the first in which the French used the revolutionary tactics of mass assault, later improved by Lazare Carnot and perfected by Napoleon. Valmy had been a defensive victory, gained largely by the superiority of French artillery. Jemappes was an offensive victory, carried by the sheer weight of men and numbers. Jemappes, with its promising consequences for the French Republic, made a profound impression on the other European powers.[64]

Dumouriez advanced rapidly into Belgium, meeting only token resistance, and took Brussels on 14 November. Deshacquets, who accompanied Dumouriez throughout the conquest, described Dumouriez's joyful entrance into Brussels: "This morning, our troops entered in the midst of the cheering of the people, whose support is manifest in their joy and gratitude."[65] By the time Dumouriez's army entered Liège on 27 November, the Liégeois patriots had already instigated a successful second Liégeois Revolution.[66] The conquest of the Belgian provinces was completed when General Miranda and his forces reached the Scheldt and seized Antwerp on 29 November. In one month, Dumouriez's troops had occupied Liège and all of the Belgian provinces except heavily fortified Luxembourg.[67]

In Paris, the effect of the victory at Jemappes was electric, and the news was greeted with jubilation. Vergniaud, addressing the Convention on 9 November, was exultant: "Sing, sing the victory that will be for all humanity! Men perished, but their deaths will prevent other deaths. In the name of the universal brotherhood that you will establish, I swear that each of your battles will be a step toward peace, humanity, and the happiness of all peoples." Dumouriez's victory was a decisive defeat for the concert of crowns. The deputies' vision of a new Europe freed from feudal custom and tyrannical oppression, each country peaceful and responsible for its own well-being and prosperity, seemed on the verge of realization.[68]

Foreign Minister LeBrun was so elated by the victory at Jemappes that he named his newborn daughter Civilis-Victoire-Jemappes-Dumouriez. LeBrun congratulated Dumouriez on his triumph, courage, and contribution to the liberty of the Belgians.[69] He urged the general and his forces to immediately take the next step of their Belgian plan by establishing a revolutionary authority in Belgium and Liège to replace all administrators and authoritative bodies with freely elected justices of the peace and provisional municipal governments, to convoke assemblies to establish a government for the new republic, and to organize an active and a reserve Belgian military force. His joy and his close partnership with Dumouriez were evident:

> My only regret is not to be able to be there with you and with them to join my enthusiasm to yours, but I hope that in the name of friendship you will

let me know all that happens. You can count on my punctuality in answering you letter for letter. You know of my interest in this great revolution—an interest that I share with you; and you can count on every means in my power and on my reputation in the Council to facilitate the glorious task that was kept for you. I will be so happy if I can see the Belgians and the Liégeois permanently and perfectly granted their freedom. This is the one and only reward I covet for my zeal and solicitude.

CHAPTER 7

Stalemate in the Belgian Provinces, November–December 1792

Following the victory at Jemappes, Dumouriez, LeBrun, and the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois immediately put into action their administrative and political plans for the establishment of an independent Belgian Republic. On 8 November, just two days after his defeat of the Austrians, Dumouriez issued another manifesto to the Belgians proclaiming that they would be free to organize a new government as they wished, on the condition that it be decided upon by representatives elected from the entire nation.[1] The first step was to be the democratic election of provisional representatives, replacing the Austrian administration with new local and provincial governments to manage public funds and rapidly organize a national army to replace the conquering French troops. Once all the Belgian provinces were liberated and had established local administrations, the Belgians would elect a national assembly to devise a constitution based on popular sovereignty. The obvious intent of this plan was to prevent the former administrations and the estates, which represented only the privileged classes, from reassuming power even provisionally.

That this plan and its execution was a result of close collaboration and extensive planning among Dumouriez, LeBrun, and the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois is clear from their ample correspondence.[2] On 3 November, LeBrun informed Cornet de Grez, the Vonckist leader with whom he was coordinating implementation inside the Belgian provinces, that the Executive Council had approved allowing the Belgians to adopt a constitution ensuring liberty, equality, and popular sovereignty, adding "You know my long-standing attachment to the glorious cause that

you serve, and you can be sure that under any circumstances I will keep on serving with all my power and with the same zeal that I showed during the first revolution in Liège, and perhaps with better results."[3] Maret had conferred with Vonck on 4 November at Lille and then joined Dumouriez at Valenciennes to coordinate their plans for Belgium and Liège, reporting to LeBrun that Dumouriez had "showed me all of his political projects for Belgium. I could almost imagine that he was reporting the talks we had in Paris with you, Digneffe, and Walckiers. All of his ideas correspond to ours."[4]

Their plan included the immediate establishment of a French agency to help organize new local administrations within occupied Belgium and distribute republican literature to educate the Belgian people in republican ideals.[5] As the French army advanced, the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, veterans of the 1789 revolutions and experienced in covert efforts to democratize the Belgian provinces after the Austrian reconquest of 1790, successfully set up municipal and provincial administrations in all parts of the occupied territories. They organized the election of representatives to municipal assemblies at Mons on 8 November and Tournai on 15 November, following procedures established by the French agency.[6] Dumouriez, LeBrun, and their agents understood the enormous effort required to overcome Statist opposition to their goal of transforming Belgium into a democratic republic. To that end, LeBrun told the Committee, they could not use force to make the provinces adopt a republican constitution but were free to use all political means of persuasion.[7] Lieutenant-Colonel Bourdois worked in Hainaut, Pierre Chépy in Flanders, and Charles Metman in Brussels, while Alexander Courtois traveled throughout Belgium. In Mons, Tournai, and Brussels they established temporary local administrations supported by French occupation forces. A flurry of political activity thus followed Dumouriez's army as it liberated the rest of Belgium and Liège.

On 17 November, Dumouriez, having occupied Brussels, proclaimed the sovereignty of the Belgian people.[8] On 18 November, the people of Brussels elected a provisional municipal government, which the next day called upon other local and provincial administrations to join them in organizing a Belgian army and the nation's finances.[9] The list of provisional representatives elected in Brussels represented a great victory for the patriots, as it included primarily Vonckist leaders and patriots, including Walckiers, Torfs, Verlooy, Rosières, and Cornet de Grez, all members of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois.[10]

Most of the communes of Hainaut, Tournaisis, Namur, Flanders, and West Flanders quickly elected provisional municipal administrations. Elections were held on 19 November in Tournaisis and West Flanders, on 21 November in Hainaut, on 28 November in Flanders, and on 5 December

in Namur.[11] All the provisional assemblies, having declared their independence from Austria, were animated by an enthusiastic patriotism.[12] There remained just one final step: organizing a national convention that would create a united Belgian and Liégeois Republic.

On 25 November, the Brussels assembly sent deputies to Paris to express the gratitude of the Belgian people to the National Convention and to request that France formally recognize Belgian-Liégeois independence. On 4 December, Torfs read a statement he had written with Walkiers, Balza, and LeBrun to the Convention in the name of the Belgian and Liégeois people.[13] Declaring that "the rumor that the Belgians and Liégeois were not ready for their independence was false," he asked the deputies to officially recognize the Belgian Republic and to refuse to conclude treaties with nations that did not recognize Belgian independence. The Convention immediately adopted the proposed decree, its president telling the Belgian people that "Our treaty of alliance and reciprocal protection is written by nature's hand. . . . You have friends, brothers, and support here."

In the month following Jemappes, the work of LeBrun, Dumouriez, the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois and the French agents and Belgian patriots, had resulted in most of the towns of Hainaut, Tournaisis, Namur, Flanders, and West Flanders favoring the election of a national convention that would establish a democratic Belgian government.[14] Cornet de Grez praised LeBrun for championing the rights of his people and declared that Dumouriez's efforts had made him a Belgian national hero.[15]

Although Belgian support for the French invasion was strong, it was not unqualified. In the autumn of 1792, Belgians may have been largely united in their hatred of Austria and their desire to be liberated from Hapsburg control, but they were still divided socially and politically. This was especially true in Brabant, the center of Statist sentiment, where political divisions appeared early. On 14 November, Deshacquets wrote to LeBrun that he feared that Belgium would soon again "be troubled by this miserable partisan spirit that splits the Belgians into Vonckists and van der Nootists. The cockades already show a distinction. A [Statist] answer to the manifesto Dumouriez gave in Mons is already circulating; in it, they pretend that nothing must be reformed in the constitution, that is, they want to keep their monks and their Estates."[16] On 20 November, an anonymous Vonckist warned LeBrun that the reactionary hold of the Statists over the Brabançons was very strong and that they were again deceiving the Belgians by claiming that the Joyous Entry, the traditional constitution of Brabant, protected everyone's rights. Statists were strongly opposed to the general election of a Belgian national convention as Dumouriez insisted.[17] Instead, van der Noot recommended a constitutional monarchy under a prince to be chosen from the House of Orange, Brandenburg, or Hanover

to govern under the Joyous Entry. In his congratulatory letter of 26 November to Dumouriez, he predicted that because the Belgians were not as politically advanced as the French, democracy would fail in Belgium.[18]

After the initial rapid organization of the new city government of Brussels, it appeared that all Brabant would soon be caught up in the flurry of reform sweeping the other Belgian provinces and Liège.[19] By late November, however, Brussels was the only Brabançon town to have accepted a democratic basis for a national government, the hostility to reform having slowed the pace of the elections and sabotaged efforts to establish democratic local governments.[20] During November, the Statists gained more ground, and by early December the inhabitants of Antwerp, Louvain, Vilvorde, and Tirlemont voted to maintain the supremacy of the estates and the Joyous Entry and to "live and die in the Holy Catholic Church."[21] When the Brabançon conservatives outside Brussels refused to modify their stand on the power of the estates, agents of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois pressed many of the Brabançon towns to hold a second round of elections. The results were equally unsatisfactory. Those elected to local governments in Brabant stubbornly refused to cooperate with Brussels, effectively preventing the organization of a provincial assembly and undermining the Brussels council's efforts to establish a national constitutional convention.[22]

LeBrun, doing everything in his power to establish popular sovereignty in Belgium and Liège, took the radical step of convincing the Executive Council and then the National Convention to open the Scheldt River to international trade. (16 November decree) Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the Scheldt, which connected the Belgian city of Antwerp to the sea, had been closed to international commerce to protect the economic interests of the United Provinces. That policy, which had turned Amsterdam into a major financial and commercial center and Belgium into an economic backwater, had been ratified by the Great Powers five times in the eighteenth century, most recently by Britain, the United Provinces, Prussia, and Austria at the 1790 conferences at Reichenbach and The Hague. Although LeBrun understood the international implications of declaring the opening of the Scheldt, he took those risks hoping to thereby unite the Belgians behind the creation of a united republic.[23] As he explained to the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, his purpose was to win the friendship of the people of Antwerp, who were strongly opposed to democratic principles. A strong advocate of free trade, LeBrun believed the measure would ensure Belgian prosperity and that the Belgians would be grateful to the French for reestablishing their commercial vitality.[24]

Yet even this bold step was not sufficient to stem the rising conservative tide in Brabant. On 8 December, a coalition of Brabançon Vonckists led by Verlooy, faced with the impasse created by Statist resistance to a consti-

tutional convention and fearing that delay would strengthen the Statists' support and forestall the election of a preponderantly democratic convention, asked Dumouriez to authorize the newly elected provisional representatives to serve as deputies to the convention rather than hold additional elections.[25] Dumouriez rejected Verlooy's proposal, however, believing that the government created under this plan would not adequately represent moderate elements in Belgium, and on 12 December called for elections to a Belgian national convention to meet at Alost on 9 January 1793.[26] His decision was strongly influenced by his old friend Cornet de Grez, who favored new elections for a national convention as the best way to get the aristocratic Statists to cooperate with the Vonckists in the reorganization of Belgium. De Grez was optimistic that the Statists, having learned from the mistakes of 1790, would resolve their differences with the Vonckists in the best interests of an independent Belgium.[27] But the Statist triumph in Brabant now doomed any reconciliation between the two factions elsewhere in Belgium, as the Brabançon Statists energetically propagandized the other provinces for their program and by early December were successful in winning additional elections.

To counter their influence, LeBrun had urged Dumouriez since before the occupation of Brussels to march quickly to Liège and liberate the Liégeois, believing that together the Liégeois and Vonckists could outweigh the opposition of the Brabant Estates in the creation of a united republic. LeBrun pressed Dumouriez to wage a decisive war against the Austrians to reassure the Belgians and Liégeois that they would never again have to fear an Austrian reconquest. Only then, LeBrun maintained, would they be free to complete the civil and military organization of the new republic.[28] On 28 November, an exuberant Dumouriez had announced to LeBrun that he had at last liberated the Liégeois.[29]

The Belgian plan had proceeded smoothly in Liège after its liberation because of its established tradition of popular sovereignty and the collective memory of its Revolution of 1789. Strong pro-French sentiment, the presence of Dumouriez's occupation army under General Thouvenot, and the work of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, notably that of Fabry, all helped considerably. By the end of November, Dumouriez called on the Liégeois, whom he called the "grenadiers of the Belgian Revolution," to convoke primary assemblies in their communes to elect deputies to a Liégeois national convention. Dumouriez and LeBrun were convinced that the rapid formation of a democratic government in Liège in December would overcome the opposition of the proponents of provincial separatism and the autonomy of the estates reasserting themselves throughout Belgium.[30]

But by this time, Dumouriez's efforts to unite the Belgians were also being threatened by the deteriorating condition of his army and opposition

to his Belgian strategy in Paris. Dumouriez most vehemently protested the attempt of Jean Nicholas Pache, named minister of war on 18 October, to reorganize the provisioning of the French armies. Traditionally, each general was responsible for seeing to the provisioning of his own army, and Dumouriez had tailored his political and economic occupation policy to encourage the Belgians to choose a popular government. From the beginning of the French occupation of Belgium and Liège, he had prohibited his officers from making requisitions on the local population. After liberating Brussels, he had announced that he would stimulate the Belgian economy by buying all supplies from Belgian contractors. He ordered the officers to pay for all purchases in numéraire (specie, or hard currency backed by gold) rather than in French assignats (paper money whose value fluctuated because of currency speculation after 1789), as Belgian confidence in the unstable assignat was understandably low. Dumouriez was also counting on a "voluntary" loan of 40,000,000 florins from the Belgian clergy to cover occupation expenses and assumed that the new Belgian Republic would pay his remaining debts at the end of the war.[31]

Pache, however, wanted to create a central agency coordinated from Paris to oversee the provisioning of all French armies and relieve generals of this responsibility. Accordingly, on 10 November, Pache, together with Monge, the minister of justice, and Clavière, the minister of finance, had created a Directory of Purchases.[32] Pache, hoping to bolster the ailing French economy, then refused to authorize the purchases of some of Dumouriez's Belgian contractors and commissioners. The new Directory of Purchases also abrogated all contracts between Dumouriez's commissioners and Belgian suppliers for provisioning his army. Dumouriez vehemently objected to the creation of the Directory of Purchases, calling its directors "speculators and monopolists."[33] Nevertheless, the Directory took over all military supplies, buying exclusively from French suppliers and failing to fulfill its supply orders, causing severe shortages for the French armies in Belgium.[34]

In late November, Dumouriez desperately appealed to Henri Baptiste Grégoire, president of the Convention, for help in relieving his army's miserable condition. Comparing the condition of his army in Belgium to the well-supplied, fully equipped army he had commanded before Valmy in September, he wrote that "we suddenly lack stores, paymasters, and hospitals" and that conditions had become as woeful as those he had reported to the Assembly in June when he had accepted appointment as minister of war.[35] Grégoire read Dumouriez's letter to the Convention, which sent it to the joint War and Finance committees for investigation.

Meanwhile, Pache had gone so far as to order the arrest of three of Dumouriez's war contractors—d'Espagnac, Malus, and Petit Jean—on charges of profiteering.[36] They were summoned to Paris and interrogated

at the bar of the Convention on 1 December. D'Espagnac, speaking for all three, argued their innocence so persuasively that the deputies applauded his speech and exonerated them of all charges.

In early December, Dumouriez again complained bitterly to the policymakers in Paris about his army's deteriorating condition.[37] At the foreign ministry, an alarmed LeBrun urged Pache to hasten supplies to the French forces in Belgium and sent Rouhière, an official in the ministry and a trusted friend, to assess the condition of the army in Belgium and the morale of its commander in chief.[38] From Belgium, Rouhière described in depressing detail Dumouriez's anger and frustration over the terrible condition of his army: "I tell you with sorrow, you cannot imagine from afar the miserable conditions of the army and the position of the brave man who leads it. You have to be there, to see and be distressed."[39] Rouhière, too, blamed the Ministry of War and pleaded with LeBrun to champion Dumouriez's cause in the Executive Council.

Dumouriez presented his case directly to the Convention, enclosing his entire correspondence with the minister.[40] Dumouriez's dispute with Pache, joined by other angry French commanders, further inflamed the factional struggle between the Montagnards and the Girondins.[41] The Montagnards rallied to support Pache, while the Girondins demanded that he be called before the Convention to explain his neglect of the French armies. Not until 9 December did Pache present a report explaining his actions to the Convention, which was sent to the War and Finance committees for investigation.

Dumouriez's case was supported by an investigation ordered by the Executive Council, who at the end of November had sent Camus, Delacroix, Gossin, and Danton to Dumouriez's headquarters in Brussels to examine the inconsistencies between his charges and Pache and Clavière's reponses. En route the commissioners observed that troop morale was high, but confirmed that the army was in a deplorable condition. Reaching Brussels, they were so appalled at the lack of clothing, blankets, and forage in Dumouriez's headquarters that they rushed Camus back to Paris to make an urgent appeal to the Convention for action.[42] Speaking before the Convention on 12 December, Camus confirmed the problems uncovered by the commissioners: The French armies in Belgium lacked the bare essentials in equipment, food, and clothing, and desertions were depleting their ranks. As Camus was appearing before the Convention, General Thouvenot was arguing Dumouriez's case against Pache before the Executive Council.

The grave supply problem was further complicated by the failure of Dumouriez's financial policy in Belgium. His decision to use numéraire for supplies and paying his troops had proven prohibitively costly, as the French lost more than half of their war funding by exchanging assignats

for the gold and silver with which they paid the Belgians. In the eyes of the deputies, France was being drained of specie and her precarious economy exposed to the incalculable strain of a further fall in the value of the assignat, and Dumouriez was increasingly forced to pay Belgian suppliers with the reviled assignats. The Belgian clergy had not been eager to furnish the loan he had counted on to solve this problem, and Camus estimated that only 10 percent of it had yet been raised.[43] Belgian resentment over the requested loans and French paper money rose, and those who had supplies withheld them from sale, increasing shortages even more. Back in France, the costs of war and Dumouriez's financial difficulties in Belgium were placing a great strain on the French Republic's finances. Extraordinary war expenditures reached 60,000,000 livres in the first half of December.[44] The Executive Council met on 14 December with the combined Diplomatic, War, and Finance committees to review the Belgian situation and French occupation policies. First on the agenda was the commissioners' report on the condition of the armies in Belgium.

Pache's opposition to Dumouriez's Belgian strategy was military as well as financial. Before the general's successful invasion and occupation of the Belgian provinces and Liège, the then new minister of war had ordered Dumouriez to instead pursue and defeat the Austro-Prussian army in the Rhineland.[45] Dumouriez had refused:

> We are compelled to the Belgian war no less by considerations of interest than by a desire to promote the progress of reason and philosophy. All despots are quite positively our enemies; but only one is very dangerous: he is the head of the House of Austria. He feels a personal hatred against us, grounded in the huge loss he suffered upon our liberation; in his vanity, outraged by Antoinette; and finally in the fact that the contact between our territories left his ambition and greed no choice but either to subjugate them as in the past, or to give up some of his best provinces in losing the Low Countries.
>
> On this basis, as foreign minister, I isolated Austria from her allies. On this basis I brought about war and all the campaign plans. My defense in the Ardennes and my offensive in the Low Countries ought to give you confidence in my plans.[46]

At that time, Dumouriez had gained support for his Belgian strategy from the Executive Council, and by the time he responded to Pache, his conquest of Belgium and Liège had become a *fait accompli* and immensely popular in Paris. Nevertheless, by late November, after the conquest of Liège, Pache was once again urging Dumouriez to invade the Rhineland, join Custine's army, and deliver the *coup de grâce* to the Austro-Prussian forces.[47]

Instead, Dumouriez wanted to next seize the Dutch fortress of Maestricht and conquer Holland, both to gain access to the resources of the

prosperous United Provinces to support his army and to create a "sister republic" or liberated buffer between Belgium and the declared enemies of France. Despite their mutual devotion to the Belgian plan, on 28 November LeBrun protested to Dumouriez that he feared a French invasion of Holland would bring its ally Britain into the war, a development LeBrun was at the time attempting to avoid through diplomatic channels.[48] Yet Dumouriez insisted on the Dutch invasion, telling the foreign minister that recent conferences with the Batavian committee of exiled Dutch patriots had persuaded him that an invasion would ignite a revolution in the Dutch Netherlands and that the French victory over the Stadholder's regime would be so rapid that Britain would not have time to enter the war before it was over.[49] Besides, Dumouriez added, according to the intelligence that had reached him, Britain itself was near revolution because of the failure of Pitt's parliamentary reform bills. Therefore, he argued, he must attack the United Provinces as soon as possible, as by the following spring all of Europe would be allied against France, creating a "formidable league that could crush us." The conquest of the United Provinces was essential to the independence of Belgium and Liège: "The Treaty of The Hague is a sword suspended over Belgium; let us break this Treaty by delivering Holland and creating a French ally." For the time being, however, LeBrun continued to oppose the invasion of Holland in the interest of maintaining British and Dutch neutrality, and the Executive Council supported him.[50]

The French conquests and occupation of foreign territory had not only radically altered France's position in the war but also raised a series of largely unanticipated practical and political problems affecting its relationships with foreign governments and nationalities. A major problem facing the French occupation was who should finance the liberation of these territories. The deputies, aware that General Custine had alienated the Rhinelanders by forcing them to pay for his occupation, nonetheless recognized that France could not support her armies on foreign territories by themselves indefinitely. There also was the question of whether France should force the circulation of assignats in the conquered territories and incur additional hostility from their inhabitants.

The occupation raised the political and ideological question of France's obligation to protect and support patriots in the conquered areas who had actively aided the French occupiers and wished to institute democracy there against powerful local resistance. If France withdrew its troops from the occupied areas, those patriots would become victims of the counterrevolutionary forces, and the French, having encouraged revolt and the establishment of regimes based on popular sovereignty, seemed obligated to protect them and their fledgling revolutionary governments. The Convention was faced with a dilemma. Coercive action by the French republican

armies to establish democratic governments and to recover from the occupied peoples the cost of liberating and protecting them would contradict the revolutionary government's declared renunciation of wars of conquest and the doctrine of popular sovereignty, but the French could not allow the initiative to pass to counterrevolutionary forces as was happening in Belgium. Because of these apparent contradictions, the revolutionary government faced increasing international indignation and hostility from neutral nations. For this dilemma the Convention could find no simple solution.

These problems were brought to the fore by requests for annexation from Nice and the Rhineland that the Convention received in November. They feared possible reconquest by their former oppressors. On 4 November, two members of the Society of the Defenders of Liberty and Equality of Nice appeared before the deputies and petitioned for annexation to France. On 3, 15, and 18 November, the Convention also heard appeals from representatives from the Rhineland urging it to decree that France would aid all oppressed people desiring to overthrow their tyrannical rulers. In the words of Philippe-Jacques Rühl, a deputy from Alsace, because "France, not content with having broken her own irons, broke those of other people and raised everywhere altars of liberty, . . . it is necessary that she take with them the sacred engagements of defending them with all the strength of the Republic."

These annexation requests were sent to the Diplomatic and Constitution Committees, where they were ultimately rejected on the grounds that requests for "reunion" with France could be considered only if submitted by properly constituted primary electoral assemblies.[51] Although this action was consistent with France's renunciation of conquests and the principle of self-determination, the deputies looked for other ways short of annexation in which they might support the democratic movements within its occupied territories. On19 November, La Reveillière-Lépaux, representing the committees, recommended that the Convention adopt the following decree in response to requests for aid from other nations: "The National Convention declares, in the name of the French nation, that it will grant fraternity and assistance to all peoples who wish to recover their liberty; and charges the executive power to give the generals the necessary orders for bringing aid to such peoples and to defend citizens who have been or who might be, harassed for the cause of liberty." The deputies, beset with their own factional battles and the on-the-ground problems of the occupation, seem not to have anticipated that, out of context, the decree appeared an appeal for universal insurrection: a challenge, backed by the promise of armed intervention, to all of *ancien régime* Europe, without distinguishing between neutral and belligerent powers.

The hostile reactions to the 19 November decree from the neutral capitals of Europe prompted LeBrun to more fully explain its intent.[52] In a 19 December speech before the Convention, the foreign minister insisted the decree applied only to territories threatened or occupied by countries engaged in war with France, not to neutral counties, where the French would never support the cause of a few isolated individuals calling for revolution. The decree would apply to neutral powers only if their peoples independently "broke their chains" and constituted themselves so that their "general will" could be clearly expressed. If they then sought aid and fraternity, the French would listen. LeBrun's interpretation of the decree, consistent with France's attempt to establish an independent Belgian Republic by democratic processes, was intended to mollify the outrage of the neutral nations and thus contain the war. The deputies received LeBrun's speech with enthusiastic applause.

That the 19 November decree was not intended to announce a policy of expansionism by the Convention, as other nations feared and most historians have argued, is illustrated by the deputies' responses to the annexation requests from Savoy and Geneva that followed. In October, popularly elected representatives to a National Savoyard Assembly had overwhelmingly voted to request annexation to France, which was formally presented to the Convention on 21 November. The ideological implications of the request occasioned considerable debate and soul-searching among the deputies. Either France must accept the express will of the Savoyard communes, annex the territory, and open itself to the charge of expansionism, or reject it and repudiate its own doctrine of national self-determination. In late November, Grégoire, speaking for the Diplomatic and Constitution Committees, introduced a decree accepting the annexation of Savoy in which he reconciled annexation with the principle of undertaking no conquests by declaring that it was not an arbitrary act of aggrandizement but a measure dictated by reason, justice, and national self-determination. In renouncing conquests, argued Grégoire, "We have not declared that we will repulse from our breast those men who are so close to us by the affinity of principles and interests, and who by a free choice, desire to have themselves identified with us." Although the French had not solicited requests for annexation from Savoy and many deputies were in fact hostile to the idea, a refusal would compromise the revolutionary principle of national self-determination. Thus Grégoire, echoing the language of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, promised the Savoyards that their union, their liberty, and their popular sovereignty "will be as durable as your mountains, immutable as the sky which hears us." Thus this annexation was motivated not by the decree of 19 November but by an earlier free plebiscite of the Savoyards—not by an expansionist ideology but by the press of external events.[53]

Also arguing against an expansionist interpretation was the deputies' endorsement of LeBrun's opposition to the exiled Genevan democrats' demand for French annexation of Geneva.[54] Annexation, LeBrun argued, could alienate neutral nations and complicate one of his foreign policy goals, keeping Austria from gaining additional allies. "Speaking of the liberated peoples," he stated, "we must not take advantage of the first burst of enthusiasm that leads them to join us."[55] The French policy toward Geneva reflected LeBrun's intention to placate the Swiss Confederation, as its neutrality was crucial to the success of his foreign policy and the French war effort. Above all, the foreign minister wanted to forestall an expansion of the war.

But the decree of 19 November still left the committees with the problem of how to support the revolutionary patriots in the Belgian provinces. On 12 December, Camus reported before the Convention that the supply crisis in occupied Belgium had became intolerable and that drastic measures were necessary to check counterrevolutionary forces there. This now spurred the deputies to formulate a detailed and uniform occupation policy. On 15 December, Pierre-Joseph Cambon, acting for the War, Finance, and Diplomatic Committees, responded to Camus's report by introducing a decree specifying the policies to be followed by the French generals in occupied territories.[56] Cambon's decree of 15 December, a direct response to the political and financial situation in Belgium, declared that since people in occupied lands had neither the means nor experience necessary to destroy their despots and privileged classes, France must help them secure their liberty:

> Brothers and friends, we have gained liberty and we shall maintain it. We offer to help you enjoy this inestimable good that has always belonged to us, and of which our oppressors have not been able to deprive us without crime. We have expelled your tyrants: show yourselves free men, and we will guarantee you from their vengeance, their designs, and their return.
>
> Henceforth the French nation proclaims the sovereignty of the people, the suppression of all civil and military authorities that have governed you up to the present, and . . . proclaims also the abolition among you of all prerogatives and privileges that are contrary to equality. You are henceforth, brothers and friends, all citizens, all equal in rights, and all equally summoned to govern, to serve, and to defend your *Patrie.*

This decree differed from Dumouriez's earlier promise of self-determination by clarifying that France was unwilling to see its efforts to free the Belgian provinces devolve into the restoration of a Statist government aligned with the Great Powers. It effectively nullified the earlier pro-

visional elections by calling for new primary elections in which, according to Article 3 of the decree, "All agents and civil or military officials of the former government, as well as individuals heretofore considered noble, or members of any corporation heretofore privileged, shall be, for this time only, inadmissible to vote in the primary or communal assemblies, and they may not be elected to positions in the provincial administration or judiciary." These new governments would be established through popular elections, not through French manipulation or control, although the occupied people would not be allowed to reconstitute their old regimes under French patronage. Paris would send commissioners to aid reconstruction but instruct them only to "fraternize" with the occupied peoples, not coerce them. Working with local administrators, they would provide for the defense of the newly freed country, ensure provisions and foodstuffs for the army, and decide on the means to pay the expenses incurred by the French. To accomplish this, assignats would be circulated in the occupied lands, and the properties of the old rulers and their supporters would be put under the safeguard of the French nation until turned over to the newly constituted democratic governments, who would use them as collateral to guarantee loans taken to repay the French for their liberation. In other words, the French were to hold enemy properties only temporarily, as trustees for the permanent regimes created by the proposed elections.

Responding in particular to the military and political situation in Belgium, the 15 December decree announced a more interventionist policy on the part of the French revolutionary government and qualified the doctrine of national self-determination that had guided its relations with foreign lands. It did, however, leave intact the principle of popular sovereignty in that French noninterference with popular elections would leave the local inhabitants free to carry out the revolution that the French had begun. Dumouriez and LeBrun had convinced the deputies that, with their help, the Belgians could successfully create a democratic government. Finding the current impasse unacceptable, the French policymakers believed themselves obliged in time of war to impose an outside solution to the problems of political reorganization of occupied territories.

The Convention clearly intended the decree of 15 December to resolve France's financial bind in Belgium by forcing the occupied lands to shoulder some of the costs of the war and to relieve the worst inflationary pressures on the assignat. Yet it was not as brutally exploitive as often claimed.[57] It did not order massive confiscations of Belgian wealth or renounce the principle of national self-determination. Its intention was to raise no more money than necessary to compensate France for the costs of war and liberation. In Cambon's words before the Convention, "We shall take nothing; we shall preserve everything for the necessary costs of a revolution." While the decree outlined a reform program for occupied territories that

would prove objectionable to the occupied peoples, no viable alternative had been produced on the local level in Belgium.

LeBrun helped plan and implement the decree of 15 December to ensure the success of the threatened Belgian project. From his correspondence with his agents, the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, and Dumouriez, he had concluded, as he wrote Chépy, that the principles of liberty and equality would not be adopted in Brabant without French aid and that the threat of an expanded war made the immediate organization of Belgium and Liège mandatory.[58] He expected that, under the conditions set forth by the decree, the organization of a Belgian National Convention would take only about a month. Still convinced that with French help the Belgians would establish an independent democratic republic, LeBrun believed the text and intention of the decree were consistent with the Belgian plan and just in time to save it.

Another mitigating and overlooked aspect of the decree of 15 December is the Convention's delay in implementing it. On 20 December, the Executive Council appointed twenty commissioners to execute the decree, but by the end of the year still had not issued them orders. Influential opposition to the decree, in and out of France, apparently made the ministers hesitate. Brissot, for instance, opposed the decree on the grounds that its provisions for the destruction of the *ancien régime* should have been ratified by the Belgians themselves and that it was seen by other Europeans as an attempt to organize insurrections everywhere and to invade territories for French profit.[59] Such foreign policy considerations contributed to a delay in the official publication of the decree in Belgium. The British were becoming increasingly belligerent in their stance toward France, and LeBrun, attempting to improve relations with them diplomatically, did not wish to further inflame the situation with an apparent threat to other nations.

Dumouriez, too, was having second thoughts about the wisdom of the decree. Initially concurring that the decree would complement their attempt to establish a Belgian Republic, he wrote to Pache requesting more copies of the decree and agreeing to proclaim and enforce it.[60] As he explained, Dumouriez viewed most of the decree as consistent with the steps he had already taken to establish a new Belgian government based on popular sovereignty:

> The administrative bodies have been charged, and the magistrates chosen by the people. Some have named their former magistrates. This I could not hinder. I, however, dissolved the Estates in all provinces, particularly in Brabant. In the midst of my military toils, I published an address to the people of which many copies in French and Flemish were sent to all the municipalities. That address was to prepare the minds of the people before convoking them in their primary assemblies. I transmitted to Brussels six

days ago a proclamation with instructions for the holding of primary assemblies.

I was not then aware of the decree of 15 December as it had been passed. But as both the proclamation and the instructions were in the genuine spirit of liberty, equality, and the sovereignty of the people, I shall have no change to make upon them but only to add to the proclamation by a circular letter the third article of the decree, with a request to all primary assemblies to comply with it.

Only after strong Belgian opposition to the decree did Dumouriez turn against it. To be sure, many Jacobin societies in Belgium and Liège had received the decree of 15 December with enthusiasm, indicating continued support for the creation of a Belgian democracy among revolutionary militants. The popular societies of Bruges, Mons, Tournai, and Brussels sent congratulations to the Convention for passing the decree, and some municipal governments, such as those of Char-sur-Sambre, Mons, Ghent, and Liège, offered their support of the measure.[61] But there was also immediate and virulent opposition to the decree among most Belgians, especially from the newly elected assemblies that would be replaced by the new elections called for in the decree, for the first time leading to dissention between the mostly Vonckist provisional representatives and their French liberators. As of 21 December, the Vonckist provisional representatives of Brussels sent messengers to the provisional assemblies of the major Belgian cities urging them to protest the decree of 15 December to the National Convention and to Dumouriez.[62]

In Paris, almost daily protests from the provisional assemblies reached the Convention. On 23 December, Namur's assembly protested the decree; the next day the Brussels assembly wrote a vehement protest signed by its Vonckist president, Théodore Dotrenge, and sent Sandlin to appear before the National Convention.[63] Among the Brussels representatives, only Walckiers supported the decree.[64] Many Belgian citizens expressed their opposition by petitioning Dumouriez's generals. On 24 December, the citizens of Antwerp protested the decree to General Marasse. Over the next few days both General Thouvenot and General Harville wrote to Dumouriez of overwhelming opposition to the decree.[65] By 29 December, the provisional assemblies of Tournai, Courtrai, Antwerp, Louvain, Malines, Audenarde, Menin, Ypres, and Bruges had all registered protestations to the French National Convention. In Paris, LeBrun and the other French policymakers were genuinely surprised by the vehemence of the Belgian protests, having assumed that the 15 December decree would help the Belgian democrats create a Belgian Republic. Now Belgian opposition led the Executive Council to officially delay imposing the decree.

This delay gave Dumouriez time to carry out his original plan for the election of representatives to a national Belgian Convention, where he believed the Vonckists and Statists would be able to reconcile their differences and create a viable republican government. On 17 December Dumouriez, announcing that the elections would proceed as planned, appealed to the Belgian people to "listen to your natural feelings; they already tell you that you are free and equal citizens. Be brothers, be now and ever united, and you will thus succeed in having a wise government, and you will become a strong and happy people. Then the French Republic, now your friend, will become your ally."[66] But the adverse Belgian reaction to the 15 December decree, especially among his Vonckist allies, had disconcerted Dumouriez and convinced him that it must be revoked. Unsure how to proceed, he requested a leave of absence to go to Paris to speak to the Convention about the condition of his army and plans for future campaigns.[67] On 26 December, Chépy reported to LeBrun that "General Dumouriez sets out for Paris tomorrow and I had a meeting with him but with no result: he remains puzzled, confused, and has no definite plan. He can now only oppose the decree of 15 December."[68]

Following Dumouriez's call for the election of representatives to the Belgian National Convention, administrations were successfully organized to supervise the voting in every province except Brabant, where the Statists' refusal to compromise with the Vonckists continued to delay the elections for the provincial Brabant assembly. Since their defeat in the 18 November Brussels elections, the Statists had concentrated on building an even larger constituency, and when the provincial elections were finally held on 29 December, they won overwhelmingly in all the primary assemblies, including Brussels.[69] As a result, the Belgian capital finally joined the rest of Brabant in requesting the restoration of the Brabançon Estates and the Joyous Entry and immediately issued a proclamation denouncing the "despised" French decree of 15 December.[70]

The Statist triumph in Brabant made doubtful the viability of any Vonckist-Statist reconciliation in the other Belgian provinces. The Brabançon refusal to create a Belgian Republic based on the sovereignty of the people for which Dumouriez, LeBrun, and the Belgian and Liégeois patriots had worked so long ended their belief that the Belgians could themselves create a democratic republic. The French, unwilling to sponsor a nondemocratic Belgian government, had been driven to issue the 15 December decree, which had only served to unify Belgian opposition. Immediately upon the 29 December elections, Metman and the commissioners to Dumouriez's army cancelled the election of deputies to the National Convention, apparently on the supposition that the Statists would have won control of the new national government.[71] But Dumouriez, as determined as ever that the Belgians should choose democracy voluntarily,

resolved to have the decree rescinded, and by 1 January 1793, he was in Paris to plead his case.

At the foreign ministry, LeBrun learned of the strong Belgian opposition to the 15 December decree from Dumouriez, his agents, and the Belgians themselves.[72] On 1 January 1793, the Curé Lys, his agent and old friend, unaware of LeBrun's role in shaping the decree, wrote to him that "The author of this impudent decree must have known nothing about Belgium and its inhabitants. He probably ignored that this obstinate and warlike people withstood an eighty-year war against the kings of Spain who had infringed upon their rights."[73] From Brussels, Ruelle claimed that the fear of changing the constitution of their fathers spread by the Statists had convinced the Belgians to defend the Joyous Entry and all the privileges it sanctified, and that to become a democracy, Belgium would have to depend entirely on France.[74] Pierre Proli urged LeBrun to reconcile with the Belgians as quickly as possible: "I think, and all the Belgians think, too, that the decree of 15 December contradicts General Dumouriez's declarations. That decree has made a very bad impression on the majority of the Belgians. You must press by all possible means the convening of the Belgian national convention, the majority of which, composed of representatives of the two Flanders, Hainaut, Limbourg, Gueldre, and Tournai, will be perfectly in line with the French Revolution and French principles."[75]

As 1792 drew to a close, the intransigence of the Belgian conservatives and the policies outlined in the 19 November and 15 December decrees had left French policymakers and the architects of the Belgian plan still without a successful strategy for creating a democratic government in Belgium.

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CHAPTER 8

Efforts to Prevent a Wider War, January 1793

Dumouriez arrived in Paris on 1 January 1793 with four goals: to have the decree of 15 December revoked, Pache replaced as minister of war, the Directory of Purchases abolished, and his invasion of the United Provinces approved. A week later, the general presented his written arguments for each of these aims to the deputies of the Convention, who referred them to the Executive Council. LeBrun and the other ministers discussed the reports extensively with Dumouriez on 9 and 10 January.[1]

In the first of these reports, Dumouriez argued that enforcing the decree of 15 December would alienate the Belgians entirely from the French. He had promised the Belgians that, according to the principle of popular sovereignty, they would constitute their own government, and under that condition the Belgians had received the French as liberators and brothers. But the Belgians saw this new decree as a despotic action dictated by conquerors. "The sacred law of freedom and equality cannot be preached like the Koran with a saber in hand," Dumouriez argued; "The Belgian people themselves must feel all the advantages resulting from this destruction and change [the situation] according to their understanding and interests; in a word, they must exercise this act of sovereignty that does not belong to us; since, according to our principles, we must not and can never be conquerors." Forcing the December decree upon them, he warned, would lead to civil war in Belgium and an Austrian reconquest.

His other reports continued his accusations against Pache. Dumouriez had already sent the Convention his correspondence to demonstrate the duplicity and incompetence of Pache and the Directory of Purchases, and his second and third documents called for the minister's dismissal and the

Directory's termination. Requesting carte blanche to again provision his army through Belgian suppliers, he assured the policymakers that this method of supplying his troops was both efficient and important to Franco-Belgian relations.[2] Dumouriez's fourth report was a repudiation of the Pache-Custine Rhine strategy to defeat the Austro-Prussian forces within the empire. Rejecting Pache's plan as absurd, he asked the policymakers to approve his own strategy of invading the United Provinces and to give him the means to implement it.

As Dumouriez made his urgent appeals, the Convention continued to be rent by factional strife between the Girondins and Montagnards. The trial of the king had intensified the bitterness and polarization between them and by January had almost paralyzed the Convention's proceedings. On 26 December, the Convention had found Louis XVI guilty of treason, though leaving his punishment still to be decided. The Girondins now attempted to save the king's life by securing the support of moderates and having his fate submitted to a national referendum, while the Montagnards, with the support of Paris and the *sans-culottes,* demanded his execution. Captain Munro, a secret British agent in Paris, described the poisonous atmosphere of the Convention to Foreign Secretary Grenville:

> The National Convention is now so torn to pieces by party and their time so much taken up with abusing each other that the King's business is attended to but by starts. This is, no doubt, done by one party with the intention of gaining time. The different departments may express their sentiments in favor of his majesty and I am happy to find this plan begins to succeed and that some of them have already presented addresses to the Convention requesting the resignation of Robespierre, Marat, Chabot, Merlin, and some others ("Robespierre's party"). The people of Paris are at present quiet, and I flatter myself there is a party strong enough to protect the lives of their Majesties in case Robespierre's party should arm his banditti against them. But from every appearance at present, assassinations are more likely to take place in the Convention than anywhere else; in effect to avoid that, I understand the deputies of both parties in general carry concealed arms.[3]

A key Girondin argument was that the king's execution would unite all Europe against the republic. On 31 December, Vergniaud warned that although England and Spain had so far remained aloof from the alliance against France for fear of precipitating Louis's death, his execution would most certainly end their neutrality and provide a pretext for joining the allies. Brissot argued that if the king were executed, England, Spain, Holland, and all the tyrants of Europe would join the concert against France.

LeBrun, too, feared that extreme measures against the king would produce a hostile reaction from the neutral powers. The French ambassador

to Madrid, Jean-Francois Bourgoing, had repeatedly warned LeBrun that Spain's neutrality was contingent on the safety of the royal family, and on 26 December the Spanish *chargé d'affaires* in Paris, Count Ocariz, read an appeal for the king's life to the Convention.[4] From London, LeBrun's agents had warned throughout the autumn that whatever restraining influence the British public might have on British policy toward France would be lost if the king were executed.[5] LeBrun consistently held that the deputies, as representatives of the French nation, had the right to judge Louis XVI and that "no foreign power should intervene in the decision which it will take," even as he argued that the Convention "was bound to show the king a great example of mercy and generosity."[6]

To the Montagnards, however, Louis XVI was a traitor to the Revolution and a continued threat to their security. Robespierre best articulated the Montagnard position in his speech to the Convention on 28 December: "If the king is not guilty, those who have overthrown him are." For the Montagnards, the choice was simple—the king should be executed as soon as possible. They believed the Girondin reluctance to condemn the king indicated counterrevolutionary sympathies, and at the Jacobin Club on 9 January, Robespierre went so far as to call Brissot a "pensioner of the foreign powers and Pitt's paid agent."[7]

With the factions locked in a vicious power struggle over the fate of the king and, ultimately, for control of the Convention, LeBrun continued to conduct foreign policy largely on his own. The Executive Council, itself brought almost to a standstill by an acrimonious feud between Roland and Pache,[8] continued to defer to LeBrun's leadership in foreign affairs, and his good relations with the Convention's committees and key Girondin leaders ensured the Convention's support of him as well. While Dumouriez lobbied for his military plans to save the Belgian plan, LeBrun focused his efforts on maintaining the neutrality of Great Britain and its Dutch ally, which had become all the more important with the collapse of the Prussian negotiations.

The invasion of Belgium that fall had alarmed the British, who had guaranteed Austrian control of the Belgian provinces at The Hague in 1790, but because the French invasion could be justified as defensive, had chosen not to use it as a pretext to declare war on France.[9] As Dumouriez had proceeded to conquer Belgium, however, the British grew increasingly concerned about the security of the United Provinces, their chief ally and primary commercial link with Europe. On 13 November, they had announced their commitment to defend the Dutch Netherlands and warned France against invading Dutch territory or encouraging the Dutch Batavian Party to foment a French-inspired revolution there.[10] Before this British warning could reach Paris, France had declared its decision to open the Scheldt River to international trade and to allow French troops to pursue

the retreating Austrian army into Dutch territory, which the British and Dutch considered aggressive acts.

Contributing to a more hostile position toward France was the outbreak of domestic unrest across Great Britain following the news of Dumouriez's victory at Jemappes on 6 November, as English policymakers were convinced that French military success and propaganda were fueling the parliamentary reform movement among the British working classes. Seeing the French Republic as an increasing threat to Britain's domestic tranquility and economic interests in Europe, Lord Grenville, the British foreign secretary, commenced a secret inquiry to find out the intentions of the other European powers, especially Prussia, Austria, and Spain, and to propose that together they "enter into the most confidential communication for the sake of European tranquility and their mutual advantage."[11]

After the French Republic had been proclaimed, LeBrun's diplomatic efforts to preserve British neutrality were hampered by several factors. Not the least of these was diplomatic isolation. Following the Revolution of 10 August, most countries had withdrawn their ambassadors from Paris and French diplomats had lost their official status in foreign capitals. Great Britain, though reaffirming its policy of neutrality, had severed diplomatic relations with France by recalling her ambassador, Lord Gower. François Chauvelin, appointed the French minister plenipotentiary to Britain by Dumouriez in March, had remained in London but only in an unofficial capacity. Accordingly, official communication between the two nations had become impossible and informal communication difficult. To deal with this diplomatic impasse, LeBrun had adopted a dual policy of unofficial diplomacy between Chauvelin and the British foreign office and of covert intelligence gathering and propaganda activities by French secret agents.[12]

This already difficult diplomatic situation was worsened by Chauvelin's outspoken republican enthusiasm and associations with Whig newspaper editors and politicians, which had alienated Grenville, the Tory foreign secretary.[13] Although LeBrun's agents informed him of Chauvelin's testy relations with the British minister and even urged his replacement, the very sources of Chauvelin's difficulties with Grenville had won him the support of key Jacobins in Paris. He also had strong ties with Dumouriez, who had served under his father in the conquest of Corsica, and was married to the sister of Walckiers, with whom LeBrun had founded the Committee of the United Belgians and Liégeois.[14]

Despite the French foreign ministry's official policy of open diplomacy, LeBrun had found that wartime conditions and France's changed diplomatic status after 10 August made secret diplomacy and covert operations necessary. Under the direction of his trusted friend François Noël, LeBrun

employed a cadre of secret agents in intelligence-gathering and propaganda activities to favorably influence British public opinion and politicians toward republican France. As Chauvelin's diplomacy became increasingly ineffective, LeBrun had come to rely more heavily on these agents, creating confusion and dissension within the French embassy that further undermined Chauvelin's position.[15] Although Grenville had dispatched his own secret agents to Paris,[16] the activities of LeBrun's agents heightened the suspicion and hostility of the British government toward France.

Furthermore, LeBrun's correspondence with Chauvelin and his secret agents indicates that their inexperience and dependence on unreliable sources of information resulted in a misperception of the political situation in the British Isles. Given their own revolutionary experience, they equated the British parliamentary reform movement with French republicanism and believed that the growth of the democratic movement in Britain, at its height that fall, would lead to a full-scale British revolution, not recognizing that British reformers sought change through the British constitutional tradition, not revolution.[17] Thus they sent LeBrun distorted reports of Britain's domestic scene, describing bread riots and strikes as potentially revolutionary events. By late November, LeBrun had become convinced that a strong pro-French sentiment prevailed in England and that revolution was at hand. He formulated his foreign policy accordingly, further alienating the British cabinet.

Playing a major role in the deteriorating Franco-British relations was the uneasy situation of the United Provinces. In 1786, Dutch patriots had overthrown the Orangist regime under the stadholder, William V, only to have the regime restored in 1788 by English gold and the Prussian army. The regime remained weak, however, and by 1792 was facing considerable internal opposition. Its political instability and the commercial and financial interests it shared with Britain had made the Dutch Republic a British satellite. William V had become a figurehead, and together the grand pensionary of Holland, Laurens Pieter van de Spiegel, and the British ambassador, Lord Auckland (William Eden), determined Dutch foreign policy.[18]

Although the Dutch had remained neutral toward France following 10 August, the ruling circle had been alarmed by Dumouriez's victory at Jemappes and subsequent conquest of Belgium and Liège. Auckland predicted that soon "The malignant disposition of the French leaders will undoubtedly direct itself toward this country. They will be urged to do so by their whole system of policy and by the number of notoriously factitious people in the different towns of the Dutch Republic."[19] The Dutch and British were also concerned about French support for the exiled Dutch patriots in Belgium, Liège, and France, many of whom had returned to

the Dutch Republic to form a small but effective patriot party. That fall, with LeBrun's support, Dutch patriots in Paris had formed the Batavian Revolutionary Committee and drawn up a constitution for a future Dutch democratic government. They, following the model of the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, had established contact with patriots within the United Provinces to foment a popular revolution following the anticipated French invasion.[20] Despite his commitment to liberty, however, in December LeBrun had withdrawn his support of the Dutch patriots' cause when it became evident that an invasion of the United Provinces would bring Britain into the war, endangering the more important cause of Belgian independence.[21]

Despite Britain's guarantee to protect Dutch sovereignty and France's assurances of its peaceful intentions through LeBrun's secret agent, Mevrouw d'Aedlers, van de Spiegel continued to fear invasion by Dumouriez's forces.[22] To stall for time to strengthen Dutch border defenses and possibly avoid war altogether, in mid-November van de Spiegel and Auckland had asked Grenville to "ascertain how far it is possible to effect an entire cessation of hostilities" and suggested negotiating with the French through Dumouriez, believing that the aristocratic general was sympathetic to the Bourbon cause and would wish to avoid an expanded war.[23] But Dumouriez had no intention of negotiating with the British and the Dutch and giving up his invasion plans. Confident of victory and of Britain's imminent collapse, he wrote to LeBrun:

> We are handling the English with too much fear and favor. If we look at their situation, we shall see that the government, which hates us, is held back only by the fear of failing in the plan of declaring war on us because it knows perfectly well that the moment of this declaration will be that of its fall, of parliamentary reform, which will take place sooner or later anyway, and finally of a revolution that is heating up at this moment and will explode even faster that ours and will have more success and force.[24]

A further threat to British neutrality had been the Convention's decree of 19 November, which reached England on 26 November amid popular protest. To British policymakers, the decree proclaimed the expansion of revolution everywhere, making no distinction between neutral and belligerent nations, and justified what Grenville called "the activity and insolence of the French emissaries and their allies in this country," to which they attributed much of their internal unrest.[25] In response, on 1 December George III called out the militia to deal with the domestic crisis, issued a proclamation of danger, and summoned Parliament to request emergency measures to augment the country's land and sea forces.[26] While policymakers in Paris awaited revolution in Great Britain, the British min-

isters in London responded as if revolution had already broken out. Once the British government sounded the alarm against the French threat and the "radicals" in their midst, the country united behind the government of Prime Minister William Pitt, leading to the Tories' overwhelming electoral victory on 12 December and effectively ending the radical reform movement in Britain.

Although the British now considered war with France inevitable, they nevertheless agreed to unofficial negotiations so as to gain time to prepare for war and further sound out the allies. At the end of November, Grenville had reluctantly agreed to talks with Chauvelin, which broke down over Chauvelin's defense of the Scheldt decree. But in early December, with LeBrun's old friend William Miles as an intermediary, Pitt agreed to meet with Maret, then on a special mission to London, to express the British government's objections to both the Scheldt and the 19 November decrees. Maret had left their interview convinced of the prime minister's desire to maintain peace between the two countries, and Pitt requested that Maret serve as LeBrun's agent in future negotiations. But LeBrun, convinced that Britain's domestic situation would soon lead it to recognize the French Republic and Chauvelin as its official ambassador, persuaded the Executive Council to retain Chauvelin as the French representative.[27]

Although suspicious of LeBrun's intentions and angered by his decision not to replace Chauvelin as negotiator, Pitt met with Chauvelin on 14 December. After listening to Chauvelin's explanation of French foreign policy, including an assurance that France would not attempt to revolutionize the Dutch Republic by force, the prime minister only responded that Great Britain would not recognize the French Republic nor Chauvelin as an accredited ambassador.[28] Immediately understanding that the British position had hardened toward France, Chauvelin sent a special courier to warn LeBrun that strong support for the Tories in the recent parliamentary elections had removed a major obstacle to war, that the British had stepped up their military preparations and launched a propaganda campaign against republican France, and that the Scheldt decree would be England's pretext for a declaration of war on France.[29] Noël, though convinced by his conversations with Miles that Pitt genuinely wanted to avoid war with France, also reported signs of military preparations that suggested Britain was anticipating a break with France and strongly urged LeBrun to have the Scheldt decree repealed and to replace Chauvelin with Maret to continue Franco-British negotiations.[30]

Yet LeBrun was not about to change his mind about the Scheldt decree, which he considered essential to the success of the Belgian plan. He restated this commitment in a 19 December speech to the National Convention, even as he attempted to ease tensions between the two countries.

Reporting that the panic of the British ruling class had led the British ministers to call Parliament and to pass repressive domestic measures and naval rearmament in the Channel, he assured the deputies that he had instructed Chauvelin to persuade the British ministers "of the futility of the grievances which they seek to hold against us." Responding to British objections to his foreign policy, LeBrun characterized the reopening of the Scheldt as of little actual consequence to Dutch and British trade and explained that the fraternal support offered by the decree of 19 November would not apply to neutral powers unless sought by a popularly elected government. His misreading of the domestic British situation is reflected in his announcement that if the British government did not find his explanations adequate, the French would make a solemn appeal directly to the English nation: "We will bring before the court of its justice and generosity the examination of a cause in which it may become possible to see a great nation sustain the rights of nature, of justice, of liberty and of equality against a Ministry which had only taken up this quarrel for motives of mere personal convenience. Finally, we will make the English nation judge between us and it, and the examination of these trials may bring about consequences which it has not foreseen." This statement of French foreign policy was met with a resounding ovation in the Convention and with praise in the Parisian press.[31]

The content and tone of LeBrun's speech indicates that he had not yet received Chauvelin's dispatches regarding his interview with Pitt, Noël's warnings, or an account of the outcome of Parliament's debates in support of the Tory ministry. LeBrun had based his policy decisions on the false belief that, given its desperate circumstances, Britain would soon come to terms with France. He had dismissed warnings that the British were preparing for war and that France must rescind the Scheldt decree to restore peaceful relations. Because his most important foreign policy objective was the establishment of an independent Belgian Republic, LeBrun could not make the one compromise that would ensure British neutrality and prevent the expansion of the war against France.

Not yet recognizing the significant shift in the British position toward France, LeBrun retained Chauvelin at his post and on 20 December pressed him to reopen negotiations with the British ministry.[32] Accordingly, on 27 December Chauvelin wrote to Whitehall requesting an interview with Grenville, enclosing LeBrun's 19 December policy statement and instructions reaffirming France's desire to establish formal diplomatic relations and avoid a rupture with Great Britain.[33] Chauvelin's note reassured Grenville that France would not attack the United Provinces and that the 19 November decree was aimed only at hostile countries, though describing the Scheldt decree as "a question irrevocably decided by reason

and by justice, of small importance in itself, and on which the opinion of England, and of Holland, is sufficiently known to render it difficult or seriously to make it the single subject of war."

This confirmation of LeBrun's intransigent stance on the Scheldt decree and the British receipt of the decree of 15 December, which it saw as justifying an exploitive occupation, led Grenville to refuse any conciliatory overtures on behalf of the French Republic or even to meet with Chauvelin. By the end of December, Grenville appeared convinced that there was no peaceful solution to the difficulties that had arisen between the two nations, indicating as much to Auckland in a dispatch of 28 December urging him to hasten Dutch preparations for war.[34] On 31 December, Grenville again enumerated the French actions that the British found most objectionable in a note that reflected the fundamental ideological conflict between the French and British positions.[35] While LeBrun based his foreign policy on assumptions drawn from revolutionary ideology, Grenville's foreign policy rested squarely on *ancien régime* power politics. The British Cabinet understood that the foundation of international relations and law was being undermined by unilateral French actions based on a higher "natural" law. In the case of the Scheldt decree, the British government could not allow France to unilaterally abrogate an international treaty or consider an agreement void if it did not conform to so-called natural laws. It also objected to the continuing occupation of Belgium and Liège, heightened by rumors of their impending annexation; if France were sincerely interested in peace with Britain, she "must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and confine herself within her own territory."[36] While LeBrun believed that the French Republic, as Europe's most enlightened nation, had a responsibility to spread the Principles of 1789, the British government considered this subversive and antithetical to British interests. Traditional British diplomacy could never be reconciled with LeBrun's revolutionary foreign policy.

Grenville had also stepped up his efforts to form alliances on the continent, reasoning that until Britain and the United Provinces had time to deploy their military forces, a French attack on the United Provinces could be met only by the Austrian and Prussian forces already in the field. Emphasizing that the chief motive for Britain's intervention on the Continent was peace, Grenville proposed to the major capitals of Europe that, subject to consultation with the powers already at war, the neutral states should propose terms of peace to France: that France withdraw its armies within its own borders, abandon its conquests, rescind the Scheldt decree, and pledge to cease fomenting disturbances against other governments.[37] In exchange, the European powers would cease hostilities against France, refrain from interference in her internal affairs, and maintain a correspondence to

conclude a treaty. If France rejected Britain's offer to mediate, Britain, in concert with the rest of Europe, was prepared to achieve these aims by force.

As the new year began, the French Republic faced the likely escalation of war. On 31 December, LeBrun reported to the Convention that there had been no progress in negotiations with the British ministry and that Britain had taken several hostile measures against France, including an embargo on French grain and a proposed Alien Bill. LeBrun claimed that Grenville's Alien Bill, which provided for strict surveillance of foreign nationals, was a violation of French rights under Article IV of the Commercial Treaty of 1786.[38] He warned that unless the British were prepared to exempt French citizens from the bill, the republic would regard the treaty as invalid.

This new hostility on the part of Great Britain caused alarm in the French capital. Parisian newspapers expressed apprehension and criticized the government's foreign policy. Marat's *Le Journal de la République française* denounced the Executive Council and particularly LeBrun, accusing them of irresponsibly providing the British Cabinet a pretext for war: "The war with which England seems to threaten us comes solely from the fear of the harm which the opening of the Scheldt will do to the trade of those islanders."[39] Even the Girondin *Journal Français* declared France's foreign policy "madness": "Why declare the Scheldt free despite the obligation of treaties, for the sake of a people who were not asking for it? What is this wild notion about making nations free in spite of themselves?"[40] The editors argued that war with Britain would be suicidal for France; if the republic was to survive, the French government must compromise with the British ministry on its Belgian policies, especially the Scheldt decree.

The Convention's debates following LeBrun's report reflected a similar concern over Britain's new belligerency. Given the possibility of an expanded war, the consensus was that preparations had to be quickly made. On 1 January, Armand Kersaint warned that if hostilities with Britain did break out, Spain, Holland, and Portugal would follow Britain's lead, and he proposed a set of measures to prepare France for an expanded war. Spurred to action by the deteriorating international situation, the Convention established a Committee of General Defense to coordinate the republic's response to outside aggression and to establish greater legislative control over the government's decision-making process.[41] Yet the new committee, composed of representatives from the War, Finance, and Diplomatic Committees, had difficulty determining the scope and nature of its decision-making power, leaving LeBrun to continue directing foreign policy in consultation with the Diplomatic Committee and with the approval of the Executive Council.[42]

On 12 January, Brissot presented the Convention with the recommendations of the Committee of General Defense, which became the official French reply to the British accusations against France.[43] Reflecting LeBrun's understanding of Franco-British relations, the Committee described Britain's responses to the opening of the Scheldt and the decree of 19 November not as genuine grievances but as pretexts for war. In particular, the report asserted, it was absurd for the British ministers to accuse France of violating Dutch rights over the Scheldt when Britain controlled the Dutch nation by virtue of the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1788. There could be no compromise, it declared, on the Scheldt decree, as the closing of the Scheldt was the work of tyrants and therefore subject to French nullification. By refusing to recognize the French Republic, violating the Commercial Treaty of 1786, and rearming itself, Great Britain, not France, was the aggressor. The Committee proposed a decree stating the peaceful intentions of the French Republic and demanding Britain's reasons for the rearmament measures; if the British refused to answer, they advised, France must prepare for war.[44]

In contrast to this ostensibly hard line, behind the scenes LeBrun continued to follow a conciliatory foreign policy. Although the foreign minister's miscalculations and single-minded pursuit of the Belgian plan were chiefly to blame for the deterioration of relations with Great Britain, several of his policy decisions demonstrate that, far from recklessly and deliberately provoking a broader war, he was actively working to maintain peace with the neutral powers. Under his leadership the Executive Council, the Diplomatic Committee, and the Committee of General Defense continued to delay the implementation of the decree of 15 December, prompting the decree's sponsors, Camus and Cambon, to accuse them of circumventing the will of the Convention. Dumouriez's intensive lobbying had persuaded LeBrun and other policymakers to postpone the decree's implementation to avoid provoking a Belgian civil war or the entry of the neutral powers into an expanded war and risking an Austrian reconquest of Belgium and Liège.

For the same reason, LeBrun and the Executive Council continued to delay Dumouriez's invasion of the Dutch Republic. On 9 January, the Executive Council ordered General Miranda to prepare for an invasion of the United Provinces but did not order an actual attack.[45] Two days later, LeBrun instructed Thainville, the French *chargé d'affaires* at The Hague, to assure the Dutch government that France desired peace and would undertake no act of aggression toward the United Provinces.[46] The Dutch Batavian Committee continued to pressure the French foreign minister to order the invasion of the United Provinces, claiming that "Dumouriez's name makes our enemies tremble. The Dutch are relying on the French foreign minister's promises, and they do not want him to wait any longer,

for it might deprive the Dutch of a revolution which, for France, would be very useful."[47] But LeBrun again refused their requests.[48] On 18 January, the Executive Council informed Miranda that he could confer with the Batavian Committee but again ordered him to delay an attack on the United Provinces.[49]

By this time, Dumouriez had come to agree with LeBrun's position. Although Dumouriez had been pressing for the Council's approval of an invasion of the United Provinces since late November, by mid-January he believed that the best time for the invasion had passed. According to information he had received from Miranda, he now deemed the expedition too dangerous, given the poor condition of the Army of Belgium, the onset of a severe winter, and the war preparations of the Dutch and British.[50] The Dutch had succeeded in sheltering the most accessible point for attacking Zeeland, on the right bank of the Scheldt, and a strong British naval force had gathered at the river's mouth. The alternative point of attack through Venlo, Maestricht, and Nimwegen, for which Miranda had been ordered to prepare, was also now vulnerable, as Austro-Prussian troops had been reinforcing these fortresses and increasing their strength daily.[51] These factors ruled out a swift and conclusive campaign. Thus LeBrun and Dumouriez agreed to continue diplomatic negotiations, hoping to eliminate the necessity of invading Holland altogether or to give Dumouriez time to improve the condition of his armies.[52]

LeBrun's continued efforts to negotiate with the British ministry throughout January constitute the strongest evidence that he hoped to avoid a break with Great Britain, encouraged by Chauvelin's reports minimizing the gravity of the tensions between Britain and France. On 4 January, Chauvelin claimed that British military preparations were not extensive, the idea of war with France was unpopular, and the British were taking a confrontational position only to bluff the French into revoking the Scheldt decree.[53] Neither Chauvelin's isolation at the French Embassy, the explosiveness of the situation, nor Grenville's continued refusal to meet with him convinced Chauvelin to leave his post or prompted LeBrun to replace him.

Perhaps to prove his usefulness, on 7 January Chauvelin informed LeBrun that, in accordance with his 31 December instructions, he had protested the Alien Bill, demanding that the French government be informed as to whether the French were to be included in the "general denomination of foreigners," even though he was aware that the British ministry would regard the protest as premature before the Alien Bill passed the House of Lords.[54] Grenville refused to accept the protest, replying that no official negotiations could take place until Britain received positive assurances with respect to its 31 December complaints against the French Republic.[55] Chauvelin's instructions had been that if the British govern-

ment was evasive on the Alien Bill, the Commercial Treaty should be broken off immediately, and thus despite being told that his protest was not considered official, on 12 January Chauvelin broke off the treaty.[56] Just a few hours after he had so notified Grenville, Chauvelin received LeBrun's 31 December reply to the British complaints and orders to begin a new round of negotiations.[57] Thus, Chauvelin again exchanged notes with Grenville and succeeded in gaining an interview at the British Foreign Office the following day.[58]

In this reply, LeBrun reemphasized the republic's desire to maintain good relations with Great Britain and denied that France intended to annex Belgium and Liège or violate Dutch neutrality. However, he remained obdurate on the major sources of contention, portraying the opening of the Scheldt as an assertion of natural rights on behalf of a liberated people and of little importance to England and Holland but of greatest importance to the Belgians: "It is to restore to the Belgians the enjoyment of so precious a right, and not to offend anyone, that France has declared herself ready to support them in the exercise of so legitimate a right."[59] LeBrun promised that France had renounced all conquests and that the occupation of Belgium and Liège would end as soon as the Belgians "insure and consolidate their liberty." The 19 November decree, he claimed, was not seditious in intent: "It announces nothing more than an act of the general will; it is so effectually founded in right, that it is scarcely worth the trouble to express it." If these explanations proved unsatisfactory to Britain and it continued preparations for war, LeBrun concluded, "We will fight regretfully against the English, whom we esteem, but we will fight fearlessly."

On 13 January, Chauvelin delivered LeBrun's letter to Grenville, who after reading it, told Chauvelin that he would consult with his colleagues and send the cabinet's decision to him at the French Embassy. Although their interview ended inconclusively, Grenville's notes on the meeting indicate he had assured Chauvelin that Britain did not intend to declare war on France.[60] Along with LeBrun's most recent instructions to Chauvelin, the French foreign ministry had also sent two letters to Miles, one from Maret and one from LeBrun himself.[61] Although Miles never revealed exactly what LeBrun had written, he believed that Chauvelin's instructions and the letters from Maret and LeBrun were conciliatory, repudiated the 19 November decree, and offered to replace Chauvelin as the French representative in London. Miles informed Pitt that he had dispatches from Paris to give him that "will put it in your hands to preserve the blessings of peace," believing they offered a possibility of avoiding war between the two nations.[62]

On the afternoon of 13 January, Grenville presented LeBrun's reply to the British cabinet. During the cabinet meeting, Miles arrived at Whitehall to deliver the letters from LeBrun and Maret. In Miles's account, Pitt

came out of the meeting to receive Miles's two dispatches "in great good humor" and returned to the meeting. But an hour later, Pitt returned from the meeting distraught, "furious and freighted with the bile of the whole Cabinet, aggravated by that of Mr. Burke who, although not a minister, attended on this occasion."[63] Edmund Burke, inexorably opposed to the French Revolution, regarded the recent French military successes as catastrophic and "pernicious French ideas" as the source of domestic unrest in England.[64] Whatever the reason for the prime minister's change in mood, he bluntly ordered Miles to stop negotiating with the French.

Apparently LeBrun's official response had a decisive effect on British policymakers. Clearly, Belgium and the Scheldt would never be negotiable. Grenville wrote to Auckland after the meeting that, although the French had conceded some points, the ministers could not determine "how far it is the intention of the present rulers of France to comply with the demands that alone can ensure to this country and to Holland a real and permanent tranquility."[65] LeBrun's reply, though conciliatory in tone, simply reaffirmed the French position on Belgium and Liège, justifying the Scheldt decree and the French occupation. In their dealings with the French, Pitt and Grenville had consistently maintained that no explanation could be satisfactory as long as the French defended these actions. Furthermore, British and Dutch intelligence had persistently reported French military threats, including Dumouriez's request to invade Holland, which belied the French foreign minister's assurances of a peaceful intent.[66]

On 18 January, Grenville curtly answered LeBrun's overture by stating that he found in it no new basis for negotiations, "The declaration of wishing to intermeddle in the affairs of other countries is therein renewed and the right of infringing treaties and violating the rights of our allies is still maintained."[67] Although indicating that the British were open to unofficial negotiations, Grenville warned that Britain would continue military preparations "to defend our rights and to set up a barrier against those views of ambition and aggrandizement dangerous at all times to the rest of Europe but which become still more so being supported by the propagation of principles destructive of all social order." Miles, now aware of LeBrun's intransigence regarding Belgium, wrote to his friend that "Instead of peace, I see war on the point of being declared—a war that will engulf both nations. LeBrun, you will become responsible for all its horrors!"[68] On 20 January, Grenville sent his correspondence with Chauvelin to Lord Auckland at The Hague and to Sir James Murray at Cologne and advised them that hostilities were now imminent.[69]

Grenville's response of 18 January was, in effect, a declaration of the cessation of relations between Great Britain and France. Pitt and Grenville, seeing war as inevitable, contrived to maneuver the Executive Coun-

cil into a position that would require a French declaration of war.[70] According to Maret, the British ministers "want, and this is a plan of action conceived some time ago and followed rather skillfully, to force us to begin hostilities in order to present the rupture as our doing and a war of England against us as an act of legitimate and necessary self-defense."[71] By blaming hostilities between the two nations on French aggression, the British could more easily convince the other Great Powers to join them in a joint war against French expansionism. Rather than declare war themselves, on 20 January, Grenville informed Chauvelin that, since he was not a recognized foreign emissary, he would come under the provisions of the newly passed Alien Bill and must leave England.[72]

On the evening of 23 January, the news of the execution of Louis XVI on 21 January reached Whitehall. The following day, a British royal edict ordered Chauvelin to leave England as soon as possible, his expulsion the equivalent of a declaration of war. Although relations between France and Britain had actually been severed days earlier, the British now cited the execution of Louis XVI as the official cause of the diplomatic break. Grenville wrote to Auckland, "I can imagine that the next dispatch to you will announce the commencement of hostilities. Probably the French will commence them."[73]

But LeBrun, having learned of Britain's overtures to the allies from his secret agents and aware that France was likely to soon face a coalition including most of Europe, was not yet prepared to abandon all hope of preventing an outbreak of war with Britain.[74] On 22 January, unaware of Chauvelin's expulsion but recognizing that the king's execution greatly increased the risk of an expanded war, LeBrun finally recalled Chauvelin to Paris, ordering him to inform the British ministry that, to maintain open communications, Maret would replace him as the official French *chargé d'affaires* in London.[75] In a letter to Noël at The Hague the same day, LeBrun maintained that despite the hostile tone of Grenville's letter of 18 January, he refused to believe that Britain and the Dutch Republic actually contemplated war over what he considered trivial issues. If Britain's intention regarding the allied powers was to intervene as a force for peace, France would consider Britain's proposals for ending the war on the continent: "We must, if we can, avoid war with two nations who have large naval forces, and yet not discourage the patriots whose cause is only too like our own."[76] LeBrun instructed Noël to use all means to make the Dutch patriot leaders understand that an invasion of the Dutch Republic under the present crisis could only jeopardize the revolutionary cause because of its limited chance of success.

LeBrun also met with Dumouriez, Emmanual de Maulde (the former unofficial representative to The Hague), and the Executive Council, Diplomatic Committee, and Committee of General Defense to discuss

the possible resumption of the negotiations with Dumouriez proposed by the British and Dutch in November.[77] The group sent de Maulde secretly to The Hague to arrange negotiations between Dumouriez, van de Spiegel, and Auckland, while Maret, replacing Chauvelin in London, would arrange safe passage and secret negotiations between Dumouriez and the British.[78] Dumouriez left Paris for his winter camp in Antwerp on 24 January to prepare for those secret peace missions. He told Miranda that he was going to London as extraordinary ambassador to learn the intentions of the British cabinet and to pledge not to invade Holland in exchange for British and Dutch neutrality. If these negotiations collapsed, Dumouriez told Miranda, he would be ordered to attack the Dutch fortresses at Maestricht and Venlo.[79]

Maret left Paris for London on 27 January, learning of Chauvelin's expulsion from England only when he arrived at Dover two days later, a shock that completely altered Franco-British relations.[80] Awaiting new instructions before initiating further talks with the British ministry, on 31 January Maret wrote to LeBrun that his London contacts believed the British ministers would welcome his overtures and wished to avoid a break with France. He urged caution concerning Chauvelin's expulsion, explaining that much of the problem was a personality conflict between Chauvelin and Lord Grenville.[81] Maret also alerted Dumouriez to Chauvelin's expulsion, noting that he awaited the general's orders.[82]

On 24 January, de Maulde left Paris on his secret mission to The Hague, where he was to deliver a letter to Auckland from Dumouriez stating the general's understanding that Auckland and van de Spiegel were interested in negotiations and that he hoped "that we should draw from this meeting results useful to England, to the United Provinces, to France, to humanity, and perhaps to the whole of Europe."[83] Meeting with Auckland to arrange possible talks, de Maulde responded to Auckland's objections to French aggression that Dumouriez, as a military man, had not participated in the recent French foreign—policy decisions, but that given the chaotic political situation in France and the condition of his army, simply wished to negotiate peace with Britain and the United Provinces. To ensure their continued neutrality, according to de Maulde, the general would agree not to launch an attack on the Dutch; if the negotiations were unsuccessful, however, he would invade immediately.[84] Writing to Grenville on 28 January, Auckland urged him to accept Dumouriez's proposal immediately to delay the attack and divert French forces to the Rhine, "where the Austrian and Prussian forces are strong enough to meet the French army."[85] On 30 January, Auckland replied to Dumouriez that, although he attributed the dispute between the two nations to French aggression, he had requested permission from Whitehall to negotiate with him.[86]

Events in Paris soon overtook LeBrun and Dumouriez's attempts to avoid an expanded war. Chauvelin's arrival on 30 January produced general indignation in governmental circles. His humiliating expulsion and sudden appearance caused particular consternation for LeBrun and those in the government supporting negotiations with the British. LeBrun, not wanting to further enflame the increasingly bellicose sentiment in the Convention while he continued his attempts to prevent a break with Britain, had concealed how tenuous and strained relations between the two nations had become. The antagonism between Grenville and Chauvelin was not generally known in Paris, and LeBrun had not presented Grenville's 18 January refusal to continue negotiations to the Convention; he had not, in other words, alerted the deputies to the strong British reaction to French policies since his report of 31 December. As a result, many French policymakers saw Britain as making an abrupt about-face and Chauvelin's expulsion as tantamount to a declaration of war.

Within hours of Chauvelin's arrival, the Executive Council, the Diplomatic Committee, and the Committee of General Defense convened in an emergency session and unanimously agreed to declare war on Great Britain and the United Provinces.[87] LeBrun announced to the Convention that "The faint hope of peace that still remained a few days ago has vanished. His Britannic Majesty has used the opportunity of the unrelenting justice meted out to the last of our kings as an excuse to force the rupture." The Convention immediately ordered the Executive Council to take all necessary measures for the republic's security and the Committee of General Defense to report on the emergency situation. The following day, 1 February, Brissot presented the Convention with the Committee of General Defense's report, which blamed the break with Britain on a deliberate conspiracy on the part of George III, enumerated France's complaints against the British since the withdrawal of their ambassador after 10 August 1792, and concluded with a formal declaration of war. An angry Convention unanimously sanctioned a decree declaring war on Great Britain and the United Provinces and a motion calling for a revolutionary appeal to the British people.[88] The Executive Council placed an embargo on British and Dutch ships in French ports and ordered Dumouriez to invade the United Provinces and seize the fortresses of Maestricht and Venlo.[89]

With war declared, LeBrun gave his full support to the Batavian Revolutionary Committee. He instructed Comps, commander of the Batavian Legion at Antwerp, to immediately "join forces with the General and to second his military operations by all the revolutionary means which you have prepared."[90] Realizing that war with all of the Great Powers was imminent, LeBrun was convinced that only the conquest of the United Provinces could now prevent the loss of Belgium and Liège, while writing to Dumouriez that "The prompt execution of this invasion

is imperative to preserve Belgium and Liège and for the well-being of the French army."[91]

An expanded war with the European powers also forced the Convention to revisit the issue of annexation. On 31 January, the deputies decreed the annexation of Nice and the immediate implementation of the decree of 15 December in the occupied territories. Although LeBrun had earlier agreed to delay those measures, by mid-January he had lost hope that the Belgians could unite and constitute a viable republican government. To solve the political impasse in Belgium and enable the French to resist their reconquest by Austria and its allies, he had reluctantly decided to press for the annexation of Belgium and Liège.[92] Although sacrificing Belgian independence to ensure a republican government, LeBrun continued to adhere to the ideal of self-determination. One of LeBrun's reasons for supporting last-minute negotiations between Dumouriez and Great Britain and the United Provinces had been to temporize while organizing a campaign to win political support for the annexation of the Belgian provinces and Liège.[93]

On 31 January, the deputies also debated a Liégeois request for annexation to France. In January newly elected Liégeois assemblies had freely expressed their desire for annexation to France.[94] Danton, representing the Convention's commissioners in Belgium and Liège, presented the request, verifying that annexation was the choice of the people and employing the "natural frontiers" argument: "I say that it is in vain to fear extending the republic too much. Its frontiers are marked by nature. We shall reach the four points on the horizon; on the side of the Rhine, on the side of the ocean, on the side of the Alps. There the boundaries of our republic must be, and no human power will be able to prevent us from extending them." Mallarmé, however, objected to the "reunion" of Liège, maintaining that the people themselves, not a French commissioner, must request annexation: "It is not at all the sovereign people of Liège who have expressed themselves directly to you: it is a general commanding the armies of Belgium who has sent to the minister of war the copy of a letter of the president of the Assembly of the sovereign people of the city of Liège. There is nothing in this letter that establishes that it is the expression of the sovereign people of Liège."

In response to this debate, Camus moved that the Liégeois request be rejected, moving instead that the Convention's commissioners be ordered to immediately organize new elections to assemblies that would vote on annexation. To meet the ideological requirement that such a request be based on the will of the people, these elections would be free, but elected representatives who refused to meet in their assemblies, where a voice vote on annexation would be taken, would be regarded as enemies. By approving Camus's proposals, the National Convention for the first time offi-

cially adopted a policy of annexation, not for solely ideological reasons but to meet the requirements of an expanding war.

To save what he could of the Belgian plan, LeBrun immediately ordered the French commissioners in Belgium to work with the Belgian patriots and with Dumouriez and his generals to organize elections and encourage annexationist sentiment among the Belgian people:

> Support, encourage, and facilitate this desire for a union which seems to benefit them; diligently bring to bear all the persuasive means you have in this respect, and complete soon what Belgium herself has started in so decisive a way. By stressing their self-interest, get those inhabitants to make up their minds who might not otherwise do so, or who only feel themselves slightly drawn towards this goal. In a manner of speaking, it becomes indispensable to them to attain it if they desire the support of France, and if they fear the chains of Austria.[95]

According to LeBrun, annexation was now the only way to keep the British and the Dutch from placing Belgium and Liège "back under the domination from which they have been freed by our armies, and to establish there as the new master the young Archduke Charles."

Although LeBrun and Dumouriez had made concerted efforts to avoid expanding the war to include Great Britain and the United Provinces, they had been unable to retreat from their plan to republicanize Belgium and Liège. Indeed, their Belgian policy had become the major source of contention between France and Great Britain, creating the circumstances leading to the War of the First Coalition and the attempt to annex Belgium and Liège.

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CHAPTER 9

Failure of the Belgian Plan, February-March 1793

With the collapse of diplomatic negotiations following the formal declaration of war on Great Britain and the United Provinces on 1 February 1793, LeBrun and Dumouriez continued to pursue their Belgian plan on two interdependent fronts: the French invasion and conquest of the United Provinces and the annexation of the Belgian provinces and Liège. Dumouriez was disappointed by the failure of negotiations, as the delay had given the stadholder time to organize Dutch defenses while his army remained in a deplorable condition.[1] Nevertheless, once war was declared, an immediate invasion was essential to French success. Most importantly, as he wrote to Miranda, the successful conquest of the United Provinces would secure Belgium and Liège and give their people greater confidence in the benefits and protection of the French Republic.[2]

On 9 February, LeBrun affirmed the Executive Council's complete faith in Dumouriez and their common aim—the prompt invasion of the United Provinces for the preservation of Belgium and Liège.[3] As Dumouriez wrote to Beurnonville, the French army was too weak to defend Belgium and Liège against the Austrians and Prussians without the support of the Belgians, and destroying the Belgian counterrevolution required the occupation of the United Provinces.[4] LeBrun explained to Tronquet Saint-Michel, a commissioner of the Executive Council in Belgium, that "Victory on Batavian territory could only improve and stimulate public opinion in Belgium and particularly in Antwerp."[5]

Dumouriez's campaign to replace Pache as minister of war with Beurnonville had succeeded, and the new minister gave Dumouriez's invasion plans his unqualified support and promised to fully provision the army.[6]

In addition to their frequent communication with Dumouriez, LeBrun and Beurnonville maintained their own almost daily correspondence to coordinate the war and Belgian and Liégeois affairs.[7] Their almost exclusive concentration on the Belgian situation and invasion of the United Provinces was demonstrated by their lack of response to General Custine's urgent appeals for more support for his occupation of the Rhineland. The Rhinelanders, afraid that France would be unable to defend their territory, had become increasingly reluctant to commit to a short-lived French regime, and thus Custine pleaded with LeBrun and Beurnonville to maintain a strong army in Mainz and along the left bank of the Rhine to force the allied armies to disperse defensively.[8] But neither LeBrun nor Beurnonville responded to his requests, ending all official support for Pache's Rhineland strategy. Custine was losing ground to the allies, and although the commissioners sent by the Convention to investigate the situation supported Custine's command, they did not recommend reinforcements. By March Mainz would be under siege, and the commissioners reported that any attempt to save it would be futile.

The Batavian patriots had convinced LeBrun and Dumouriez that when French troops invaded the United Provinces, they would provoke an insurrection against the stadholder's regime, the French army would be welcomed throughout the United Provinces, and the Dutch would provide them with arms, provisions, munitions, and 25,000-30,000 reinforcements.[9] Though pleased with the French decision to finally invade, the Batavian patriots urged LeBrun to make several changes in the application of the decree of 15 December to avoid problems that had plagued local Belgian governments under the French occupation. These included allowing the French to replace municipal regents but to leave lower officials in place, keeping Dutch taxes as they were and placing control of the Dutch government directly in the hands of the Batavian Revolutionary Committee.[10] According to Dumont-Pigalle, one of the Dutch patriot leaders, LeBrun agreed to their proposals and had them approved by the Committee of General Defense.[11] Although the Convention's final decree would vest the "revolutionary authority" in the French rather than the Dutch, it adopted all the other provisions LeBrun recommended. The French were forbidden to use assignats in the United Provinces, and except for traditional Dutch taxes on beer and bread, which were to be abolished for the benefit of the Dutch *sans-culottes,* all existing taxes were to remain in place. LeBrun had represented these changes to the deputies as inducements to gain Dutch support for the liberation that would follow the French invasion.[12]

Dumouriez had been confident of his earlier invasion strategy, in which his army would besiege Maestricht, General Miranda's forces would seize Venlo, and their combined armies would take Nimwegen, after which, he

believed, it would take only two weeks for the victorious French to advance on Amsterdam.[13] On 11 February, however, the Duke of Brunswick struck first, reinforcing Venlo with 10,000 Prussian troops, strengthening the right flank of the imperial army, and destroying Dumouriez's original invasion plan. In response, Dumouriez proposed a daring two-pronged attack. Miranda and his generals would besiege Maestricht and prevent Brunswick's army from reinforcing its garrison, while Dumouriez would lead the rest of the Army of Belgium on the shortest but most dangerous route, much of it by water, to capture Amsterdam.[14] This strategy would enable the French to cover a broad span of territory with a limited number of troops and make an unexpected and rapid advance. Dumouriez's intention was to capture most of the major cities and defenses en route, trap Brunswick's forces between Miranda's army and his own, and with the aid of Dutch patriots, establish a republican government that would order Dutch commanders to surrender the remaining fortresses.

Depending on speed and surprise, Dumouriez did not intend to fight a conventional war. He was counting on the enemy's supposition that the French forces were much more formidable than they were, on the stadholder's not having an immediate plan of defense or a mobilized and seasoned army, and on a simultaneous Dutch insurrection. Above all, Dumouriez realized, he must astonish the enemy with the impetuosity of the strike.[15] In this, Dumouriez did not anticipate that British intelligence had learned of this strategy and quickly communicated it to the allies.[16] He also discounted the concerns of his second-in-command, Miranda, who approved the strategy but warned Beurnonville that "our forces are far from being sufficient to hold successfully the whole territory that we are occupying at the moment, or to execute the operations which we are about to undertake."[17] Miranda was properly concerned about the strength and skill of the Austrian army, commanded since early February by the formidable Marshal Frédéric Josias, Prince of Saxe-Cobourg. But Dumouriez insisted that, in spite of its excellent cavalry and Hungarian grenadiers, the Austrian army consisted primarily of new recruits, was poorly provisioned, and could not participate in the campaign for several weeks.[18]

Now facing an expanded allied coalition, Dumouriez was under intense pressure to retain Belgium and Liège, and the wretched condition of his army forced him into a bold offensive strategy. He understood that he lacked enough troops to keep the enemy at bay on all fronts and still launch a major offensive, yet trusted that his troops, understanding all the difficulties of such an invasion, would summon increased enthusiasm for the hazardous campaign.[19] Dumouriez asked Beurnonville and the Executive Council for continued support for his Dutch strategy because "without Holland, our position in Belgium will become untenable"; with Holland, he would push the imperial army back across the Rhine.[20]

Dumouriez's strategy had the wholehearted support of his generals, Valence writing to Beurnonville that "Dumouriez will succeed. His genius and his audacity make that a certainty. If you only knew what this army was like, which is going to capture the strongholds, seize ships and overrun Holland victoriously!"[21] Beurnonville showed confidence in Dumouriez's ability, telling Miranda that his plan was well constructed and Valence that "Dumouriez's genius would make good for everything, and [through his amphibious strategy] the new Icarus would rise above the dikes of Holland."[22]

On 15 February, the eve of Dumouriez's invasion, he issued manifestoes proclaiming his intentions to the Dutch, the Belgians, and the Liégeois.[23] To the Dutch, he announced that he had come to liberate them from the tyrant William V, who had given away their colonial trade to Great Britain. He praised the Liégeois for their revolutionary spirit and asked for their support of the French invasion and the Dutch revolution. Addressing the Belgians, he declared that the conquest of Holland would ensure their own freedom, invited them to fight the Austrians in the Netherlands under their own flag, and assured them that the French would protect them from the imperial troops marching toward the Belgian provinces. The Batavian Revolutionary Committee also proclaimed Dumouriez's invasion, announcing his intention to free the Dutch people from tyranny.[24]

On 16 February, Dumouriez launched his bold invasion, marching from Antwerp to the fortress of Breda as Miranda turned to the southeast to lay siege to Maestricht. In quick succession, Dumouriez's troops seized Breda, Klundert, and Geertrindenburg, and then, according to plan, prepared to embark from Moerdijk across the Holland Diep to seize Dordrecht and march on Rotterdam.[25] LeBrun and Beurnonville were overjoyed at Dumouriez's success. LeBrun was "sure this conquest is a favorable sign and the liberator of Belgium will soon be the regenerator of the United Provinces" and reaffirmed his devotion to their cause.[26] Beurnonville, calling Dumouriez "Eternal Father," reiterated the Executive Council's support of his strategy, though noting that success depended on the capture of Maestricht.[27] By early March, the policymakers in Paris were sufficiently confident of Dumouriez's success that on 7 March they declared war on Spain.[28]

But Dumouriez's triumph was fleeting. As he was about to embark across the Holland Diep to attack Dortrecht, aides brought the shattering news that the allied armies had decisively defeated the French near Liège and occupied that city. On the night of 9-10 March, the general placed his expeditionary force in Holland under the command of General de Flers and left immediately for Belgium.[29]

Under the guise of supporting the United Provinces, Austria's major military objective in February 1793 was to reconquer Belgium and Liège to exchange them for Bavaria, an aim supported by the Prussians.[30] Early

in February, Austria's Field Marshal Cobourg and Prussia's Duke of Brunswick had met at Frankfurt to determine the allied strategy for reconquering Belgium and Liège. On the night of 1 March, Cobourg's troops quickly crossed the Roer to attack the French at several key points, knowing that if Dumouriez reached the heart of Holland and Miranda seized Maestricht, the allies would never regain their former territories. Cobourg's forces surprised and defeated the armies of Generals La Noue and Stengel and proceeded to capture Aix-la-Chapelle.[31] On 3 March, Cobourg's second-in-command, the Archduke Charles, lifted the French siege of Maestricht. The allied advance threw the French armies into confusion and panic, and their retreat from Belgium and Liège began on 4 March with the defeat of Valence and Miranda's armies and the capture of Tongres.[32] In a council of war on 5 March, Generals Miranda, Valence, La Noue, Thouvenot, and the Duke de Chartres decided to evacuate their troops from Liège.[33] The French armies of Belgium, the Ardennes, and the North reassembled at Louvain when, on 12 March, Dumouriez arrived to reestablish a unity of command.[34]

The allies' lightning strike was the turning point of the spring campaign, and reports of the defeats caused dismay in Paris and further intensified the Montagnard-Girondin struggle. On 10 March, Robespierre accused Generals La Noue and Stengel of allowing the defeat at Aix-la-Chapelle, and the deputies ordered them to appear before the bar of the Convention.[35] An agitated Dumouriez immediately defended his generals to Beurnonville, arguing that the French defeats had not been caused by wrongdoing or incompetence and that, on the contrary, the generals and troops had shown great courage. He described the decree of recall as unjust and as causing consternation among his generals: "It should be common knowledge, that the outcome of battles is a matter of chance; that a large number of factors which have nothing to do with the plans the general make contribute to the causes of victory or defeat."[36] Somers reported that the Executive Council was so discouraged by the French defeats that they had considered ordering Dumouriez to withdraw from Belgium entirely in order to fortify the French frontier, but they had decided against it, as "such a plan must meet with that general's decided reprobation, as [Belgium] was always his favorite object."[37]

LeBrun learned of the defeats from Milon, one of his secret agents in Belgium, who reported on 4 and 7 March that the Austrian successes at Aix-la Chapelle and Maestricht were largely due to their excellent intelligence network among the Belgians, who, he added, "appear most happy to see us leave."[38] In response, LeBrun urged his agents to redouble their efforts "to speak out for yourself and your friends, speak out for annexation all over Belgium. In essence, this is the main objective of the instructions to be given to the national commissioners."[39]

Although on 31 January the National Convention had shifted its occupation strategy toward annexation, it continued to insist on the principle of self-determination, maintaining that only through legally constituted elections could occupied peoples legitimately request annexation to France. By mid-February, however, the deputy Lazare Carnot had proposed that annexation be undertaken on behalf of French interests whether or not the people to be annexed so wished. Ideally, he argued, the desires of the occupied peoples and French self-interest would coincide; but in an emergency, France should annex territories when it was beneficial for it to do so. The deputies applauded Carnot and voted unanimously to annex Monaco and some of the Rhenish states belonging to the Duke of Zweibrücken and the Prince of Nassau.

Despite its departure from the principle of self-determination, LeBrun had now accepted this annexation policy for Belgium and Liège, reasoning that the Belgians would willingly accept annexation as preferable to Austrian reconquest and that annexation alone could end the political chaos there and protect their liberty. Yet he still believed that this could be accomplished voluntarily, as in Liège.[40] LeBrun directed this policy through his agents and the commanders of the occupying forces, putting all his efforts into generating Belgian enthusiasm for annexation and revolutionary principles.[41] As he admitted to the Curé Lye, his old friend and agent in Herve, "Perhaps in ordinary times it would have been more natural, more in accordance with our principles, to leave entirely to the Belgian themselves an absolutely undefined freedom to organize whatever government they wished for themselves. However, in a time of turmoil and revolutions, surrounded by intrigues and seductions, and more especially with the example of our own past to go by, both our own safety and the interests of the Belgian people demand of us an active role in their first attempts to form their own government."[42] Thus it was only after the escalation of the war threatened France with military defeat and Belgium with a Hapsburg restoration that annexation had become a significant element of French foreign policy. France's new annexationist policy was not, as commonly argued, a return to monarchical ambitions or a belligerent program of revolutionary imperialism.[43] Rather, LeBrun and the other French policymakers believed that the overwhelming European opposition to France and the desperate plight of the divided Belgians had left them no alternative.

Under these new circumstances, LeBrun and the Executive Council had ordered their thirty-two commissioners on mission in Belgium to make every effort to persuade the Belgians to freely support annexation in their newly constituted assemblies. The Convention also sent six new deputies of their own—Camus, de Douai, Trielhard, Gossuin, Danton, and Delacroix—to assist in those efforts.[44] In his instructions, LeBrun as-

sured the commissioners that "the two Flanders, Bruges, Liège, Limbourg, Stravelo, Malmédi, Lohn, Dinant and the surrounding countryside, Mons and even part of Brussels, are leaning toward and voting for annexation to France like Savoy."[45] He instructed them to establish the best possible relations between French military commanders and Belgian patriots and to represent Belgian, not only French, interests: "Your prudence and your generosity tell you to lay emphasis, in these decisive times for the Belgians, only on the interests of the Belgians themselves."[46] The commissioners, genuinely animated by a desire to replace the *ancien regime* institutions in Belgium with a new social order and believing that French safety depended on it, on the whole avoided outward manifestations of extraordinary power and conducted themselves with an austerity and simplicity characteristic of French republican ideals.[47] They carried out LeBrun's orders on the implementation of the decree of 31 January precisely, taking immediate measures against any agents or military personnel found abusing their power and, in some cases, indemnifying the victims.[48]

Nevertheless, many Belgians, especially the conservatives, had become increasingly alienated by the French efforts to revolutionize Belgian local rule, social structure, and institutions. On 21 February, Milon reported that "The way the Belgians in general are thinking is not yet very reassuring. The coalition of fanaticism between the partisans of the former constitution and the supporters of Austria is continually at work raising obstacles and even strong opposition to the introduction and propagation of the new regime."[49] If Belgians friendly to France were to resist the conservatives, they must be confident that the French military presence could protect them from reprisals in the event of reconquest. For that reason, LeBrun, the commissioners, and the Belgian patriots understood that the French annexationist policy in Belgium and Liège would depend almost entirely on Dumouriez's success in conquering the United Provinces.

Tronquet Saint-Michel, the Executive Council's commissioner in Antwerp, had advised LeBrun that, although annexationist sentiment was low, the first news of Dumouriez's success in Holland would produce a great burst of popular enthusiasm for annexation.[50] LeBrun, Dumouriez, Beurnonville, and the commissioners all expected victory in Holland to inspire Belgian confidence that France could protect their liberty and followed Dumouriez's spectacular seizure of Breda, Klundert, and Geertrindenberg with a propaganda campaign to kindle the spirit of egalitarianism among the Belgians.[51] LeBrun's voluminous correspondence with the commissioners, agents, and generals reiterated the importance of respecting the principle of popular sovereignty in working for annexation. He assured LeVoz, his friend and agent in Liège, "that the Executive Council has given the commissioners the most precise instructions that annexation take place only after a mandate of the majority of the people has been

freely expressed."[52] Accordingly, he instructed D'Amandry to "address yourself to the task of spreading enlightenment, allaying fears, calming passions, and especially of proving to the majority that their self-interest lies in answering the call of liberty."[53] Deshacquets continued to assure the foreign minister that with the destruction of their old institutions, "the Belgians would become the most solid supporters and the most enthusiastic propagators of the true and only liberty, which is founded on equality."[54]

LeBrun, the commissioners, and French agents in Belgium recognized that not only would military success increase Belgian confidence and encourage pro-annexation sentiment, but that a rapid annexation of the Belgian provinces would also strengthen the French war effort. In their reports to Paris, the Convention's commissioners especially stressed the military argument for annexation: "The salvation of the French Republic lies in Belgium. Only by the union of this rich country with our territory can we redress our finances and continue the war, so in order to attain this great objective we must offer the timid patriots of Belgium of powerful means of security; by widespread deployment of our military resources we must prove to them that they do not have to fear the return to Austrian domination."[55] This emphasis on French rather than Belgian interests led to conflicts between the chief proponents of the Belgian plan and the six commissioners from the Convention, whose presence and views reflected both the growing Montagnard opposition to the Girondins and the Convention's bid for greater control over the government. For LeBrun and his agents, Dumouriez and his generals, and the Executive Council's commissioners, the annexation of the Belgian Provinces and Liège should reflect the sincere desire of the majority even as it countered the danger of an Austrian reconquest, and they opposed coercive measures to annex Belgium and Liège. For the Convention's commissioners, however, the military necessity of annexation trumped other considerations, reflecting the dominant sentiment in Paris. They held that Belgium and Liège should be annexed immediately and predicted that defeat would be tragic for both nations: "It would be quite certain, then, that the Sicilian vespers would sound all over Belgium for the French, and the Belgian patriots, trembling for themselves, could not be of the slightest use to them."[56]

For their varied reasons, throughout February the commissioners worked to create annexationist sentiment in the Belgian primary assemblies, which consisted of all male Belgians twenty-one years of age or over. In some places voting was by voice, making it impossible to determine how many actual votes were cast for or against annexation, while in others voters' preferences were recorded in writing. Despite the lack of reliable data on how many Belgians voted for reunion with France in 1793, the available fragmentary records suggest that 594 towns and communes

voted for annexation and 71 against.[57] Although there were reports that some commissioners used arbitrary arrests and intimidation to produce the desired results and there were scattered reports of violence, nearly all these instances occurred after the Austrian onslaught on 1 March. French soldiers were present at nearly all the primary assemblies, French generals and commissioners attempted to hold peaceful elections, and in general the voting procedures were conducted honestly. These results have been variously interpreted, but what can be said factually about the Belgian-Liégeois "plebiscite" of 1793 is that a great majority of the communes that voted accepted union with France.[58] In Liège, where pro-French sentiment had always been strong, on 16 February sixty-one Liégeois deputies voted for annexation in their National Assembly, expressing only five reservations, all of which involved the circulation of assignats.[59]

At the request of the Committee of General Defense, on 28 February LeBrun reported to the Convention on the Belgian situation, announcing that "The principles spread by the commissioners, by the generals, and by other patriots, their good example and their enthusiasm, have produced the best effect in Belgium."[60] The foreign minister announced that despite differences in local circumstances, throughout Belgium the old regime's onerous taxes had been eliminated, well-chosen provisional administrations established, hospitals and roads repaired, and the influence of the Belgian estates, priests, and émigrés largely eliminated, although "their perfidious insinuations and their lies are in some districts still misleading the least enlightened of the inhabitants and are obliging our commissioners and the true patriots to redouble their efforts and their caution." LeBrun, apparently filtering the reports reaching him through his own enthusiasm, seriously if sincerely exaggerated favorable Belgian opinion. His optimism seemed confirmed when on 1 March he was able to announce to the Convention that the majority of Belgians and Liégeois had in fact requested annexation: "It gives me great satisfaction to be able to communicate to the National Convention this new proof of the good will of the Belgian people."[61] The National Convention then began accepting the Belgian and Liégeois annexation requests.

But on the very day of LeBrun's announcement, the Austro-Prussian rout of the French armies triggered what would become a general Belgian insurrection against the French. The Statists quickly united all streams of opposition to the French in the countryside and in the towns, causing continuous disorder.[62] Fear of the advancing allied army led to a loss of confidence in Dumouriez and the French army and to frenzied pillaging by French soldiers, further enraging the Belgian population. From Brussels LeBrun and Beurnonville were informed that the "fanatical priests in Brabant" had risen and that it would take 20,000 additional troops to prevent a general insurrection throughout Brabant. Milon wrote that the

Brabançons were rejoicing at the news of the French disasters.[63] Dispatches from Antwerp, Ghent, and Tournai reported that anti-French sentiment had increased since the defeats at Aix-la-Chapelle, Liège, and Maestricht.[64] The largest insurrection broke out at Grammont where, according to the Duke of Chartres, "a large gathering of peasants with arms and even artillery had defeated the French troops sent to disperse it."[65] LeBrun was in daily contact with Beurnonville, requesting the creation of more Belgian legions to bolster the French presence and passing on intelligence reports on the position and state of the French and Allied armies.[66] Notwithstanding the constant stream of reports of defeat, disaster, and insurrection, LeBrun announced to the Convention on 11 March that "despite the difficulties of the moment, the love of the Belgians for liberty is shown daily, even in the presence of the enemy, by their requests for annexation."[67] The requests for annexation had convinced him that the Belgians and Liégeois understood that annexation would protect their freedom and that the French military setback was only momentary.[68]

But in Belgium, the sudden and overwhelmingly successful allied offensive had profoundly demoralized the French army. Thousands deserted, and general disorder prevailed among the troops of the line.[69] The French regulars, demanding the return of their commander in chief from Holland, fell back in panic and disarray as the imposing imperial army marched toward Liège.[70] After pushing the French behind the Sambre River, Cobourg reinforced Maestricht and conquered Liège. While waiting for further instructions, he reestablished former local administrations under the estates and punished Belgian patriots with heavy fines.[71]

Given the French defeats and the dismay of the Belgians, many of the French revolutionary agents became defensive, menacing, and even brutal. Panic overcame the commissioners, often manifested in the sanctioning of outrageous acts against the Belgian privileged classes, particularly the clergy. The Convention's commissioners met at Lille to devise a course of action, delegating their authority to the Executive Council's commissioners in their absence. Before leaving for Lille, they decreed on 5 March that all silver and gold in religious establishments not required for worship services be sequestered and sent to France to protect it from the enemy.[72] When the Council's commissioners implemented the decree in their absence, soldiers and a legion of *sans-culottes* led by the French radical Estienne pillaged the churches indiscriminately, and the situation lost the sanction of law. To avoid further insurrection, the commissioners ordered all *émigrés* tracked down and imprisoned and hostages seized and sent to French frontier towns; eleven Belgians who defied French decrees were imprisoned. In the last days of March, when disaster appeared certain, some commissioners sequestered public treasuries. In their retreat, French troops lost much of their discipline. As Gadolle, the commissioner of the

Executive Council at Ostende, reported to LeBrun, "In all the Belgian towns through which the troops of the Republic pass or in which they have a garrison, greater or lesser excesses are being committed, such as public insubordination toward their superiors, drinking, libertinage, and filthiness, especially of the soldiers who are billeted in bourgeois homes, where they damage everything they use, such as beds, and their behavior, far from encouraging the Belgians to unite with and fraternize with France, annoys them; for the Belgian, being unable to read, judges only by what he sees."[73]

The Belgians were soon in open insurrection. Priests damned the occupiers from the pulpit, and lawyers joined them in urging revolt against French administrators. Almost everywhere in Belgium the black cockade of Austria replaced the French tricolor. In public squares the raised standard of the imperial eagle replaced the tree of liberty, and everywhere were heard cries of "*Vive l'empereur!*" The French were insulted, hissed, even assaulted. A Belgian vigilante band called *les Hardis* pillaged the retreating French convoys. On 7 March, outbreaks of violence occurred in Soignies, Enghien, Namur, Renaix, and Thourout. Near Alsot, bands of armed peasants raided the French carts carrying Belgian silver and gold to Lille.[74] On 11 March, the Executive Council's commissioners in Brussels wrote to LeBrun in despair: "The situation is becoming more and more alarming. All the destructive passions have been stirred up: the tocsin of insurrection is being sounded in the country places, the curés and the monks are firing on our detachments, the black cockade has been raised in Grammont. . . . Everywhere fanaticism and the aristocracy are raising their horrible head, democracy is silent, and trembling awaits the outcome of the fight between the soldiers of liberty and the automatons of despotism."[75]

When Dumouriez had learned that the allies had driven the French armies in Belgium behind the Meuse and Sambre and Belgium was in full insurrection, he immediately left Holland "to reassure the Belgians and to bring them back to us through the confidence that they have in me, particularly by diminishing the tyranny and the injustices which they have been through up till now."[76] Arriving in Antwerp, the general took charge, restoring calm by dismissing the French commissioners for attempting to imprison deputies of the city's primary assembly and dividing the responsibilities of the municipal government between the assembly and the French military authority.[77] The next day he arrived in Brussels, where he found wholesale desertions, looting, and a population terrorized by Estienne's *sans-culottes.* Dumouriez immediately closed the city's gates, put the local garrison on patrol to arrest all deserters, and ordered Estienne arrested and his legion disbanded. Dumouriez suspended the Executive Council's commissioners Gouget-Deslandres and Robert for ordering the confiscation of ecclesiastical silver and gold and arrested Chépy for making threats against

the Belgians.[78] He ordered the return of everything confiscated from Belgian churches. Enraged and frustrated, he turned his considerable energies to reversing the anarchy unleashed by the defeat of his armies. Confident of eventual military success, he believed that strong action could halt the turmoil and that he could still save the Belgians and Liégeois from the Austrians.

On 11 March, Dumouriez addressed the Brussels assembly, apologizing for the actions of the French commissioners and soldiers: "Citizens! I have come to tell you that they have committed wrongs and even crimes against the Belgian people. I proclaim to you that I wish to repair the first and punish the second."[79] He pledged to release all Belgians arbitrarily arrested and to free all hostages. Entrusting the Brussels government to the Assembly, he asked them to persuade their counterparts throughout Belgium to recognize the French as liberators and friends and to assure them that they would never again face persecution by French agents: "Belgians, count on our bravery and our own feelings of fraternity. I was sad to learn of your justified complaints. I am going to end them. I recognize no other force than that of the law, and I will plead your defense against injustice, just as I have defended you and will still defend you against the bayonets of the enemy." Dumouriez's speech electrified the Assembly. The deputies rose, applauded enthusiastically, and escorted Dumouriez to the Grand Place, where they were met by a crowd that burst into applause. The general's measures worked. His proclamation, posted everywhere in both French and Flemish by the military commandants, reestablished order.

On 12 March, Dumouriez wrote what would become his last letter to his friend and collaborator LeBrun, informing him of his actions in Antwerp and Brussels and intention to do the same throughout Belgium and asking the foreign minister to recall the commissioners to Paris. Dumouriez understood that his actions had defied the Convention and could result in his recall and trial, but he took the risk nonetheless, telling LeBrun, "You know my firmness and the soundness of my intentions. That should be enough for you."[80]

Knowing that he had staked his career, perhaps even his life, on his decision to restore order and security in Belgium without authorization, on 12 March he wrote a fateful letter to the National Convention describing the Belgian situation and justifying his actions as necessary to save the French armies.[81] He blamed the defeats of his armies on Pache and the previous ministers of war and the Belgian uprisings on the commissioners, whom he called extortionists and agents of tyranny who had antagonized the Belgians by their brutal and insolent zeal. Dumouriez accused the commissioners of deceiving the Convention about their actions, forcing some Belgians to vote for annexation, giving the priests grounds to denounce the French as profane thieves, and committing violent and unjust

acts. As a result, villages were revolting and arming against the French, who were now surrounded by a sea of enemies. Placing this insurrection in an historical context, Dumouriez equated the actions of the French with those of *ancien regime* despots: "Review the history of the Low Countries, and you will see that the Belgian people are good, honest, decent folk who yearn to throw off the yoke of suppression. The Duke of Alba, the cruelest of Phillip II's henchmen, had eighteen thousand of them put to death at the hands of executioners. The Belgians have avenged themselves through thirty years of civil warfare, and only their attachment to the religion of their fathers had made them revert to Spanish subjugation." By angrily imposing blame for the Belgian fiasco on the commissioners and several French policymakers, specifically Pache (now the powerful mayor of Paris) and Cambon, Dumouriez aroused great animosity in both the Convention and the Jacobin Club.

In Paris, LeBrun's correspondence indicates that he worked feverishly and almost exclusively on Belgian affairs throughout March. Greatly concerned about the impact of French defeats on the Belgians, he was especially troubled by the Austrian reoccupation of Liège, though he never ceased hoping that the French would recapture his adopted homeland.[82] LeBrun had been surprised by Dumouriez's actions of 11-12 March, as he had believed that the annexationist campaign had been a success and that Belgians had at last been persuaded to adopt the principles of liberty and equality.[83] Sharing Dumouriez's anger at the commissioners for ordering the removal of the silver and gold from the Belgian churches "at the very time when the hearts of the Belgians were so important," LeBrun recalled to Brussels all the commissioners suspended by Dumouriez but instructed them to remain in Belgium to promote democratic principles and annexation, repeatedly admonishing them to treat the Belgians equitably: "Our principles tell us to respect the people's rights."[84] LeBrun wholly supported Dumouriez's strong measures and communicated the Executive Council's full approval to him.[85] He defended Dumouriez's proclamation of 12 March to Rens, the Vonckist leader, and promised it would be implemented peacefully.[86] LeBrun demanded that more troops be sent to restore order and, above all, to prevent an Austrian reconquest.[87]

Support for Dumouriez's effort to reestablish Belgian confidence seemed unanimous among the Executive Council's commissioners and LeBrun's agents. Even the commissioners Dumouriez had suspended in Brussels, Gouget-Deslandres and Robert, praised his accomplishments to LeBrun, noting that it had been the arbitrary powers given to the Convention's commissioners that had necessitated Dumouriez's dictatorial proclamation: "The general had taken on himself the entire responsibility for saving the republic. He will conquer the enemy, who is already retreating before us, and the insurrection of Grammont is calm since the arrival of

Dumouriez."[88] Only Bexon and Rilgault, the Council's commissioners at Namur, qualified their support, criticizing Dumouriez's dictatorial tone but acknowledging that he was "the man who perhaps holds in his hands the fate of the republic."[89] LeBrun's secret agents were unanimous in their praise for Dumouriez. Gonchon and Foucarde lauded him for not abandoning the Belgians, "a people made to be free." From Brussels, Baret praised Dumouriez's leadership in a time of crisis: "We must finish our task and fulfill Dumouriez's promises."[90] Milon praised the general's monumental effort to restore confidence, good will, and order and believed that he alone could correct French mistakes.[91] Rens, speaking for the Belgian-Liégeois patriots, maintained that Dumouriez had saved Belgium from counterrevolution: "There is no longer any doubt but that a terrible coup was being prepared throughout Belgium. . . . If our enemies had penetrated as far as Brussels, it would have been the end of all democrats. Fortunately, Dumouriez's courage and sensible conduct has prevented this massacre, which would perhaps have ended in Paris."[92] Only Camus and Treilhard, the Convention's commissioners in Lille, appeared to challenge Dumouriez's orders, visiting him in Louvain to discuss the measures he had taken in Antwerp and Brussels. Dumouriez told them that he was restoring order in Belgium and honor to the French Republic and showed them his letter of 12 March to the Convention; the commissioners, powerless to modify or reverse his actions, relented.

By returning to Belgium, Dumouriez had established civil order and unity of command for the French armies there. Generals Miranda and Valence ended their feud over strategy, and the troops regained their confidence and morale. Dumouriez quickly and methodically worked to repair the damage done to his armies by the Austrian offensive.[93] Confident that he alone could save Belgium, Dumouriez now prepared for another victory to match Valmy and Jemappes and drive out the Austrians. He intended to then call for the suspension of the decree of 31 January and put an end to the annexation efforts, sure that the Convention would once again bow to his will and he would at last create the independent Belgian Republic for which he had labored so long and so hard. At the same time, Dumouriez knew that defeat could bring the Convention's decree of accusation against him, a trial, and execution.[94]

The French armies were encamped around Louvain, and the troops had taken fresh courage when Dumouriez had reached them on the evening of 11 March. Establishing a regular order of battle, he divided his army into three divisions: the right and left wings, commanded by Valence and Miranda, respectively, and the center, commanded by Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, Duke of Chartres. Again choosing an offensive strategy, Dumouriez planned to advance on Cobourg's army immediately, without

calling for reinforcements either from d'Harville's corps at Namur or from his own expeditionary force still in Holland.

The imperial army, concentrated around Saint-Trond and Landen, continued its offensive, marching toward the French at Louvain. On 17 March both armies, positioning themselves in and around the town of Neerwinden, prepared for what proved the decisive battle of the 1793 campaign. Dumouriez was betting all on a victory that would regain Belgian allegiance, restore order, and override the Convention's opposition. At seven in the morning of 18 March, Dumouriez ordered a surprise frontal attack on the Austrian army with the intention of defeating Cobourg's forces in a pitched battle. The right wing under Valence and the center under the Duke of Chartres fought the Austrians all day, losing ground at Racour, Overwinden, and Neerwinden, but at nightfall, with heavy losses on both sides, the outcome of the battle remained undecided. At two in the afternoon Miranda's left wing had been defeated by Archduke Charles, and without notifying Dumouriez, Valence, or the Duke of Chartres, Miranda retreated to Tirlemont, deciding the battle. The next day, the French army fell back in defeat to Louvain.

In a proclamation to his troops immediately after the battle, Dumouriez blamed defeat on the left wing, citing the cowardice of the volunteers and faulting Miranda for not having requested permission before retreating to Tirlemont.[95] Later the Convention's commissioners Danton and Delacroix, visiting Dumouriez's headquarters on 21 March, would confirm Miranda's incompetence after discussing the battle with his troops, who swore they would no longer follow him, and recommended that Miranda be called before the bar of the Convention to explain his role in the defeat.[96] However fault is apportioned, the battle of Neerwinden decisively dashed Dumouriez's hopes for Belgium.

The Army of Belgium retreated toward Louvain on 19 March, demoralized and plagued by desertions.[97] The Austrians followed closely, sending detachments around Dumouriez's left wing in an attempt to cut the French supply line and sever communications with France. Near the woods of Bautersem on the main road to Louvain, on 21 March Cobourg again attacked and defeated Dumouriez's army. Dumouriez could no longer determine the strength of his army, enforce orders, or punish insubordination. He was so dependent on his lieutenants that he could not reproach them for fear of alienating them, his soldiers so discouraged by retreat that they were ready to desert at the slightest setback.[98] He wrote to General Duval, "The only way to fight is to have an army."[99] With no option but to continue his retreat, Dumouriez began to consolidate his army behind a defensive line near the Franco-Belgian border before receiving Beurnonville's orders from the Executive Council to do so on 23 March.

In his letters to Beurnonville and his generals, Dumouriez despaired over his defeats and the appalling condition of his army. Those defeats had led to opposition to him in the Convention, and on 17 March the Committee of General Defense decided to send Danton and Delacroix to Dumouriez's headquarters to demand that he retract his letter of 12 March. Upon their arrival on 21 March, Dumouriez refused to apologize, telling them that the letter had deliberately been written to disassociate French policy in Belgium with tyranny and injustice, adding that the letter had in fact revived much Belgian goodwill and ensured the safety of his defeated and retreating army. He wrote to the president of the Convention asking him to delay action on his command until he could confer with its commissioners, which became moot when the two fled Cobourg's attack and returned to Paris.[100]

Now under increasing attack politically as well as militarily, Dumouriez decided once again to take matters into his own hands, this time to negotiate a separate armistace with the Austrians. On 22 March, he sent his most trusted aide-de-camp, Colonel Montjoye, to Cobourg's headquarters to discuss a truce on the basis of an exchange of prisoners, a return of the wounded, and terms for the suspension of hostilities. This resulted in a tacit agreement on a cease-fire while Dumouriez's army retreated through Brussels.[101]

Dumouriez's major objective in these negotiations was to end the war. He understood that not only was Belgium again lost but France itself could now expect to be invaded from its Belgian frontier, and that England's naval power would complete the hostile encirclement of the threatened republic. Domestically, the ever-rising discord in the Convention and recent outbreak of civil war in the Vendée and the western departments made France especially vulnerable to attack. Hope of defending France, he believed, depended on getting the remnants of his army and the sixteen unharmed battations in the Dutch Netherlands safely back to France, where they could regroup against the allies. Yet he knew that upon his return to France he would surely be tried before the Convention's new Revolutionary Tribunal and forced to relinquish command of his army—a loss, as he saw it, not simply for him but for an endangered France, which would be forced to face the allies without the assistance of its most experienced and celebrated military leader.

Dumouriez, a diplomat and statesman as well as a soldier, recognized that the allies would agree to peace only on the condition of a Bourbon restoration. Knowing that the increasingly radical Convention would never make such a concession, he told Louis-Philippe on 22 March that he had decided to negotiate peace on the basis of a march against the Convention and the restoration of a constitutional monarchy. This seeming abandonment of the republican principles to which Dumouriez had sacri-

ficed so much throughout his career cannot be adequately explained as simply animus or ambition. Rather he appears to have sincerely believed that the increasingly Paris-dominated Convention no longer represented all of France and must be replaced by a truly representative government that could establish peace with Europe.[102]

Although Dumouriez has come to be viewed as a crypto-royalist and traitor to the republican cause, he unwaveringly believed that the legitimacy of any government, whether that of Belgium or France, could be based only on the will and consent of the people. He reasoned that only a new government in Paris, one established on the basis of a constitution acceptable to most shades of French opinion, could rally the people to her defense.[103] Dumouriez's plan was to march on Paris with his army, have the prince, Louis XVII, abducted from the Temple, proclaim him king, overthrow the Convention, and restore the Constitution of 1791. Although Dumouriez was clearly aware that his plans to march against the Convention in Paris would be considered treason to the republic declared on 10 August, to his mind he was not acting as a traitor to the original revolution and the constitution that it had produced, nor to any Bourbon who accepted a constitutional monarchy. At the least, he believed, these plans would give the French time to organize a defense against the allied invasion that was inevitable should he fail.

Dumouriez did not disclose this plan to Beurnonville, but in his letter of 24 March he did inform him that he was negotiating with Cobourg for an exchange of prisoners and wounded and would continued to keep him informed about the progress of the retreat.[104] He also shared his personal anguish with his old comrade-at-arms:

> Everything that I have foreseen only too often has happened. Disorder and dismay are at their height. I doubt if I can gather the army under the walls of Brussels. There is an awful mixture of bravery and fear in this poor army. We can do nothing about it until we are near the border; then I will have a sense of how to reorganize it if you still trust me when the retreat is over. . . . The army is very dispirited and has an extreme desire to return to France. As for me, I am really indifferent to my fate and the judgment of men.

Cobourg, who believed that the French forces outnumbered his own, welcomed an armistice, and the Austrian army remained at Louvain while Dumouriez's forces made a slow and orderly retreat to Brussels.[105] Dumouriez was well received by the people of Brussels and conferred again with the deputies of the Brussels assembly.[106] Yet many Belgians, disillusioned with the French retreat, welcomed the Austrians' return.

Dumouriez, increasingly bitter about the end to which he and his Belgian plan had come, continued his evacuation and blaming Pache and the

condition of the French army for his misfortune. Receiving Beurnonville's orders to retreat to France on 24 March, he responded that "It was impossible for me to wait for your orders on the evacuation of the Low Countries. Neither am I forced by the enemy. . . . We owe all our disgraces to our own army and its total disorganization, something that I foresaw. You can find proof of it in my published letters to the minister Pache. Here is the origin of all our misfortunes."[107] Dumouriez ordered d'Harville to abandon Namur, D'Moran to leave Tournai for Lille, and Marassé to evacuate Mons and proceed to Courtrai.[108]

On 25 March, Dumouriez's army reached Ath, near Courtrai, where he negotiated with Colonel Karl von Mack, Cobourg's chief of staff, for a continuation of the safe evacuation of French forces from Belgium and told him of his plan to march on Paris and restore a constitutional monarchy under Louis XVII.[109] Mack agreed to the suspension of hostilities while the French evacuated Belgium and retired behind the French frontier and to not invade France or interfere with Dumouriez's march on Paris. Dumouriez promised the Austrians a full evacuation of Belgium by 30 March and ordered his army to retreat to Tournai on the Franco-Belgian border. Cobourg accepted these terms because his depleted army was too exhausted to continue fighting in Belgium and he had been unable to obtain reinforcements from the Duke of Brunswick in the United Provinces.[110]

Meanwhile, opposition to Dumouriez in Paris continued to grow. On 24 March, Miranda appeared before the bar of the Convention and that evening defended himself before the Jacobin Club by blaming Dumouriez for the defeat at Neerwinden.[111] He also discredited his former commander in conversations with Montagnard deputies Bancal des Issarts and Pétion, the latter a member of the Committee of General Defense.[112] Two days later, a Jacobin circular was distributed in Paris denouncing the general, portraying him as a traitor in the tradition of Lafayette for letting the Prussians escape after Valmy, defending Pache against his criticisms, and accusing him of abandoning Belgium.[113] Whether sincerely blaming Dumouriez for the loss of Belgium or simply sensing the changing mood in the Convention, Jacob Pereyra, a Jacobin who had also been one of Dumouriez and LeBrun's trusted Belgian agents, called for an immediate inquiry into Dumouriez's conduct. On 26 March, the Jacobin Club sent Pereyra and two other Belgian patriots and former agents of LeBrun, Pierre-Jean Proli and Louis-François Dubuisson, to meet with Dumouriez, ostensibly to discuss Belgian affairs.[114] The three Jacobins first called on LeBrun to ask him to recommend them to Dumouriez, claiming the purpose of their mission was to discuss LeBrun's recent proclamations on annexation and the best methods of annexing Belgium to France.[115] They apparently believed that such a recommendation would encourage the

general to take them into his confidence and perhaps overcome suspicions he might have regarding their Jacobin ties, as their subsequent actions strongly suggest that their intention was to extract damaging statements from Dumouriez that they could use to prove he had treasonous plans.[116]

The Jacobin emissaries had three conversations with Dumouriez over three days and returned to Paris on 30 March, reporting to LeBrun and turning a précis of their conversations into a highly damaging report that they presented to the Committee of General Defense.[117] Despite Dumouriez's denial of many of the incriminating details of these conversations, they were consistent with much of what Dumouriez had also communicated to Louis-Philippe and Beurnonville. According to the report, the general had raged against the Jacobin Club and the deputies of the Convention, whom he called tyrants and regicides, and told them that he intended to march on Paris and restore the constitutional monarchy.[118] The three also resurrected Robespierre's November claim (which Dumouriez had stoutly denied) that Dumouriez aspired to become a Belgian dictator or chief of state, claiming that he told them of his intention to lead an independent and democratic Belgium, under Austrian protection if necessary.[119]

Having gathered the information they needed, the three Jacobins stopped at Lille on their return to Paris and there informed the commissioners of the Convention of Dumouriez's treasonous plans. As Carnot reported to Guyton de Morveau, president of the Committee of General Security, the commissioners were unsure how to proceed: "Lille is in an awful disorder, all our fortresses are overrun by hordes of unknown emissaries, our countryside is in an inexpressible excitement: the aristocrats are radiant, General Dumouriez has brought his disloyalty to a climax, and we have been hesitating about whether or not we should arrest him at once. But we do not know how to take over from him, and we are afraid of completing the disorganization of the army, which is nothing but a horde of tramps."[120] Unable to disregard Dumouriez's apparent treason, however, the commissioners ordered Dumouriez to come to Lille and answer certain allegations.[121]

The following day, 29 March, Dumouriez responded that he was too busy directing the evacuation of Belgium to leave his army, and the commissioners decided to wait until he had evacuated Belgium and fortified the frontiers before going to Saint-Amand to arrest him.[122] On that day, the beleaguered general also learned that he had been accused of treason and would be called before the bar of the Convention. Explaining to Beurnonville the necessity of remaining with his army rather than appearing before the commissioners at Lille, he added that "Besides, my dear Beurnonville, I really consider my head too invaluable to hand over to an arbitrary tribunal. The only way I can be judged is while I am alive and by

the whole nation, as I would be by history after my death."[123] In this letter, Dumouriez openly communicates his outrage and determination to fight on against his enemies, foreign and domestic:

> I already imagine all the slanderous things those villains who agitate the republic will say about this way of dealing with the enemy. I shall defend myself with vigor against my enemies within and without the country. Tell the Committee of General Security that once I get back to the borders of France, I will split my army into two parts: on the one hand to prevent a foreign invasion and on the other to give back to the sound and oppressed part of the Assembly the strength and authority of which it is deprived and which throws it into degradation in the eyes of the people of the departments.

Also reporting on the visit of the Jacobin deputies and his surprise that they carried a letter of recommendation from LeBrun, his close ally in his Belgian plan, the general observed that

> When it is up to the point of saving the state, when the whole of France is about to be ruined, I see only factions, sinister plans, denunciations, crimes. I see neither the love for liberty nor liberty itself. I see all individuals ready to stab one another and throw mud at each other. I see everywhere the shame of a great nation whose only resource is ungratefulness toward its unhappy generals who for a year now have been sacrificing everything: the design is to condemn them without knowing who will take their place.

Rather than be led like a lamb to slaughter, Dumouriez told Beurnonville, he would fight for his life and that of his army: "The nation's dice have been loaded. It is not enough to be standing; we must act. It will be neither with clamors, nor with daggers, nor even with pikes; it will be with good arms, wisdom, and discipline that we will save France. That is especially with a wise plan and this plan tells us to make peace."

As he retreated the next day from Tournai to the French frontier, Dumouriez had another interview with Mack, confirming the allied pledge not to invade France and Dumouriez's promise to complete the evacuation of Belgium the next day and to march on the Convention in eight days.[124] Dumouriez then wrote again to Beurnonville, detailing the evacuation and assuring his concerned friend that although he was not losing heart, he was extremely alarmed by the French political situation.[125] He complained angrily about the Jacobin attacks on him in the circular of 26 March and what he saw as their intentional misrepresentation of everything he did. Defending his letter of 12 March to the Convention, he defiantly stated, "I will always say the truth, and I would be disrespectful to the representatives of the nation if I deceived or deluded them." He was

not accusing the entire National Convention of evil intentions, he declared, but just the radical minority that had managed to reduce the majority to silence. Without directly revealing his plans to overthrow the Convention, Dumouriez's communications with Beurnonville described a bleak situation in which a weakened France must take advantage of this chance to remove the radicals before it was too late. If it were a crime to have this opinion, he allowed, then he was a criminal.

By 31 March, Dumouriez's armies had evacuated Belgium and secured a strong defensive line on the French frontier from Dunkirk to Porrentruy. There he wrote to Beurnonville for the last time, reporting that he had heard of General d'Harville's arrest and knew that he too would soon be arrested.[126] Arguing that the French armies were demoralized by desertions, lack of provisions, and the arrests of their generals, he begged Beurnonville to champion peace negotiations. But this letter was too late. Beurnonville and four commissioners of the Convention were already on their way to Dumouriez's headquarters at Saint-Amand with orders to arrest the general and take him to Paris for trial and for Beurnonville to assume command of the French armies.

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CHAPTER 10

ENDGAME, MARCH-DECEMBER 1793

The presence of Dumouriez's handpicked minister of war and confidant among the Convention's delegation sent from Paris to arrest him was dramatic evidence of how quickly and completely the tide had changed in the capital. Until the Austrians had invaded Belgium in early March, the general had been almost universally lauded as a revolutionary hero, even at the Jacobin Club, where he was admired and supported by Danton and Robespierre as the celebrated victor of Valmy and Jemappes and the champion of democracy in Belgium and Liège.[1]

But French military defeats in March further fueled the domestic unrest and factional struggles that had so preoccupied the deputies of the National Convention since their declaration of war on Great Britain and the United Provinces in early February. On 24 February, the Convention had decreed the Levy of Three Hundred Thousand, in effect reestablishing conscription. The law was unpopular, particularly in western France, and counterrevolutionary demonstrations against conscription and taxation had broken out in the Vendée. In Paris, between 25 and 26 February the increasingly bitter *sans-culottes,* suffering from rising prices and bread shortages they attributed to hoarding in the provinces and the provisioning of the army, angrily protested against the Girondin deputies for defending free trade policies and appearing unsympathetic to their demands for price controls.

On 4 March, the Convention, in the midst of voting on the Belgian annexation requests, had learned of the French defeat at Aix-la-Chapelle. Beurnonville had assured the deputies that the Austrian victory was unimportant and that Dumouriez would be master of the left bank of the

Rhine within a few weeks. But when commissioners Danton and Delacroix rushed back to Paris to report on the military disasters, the Montagnard leaders had responded with proposals for immediate action against the counterrevolutionary forces, domestic and foreign, now threatening the republic. On 8 March, Danton pressed the Convention to take immediate measures to recruit new troops to reinforce the armies in Belgium, including a levy of Parisian volunteers and a recruitment campaign in the sections. The Girondins, understandably alarmed by a move to arm the angry *sans-culottes,* tried unsuccessfully to defeat Danton's motion. The next day, the Convention authorized the sending of eighty deputies as representatives-on-mission to the departments, giving them full authority to increase recruitment, expedite war emergency measures, and root out and quell counterrevolutionary sentiments and activities.

The Montagnards sought to deflect blame for the fearful turn of events onto their enemies in the Convention. On 8 March Robespierre, supported by fellow Montagnards Danton, Delacroix, and Carra, presented the decree of accusation against Generals La Noue and Stengel that had so outraged Dumouriez. Desfieux led the first Montagnard attack on Girondin foreign policy, accusing the Girondins of declaring war on England before the French navy was in a state of readiness.[2] Other Montagnards then called for the trial of Girondin opponents such as Brissot, Buzot, Gaudet, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Barbaroux, Gorsas, and Clavière.[3]

The French retreat from Belgium and Liège and the renewed possibility of an allied invasion had caused considerable anxiety across France, especially among the Parisians, who had not forgotten Brunswick's threat to destroy the city if the royal family were harmed. On the evening of 9 March, a crowd gathered outside the Convention, shouting threats and calling for the removal of all "traitorous" deputies who had failed to vote for the execution of the king. The crowd moved to the Jacobin Club, urging its supporters there to purge the Convention of such deputies, and then poured into the streets, destroying Girondin printing presses that included Brissot's *Le Patriote français* and Gorsas's *Courrier.* When the disturbances of 9-10 March threatened to become a full-scale insurrection, the now-alarmed Jacobins refused to support the rioters, Dubois-Crancé telling the crowd that the massacre for which it called was horrible and likely to lead to the overthrow of the republic.[4]

After those disturbances, the Montagnards had moved toward a closer alliance with the Paris sections and greater influence in the Convention. Compelling the deputies to postpone discussion of the destruction of the Girondin's presses, they obtained a decree forbidding any deputy to act as a journalist or an editor, thereby stopping the Girondins from publicly condemning the mob's actions and its Jacobin allies. As the protestors demanded, Danton proposed the creation of the Revolutionary Tribunal, a

single court charged with trying and executing anyone found guilty of counterrevolutionary offenses, especially those, such as hoarding or aiding foreign armies that would impede the war effort. The court would have a judge and jury selected by the Committee of General Security, whose members were all Montagnards, but its real power would be wielded by the Tribunal's Montagnard chief prosecutor, Antoine Fouquier-Tinville.[5] Since this court would effectively give the Montagnards the power to condemn and execute all opponents, the Girondins violently fought the motion but were unable to block its passage. The very day the court was established, 12 March, petitioners from the section Poissonnière came to the Convention to demand the resignation of Beurnonville and the impeachment of Dumouriez.

On 13 March, Vergniaud, chief Girondin spokesman, warned the deputies that the rising disorder and attacks on persons and policies unpopular with the *sans-culottes* were moving the Convention close to dissolution. Accusing the Montagnards of sedition by supporting popular unrest in Paris, he appealed to the deputies on both sides of the Convention to unite to suppress the sections and end the growing anarchy by ordering the arrest of the Paris Revolutionary Committee. But Marat, speaking next, argued that deputies must ally with the people of Paris to save the republic. Although the deputies were fundamentally and implacably divided over the increasing influence of Paris over the national government, they all recognized that the rising popular discontent and violence presented a danger to the Convention itself. This threat now forced each deputy to align himself either for or against the repression of the Paris sections, even though doing so left them all vulnerable to their opponents' attacks. Shouts of treason and demands for impeachment became everyday events, turning former friends and fellow revolutionaries against one another.

To this point, however, the Convention had remained united over the command of the republic's armies. Although Beurnonville had resigned on 12 March in response to the petitioners' demands, the deputies reelected him two days later.[6] And despite the military setbacks, and contrary to later Montagnard claims, both groups fully supported Dumouriez as commander in chief of the French armies in Belgium. Danton, speaking on 8 March, had praised the general's courage and ability. Robespierre had remained calm after learning of the first French defeats in Belgium and Liège, on 10 March announcing to the deputies that "No one dares to doubt the invincibility of a French army properly led against tyrants, and I have confidence in Dumouriez. Three months ago he wanted to invade Holland. If he had done so, not merely would we have escaped our present misfortunes, but there would have been a revolution in England." On 12 March, Marat replied to the petitioners' demands by saying that Dumouriez was irreplaceable. That evening at the Jacobin Club, Billaud-Varenne

defended Dumouriez's leadership as necessary to the armies of the republic, and Barère declared that Dumouriez alone was worth an army.[7]

But this support had begun to fade with the receipt of Dumouriez's 12 March letter explaining his extra-legal action in Belgium in defiance of the Convention.[8] Bréard, president of the Convention, fearing increased consternation if the letter were made public, had secretly referred it to the Committee of General Defense. The Committee's 17 March decision to send Danton and Delacroix to demand an explanation of Dumouriez's actions and a retraction of his accusations against the deputies constituted the first sign of the Convention's opposition to the commander in chief. Although the Girondins were still a majority in the committee, the Montagnards now shifted their attack on the Girondins by linking them to Dumouriez, making them responsible by association for his military failures. On 17 March, the undercurrent of anti-Dumouriez sentiment in Paris surfaced in an attack on Gensonné by Desfieux at the Jacobins that referred to his close association with Dumouriez, and it became more vocal after Dumouriez's defeat at Neerwinden on 19 March.[9] Full Montagnard opposition to him began after Miranda's appearance at the Jacobin Club on 24 March, where he blamed Dumouriez for the defeat.

On 26 March, the increasingly Montagnard influenced Convention acted to extend its control over the war effort by voting to enlarge the membership of the Committee of General Defense and electing a new committee with stronger Montagnard representation. The original committee of thirteen had included eleven Girondins, one Montagnard, and one *à l'écart* deputy; the new committee of twenty-five consisted of ten Girondins, eleven Montagnards, and four deputies *à l'écart* or on mission.[10] Meeting for the first time that same day, the new Committee resumed discussion of Dumouriez's 12 March letter. Robespierre, now charging that the general had become a dictator in Belgium whose political opinions had become alarming to all "friends of liberty," called for his removal from command. Both Danton and Camus had objected, however, defending Dumouriez for the last time. The next day, Cambon denounced Dumouriez for printing and distributing his 12 March criticism of the Convention throughout Belgium and Liège. Robespierre agreed, declaring that the general had become too powerful and demanding that the letter of 12 March be read before the full Convention.[11]

The Committee of General Defense met again on 29 March to determine what course of action to take concerning Dumouriez. At that meeting, Beurnonville read Dumouriez's 28 March letter in which the general, defending himself and his generals, had charged the deputies themselves with failure by leaving the army destitute, demoralized, and in dire need of replacements.[12] As a result, Dumouriez's letter warned, little stood in the way of a successful allied march on Paris: "The enemy has the chance to

take, without any resistance, all the fortresses they would like and come to Paris. Think that even without taking time to stop and capture our fortresses they have 20,000 cavalry, enough to burn and put to the sword that part of the kingdom near Paris, and I do not have the same resources that I had in Champagne to stop them. At that time, the energy of the republic was at its peak and the National Convention had cohesion and authority." Expatiating upon what he saw as the deputies' failures, lack of republicanism, and responsibility for the disasters in Belgium and France, Dumouriez also made an unintentional or incautious reference to France as a "kingdom." In response, Pétion and Bancal des Issarts denounced him, telling Committee members that, according to Miranda, Dumouriez was a traitor and was planning to march against the Convention.[13] Provoked by Dumouriez's letters of 12 and 28 March and Miranda's allegations, the Committee rrecommended to the Convention that Dumouriez and his staff be arrested and brought before the bar of the Convention for impeachment.[14]

On 30 March, the Convention approved the committee's proposal and selected Beurnonville and four deputies, Camus, Quinette, Lamarque, and Bancal des Issarts, to set out immediately for Dumouriez's headquarters at Saint-Amand to arrest him.[15] En route, the delegation met two couriers from Saint-Amand who gave Beurnonville Dumouriez's letters of 29 and 30 March, the first reporting that Dumouriez would be negotiating with the Austrians the next day and declaring his willingness to sacrifice his life for France but not for the Jacobin-dominated Convention, the second defending his letter of 12 March and complaining bitterly of the Jacobin attacks against him. These letters, which not only repeated his charges against the Convention but as much as announced his intention to overthrow it, undoubtedly helped quell whatever misgivings the delegation might have had about their mission.

The delegation stopped briefly at Lille to inform the commissioners there of their task, then continued on with a military escort and arrived at Saint-Amand on 1 April. Dumouriez had received word of the delegation's coming but, according to his memoirs, was unprepared to find Beurnonville, his comrade-in-arms and good friend, among its members.[16] When the deputy Camus immediately attempted to arrest Dumouriez and his general staff, Dumouriez ordered the delegation arrested and its members handed over to the Austrian advanced posts.[17]

By moving against the Convention, Dumouriez crossed his Rubicon. Now his last hope was to persuade his officers and troops to join him in marching on the Convention, restoring the constitutional monarchy, and negotiating peace with the allies. On 1 April, he issued a proclamation calling on the army to purge France of assassins and agitators and restore their unfortunate country to the peace destroyed by the crimes of her representatives: "It is time to take up again a constitution to which for a

period of three years we swore to adhere, and that gave us liberty and alone can protect us from the licentiousness and anarchy into which we have been plunged." He informed his generals of the Convention's attempt to arrest him and announced his intention to reestablish the Constitution of 1791, leading an incredulous General Valence to write to General Biron,

> My dear Biron, I think I ought to warn you of the incredible situation in which we find ourselves. Dumouriez, who is supposed to be under arrest, is having the minister and the commissioners arrested. Lille and Valenciennes are full of deputies, the enemy is, to the tune of sixty thousand men, victorious five miles away from us, and we have no provisions and no fodder. This is what the republic has come to! All the generals arrested except me because I am wounded. Ligniville, d'Harville, Bouchet, Miranda, etc. The traitors who are selling France are having the generals arrested in order to hand the country over more easily.[18]

Dumouriez also wrote to the administrators of the department of the North, swearing to defend the frontier and proclaiming his intention to march on Paris and restore the Constitution of 1791. And as he had in Belgium and the United Provinces, he composed a lengthy proclamation to the people of France explaining and defending his intentions.[19] Reminding his fellow citizens of his long career in the service of their country, he declared that it was not he but the Jacobin-dominated Convention who had caused France's defeat and pledged that once he had reestablished order, the constitution, and peace, he would retire from public life. Dumouriez appealed to all French citizens to support him against "the Marats, the Robespierres, and the criminal sect of Paris Jacobins who have conspired to bring about the downfall of the generals." He also moved immediately to secure the three major frontier fortresses—Condé, Lille, and Valenciennes—and the loyalty of the municipal administrators and military personnel in those cities. General Neuilly, commander of Condé, quickly assured Dumouriez of his wholehearted support. Dumouriez sent General Lescuyer to secure Valenciennes for his cause and General Miaczynski to gain the support of Lille. Meanwhile, he spoke to his troops at the camps of Bruille and de Maulde to rally them to his banner.

The Convention acted swiftly after its decision to arrest and try Dumouriez, issuing arrest warrants for all Dumouriez's known associates and sending commissioners to the northern frontier to rally the generals and administrators to its side. In addition to Carnot and Lesage-Senault, already at Lille, Bellegarde, Cochon, and Lequinio went to Valenciennes on 1 April, and Gasparin, Briez, Duhem, Roux-Fazillac, Duquesnoy, Du Bois, du Bais, and Delbrel to Douay on 2 April. The Convention's representatives organized committees, issued proclamations urging support for

the republic, and sent emissaries into the soldiers' camps, which were in great disorder and in the process of disbanding, to propagandize for the Convention and restore morale.[20] They wrote individually to the generals remaining loyal to Dumouriez, ordering them to affirm their loyalty to the republic and to arrest Dumouriez.[21]

The Convention's efforts to secure the loyalty of the military and civilian population were successful, and Dumouriez's attempts to secure the frontier fortresses failed. General Lescuyer and his troops entered Valenciennes, but did not arrest the commissioners. Bellegarde, Cochon, and Lequinio had been able to sway the populace with pro-republican speeches, and Generals Lescuyer and Ferrand, observing the pro-Convention consensus at Valenciennes, took the oath to the republic on 3 April.[22] General Miaczynski tried but failed to secure Lille for Dumouriez. Dumouriez had counted on General Duval, the commander of Lille, to arrest Carnot and Lesage-Senault, but Duval remained loyal to the Convention and arrested Miaczynski when he and his troops entered Lille. Despite Lescuyer's oath, he and General Miaczynski were arrested and sent to Paris.

Swayed by the energy and dedication of the commissioners, other military commanders rallied to the Convention. General Tourville, commander of Maubeuge, and his chief of staff and the commune's general council declared their disappointment in Dumouriez's proclamation and their loyalty to France's elected government.[23] On 4 April General Dampierre, commander of Quesnoy, announced that he opposed Dumouriez and supported the republic, and the Executive Council and the Committee of General Defense appointed him the new commander in chief of the French armies.[24] The same day General Neuilly, commander of Condé, read the Convention's proclamation against Dumouriez to his troops.[25] On 3 April, Carnot and Lesage-Senault were able to announce victory to the Convention: The majority of the population on the frontier had remained loyal to the republic, Dumouriez was without supplies, ammunition, or forage, and his army was abandoning him.[26]

Yet Dumouriez still believed his troops would remain loyal to him. With Valence and the Duke of Chartres, on 3 April he went to the camps of Bruille and de Maulde to rally the army behind him. At Bruille, he promoted General Rosières from commander of the Belgian-Liégeois legions to commander of the Army of the North, and Rosières's troops received Dumouriez with great enthusiasm and swore their loyalty. Flushed with success, the three generals rode to the Camp de Maulde, commanded by General Leveneur, where Dumouriez reviewed and spoke to his troops, asking them to follow him and save France.[27] The Convention, he charged, was hopelessly divided and ruling unjustly, and the Jacobin deputies were sending commissioners to disorganize the army and arrest and execute its generals. Dumouriez declared that the next day he would render an

account of his actions toward the Convention and the army could then "judge between it and me, which one of us has the safety of his country closest to his heart. Follow me, I will answer for everything!"

The army hesitated. The troops of the line, especially the infantry and cavalry, were very attached to Dumouriez, but the national volunteers, strong republicans who dominated the artillery, repudiated him.[28] An extremely popular commander, Dumouriez had been a stout-hearted defender of republican values, and republicanism was strong in the new revolutionary army. Yet the troops now associated the republic with the nation and saw the Convention, the representative body of the nation, as its sole authority. French troops had not only proclaimed the republic but had also fought and died for it. To them, the Austrians and Prussians represented the repudiated *ancien régime,* and the republic had executed the French king in defiance of all Europe. The army's republicans also considered the Jacobins the sincerest friends of liberty and equality. As Gonchon, LeBrun's agent in Belgium, had reported, "The soldiers all want the Revolution and the Republic, they want to rally around the Convention."[29] At first the troops had believed the Convention wrong to indict Dumouriez for suffering defeat at Neerwinden and evacuating Belgium, but when he had turned over the four commissioners of the Convention and the minister of war to the Austrians and they learned that he was negotiating a cessation of hostilities with Cobourg, the troops saw Dumouriez's actions as treason. Once Dumouriez had lost his association with the nation and been accused of treason, he had lost the army.[30] In the end, Dumouriez was defeated in large part by his own success in building a republican army.[31]

The following day, 4 April, Dumouriez intended to inspect the garrison at Condé to strengthen troop loyalty before an afternoon meeting with Colonel Mack at Boussou to coordinate plans for a march on Orchies. He traveled with an escort of just his general staff—the Duke of Chartres, Touvenot, Montjoye, and eight orderlies—rather than his usual regiment of guards. On the way, Dumouriez met General Neuilly's aide-de-camp, who warned him not to proceed, as the Condé units were dangerously agitated and his life would be in danger. Dumouriez had stopped to write orders for Neuilly and his cavalry regiment to meet him at Doumet when a battalion of national volunteers under Lieutenant Devout passed on their way to Valenciennes. Suddenly, a group of sharpshooters from the battalion came riding toward Dumouriez and his escort, who took flight. Dumouriez barely escaped, riding north through the fields bordering the Scheldt and crossing the river into enemy territory. There he and his small band found refuge in an Austrian camp commanded by General Latour.

At the nearby Château Bury, Dumouriez, shaken but still determined, met with Mack and decided to make one more desperate attempt to win back his army. Dumouriez asked Cobourg to issue an Austrian promise

not to invade France while Dumouriez reestablished the constitutional monarchy and to aid Dumouriez and his army in that undertaking. But instead of strengthening Dumouriez's cause, Cobourg's proclamation confirmed his treason in the eyes of the army and most of France, who agreed with Prudhomme's view that "Never since the beginning of the Revolution had there been a more skillful or perfidious foreign declaration."[32]

On 5 April, Dumouriez returned to his troops with his chiefs of staff and, according to his later account, an escort of fifty imperial dragoons.[33] At the camps of Bruille and Château l'Abbaye, Dumouriez was well received by the French troops, who shouted, "Long live Dumouriez!" At the Camp de Maulde, the troops assembled for review and were at first receptive to the general. Dumouriez mixed easily with the soldiers, who broke lines to question him about the volunteers' attack on him the preceding day and about his escape to the Austrian lines. But while Dumouriez and his staff prepared to leave for Saint-Amand, the 45th regiment turned hostile, and a messenger informed him that his artillery and most of the troops had left for Valenciennes. This desertion effectively ended the army's support for Dumouriez. Knowing that surrender to the Convention would be fatal, Dumouriez and his chiefs of staff rode to the Austrian outpost at Tournai under the command of General Clairfayt.

As word of Dumouriez's attempted march on Paris and subsequent defection reached the capital, the Montagnards quickly used it to consolidate their growing power in the National Convention. The Girondin's influence had been considerably reduced since the king's death in January, and though they still exercised influence through membership on the Convention's committees, most were not involved in the day-to-day activities of the government. But now the apparent treason of the formidable and popular Dumouriez gave the Montagnards an opportunity to seize control of the Convention and replace the remaining Girondins on the major committees.

On 31 March, waving the report of Proli, Pereyra, and Dubuisson on their conversations with Dumouriez and the decree of accusation against him, the Montagnards launched a vigorous campaign against the Girondins by associating them with Dumouriez. At the Jacobin Club that night, Danton escaped being denounced for his association with Dumouriez only by delivering his own skillful attack on the general and, by association, his Girondin allies. He justified his previous praise of Dumouriez as an attempt to flatter him into returning to "right principles" for the sake of the republic. But when Dumouriez "began perverting public opinion by circulating poisonous documents" criticizing the deputies, he claimed, "I recognized the treacherous plan of a criminal faction. Its intention was to divide the Mountain, but the Mountain is indivisible, like the Jacobins and the Republic!"[34] Speaking next, Marat linked the Girondins even more closely to Dumouriez,

claiming that the general was in fact the pawn of the Girondin faction who had provoked the declaration of war and maintaining he would never be satisfied "until the heads of the traitors roll on the scaffold."[35]

The Montagnard attack on Dumouriez and the Girondins continued relentlessly, at both the Jacobin Club and the Convention. Despite their support of Dumouriez since March 1792, when he had become minister of foreign affairs, individual Montagnards quickly dissociated themselves from the general and the war, and in speech after speech emphasized Dumouriez's earlier Girondin associations.[36] On 3 April, Robespierre painted Brissot as Dumouriez's intimate friend and the Girondins as "the first apostles of the war . . . and they showed us all peoples, beginning with the Belgians, ready to fly toward the French constitution; they showed us the tricolor floating on the palaces of all the kings."[37] The Montagnard's successful attempt to associate Dumouriez with a failed Girondin foreign policy and the Girondins with Dumouriez's treason, long accepted by historians, was thereby launched.[38]

The final displacement of the Girondin leadership in the Convention began immediately after Dumouriez's defection. On 6 April, the deputies transformed the Committee of General Defense into the Committee of Public Safety, whose membership was exclusively Montagnard.[39] As proposed by Bertrand Barère, the Committee would meet in secret, empowered to oversee all government activity and enact decrees for the administration of the country and the war— "to take all measures necessary for the internal and external defense of the Republic." Danton emerged as its unofficial leader.

Despite LeBrun's close friendship and collaboration with Dumouriez, he had retained unqualified support for his Belgian policies throughout the crisis in March. Although not wittingly involved in implicating Dumouriez as a traitor, LeBrun had presented the report of Proli, Pereyra, and Dubuisson to the Committee of General Defense on 31 March, and because of this and his continued Jacobin support, LeBrun escaped immediate association with Dumouriez. In fact, when Beurnonville was selected to replace Dumouriez on 30 March, LeBrun was again chosen as interim minister of war.[40]

LeBrun had not escaped criticism from outside French governmental circles, however. Two former associates, themselves vulnerable to suspicion, had attacked him. Emmanuel de Maulde, the former French ambassador to The Hague, had denounced LeBrun at the Jacobin Club on 9 March after the French defeat and before the Convention a week later described LeBrun's entire foreign policy as inept.[41] He accused LeBrun of twice sabotaging peace negotiations with Great Britain and the United Provinces, thereby expanding the European coalition against France. De Maulde's impact may have been slight, as he himself was facing trial as a traitor, although on 30

March the *Révolutions de Paris* took up this attack. Prudhomme accused the foreign minister of ineptitude and inexperience and claimed that the conduct of LeBrun and "his supporters" hinted of treason.[42] Then on 29 March, Ruelle, a Vonckist who had worked for LeBrun in Brussels and Paris, launched a scathing attack on him before the Committee of General Defense.[43] Ruelle charged that even before becoming foreign minister, LeBrun had been intent on forcing a revolutionary political plan on the Belgians, through propaganda if possible but by force if necessary, and in the process had alienated even the Belgian democrats. He also claimed LeBrun had wasted French funds on propagandizing in Belgium and deceived the National Convention about the purposes of the decree of 15 December and the legality of the annexation votes. Fundamentally, Ruelle accused LeBrun of aborting a true revolution in Belgium, alienating the Belgians from the French, and being the "prime cause of all these disasters."

Despite the defeat in Belgium, Dumouriez's defection, and his former associates' charges, LeBrun continued to demonstrate deep concern for the Belgian situation and the Belgian-Liégeois patriots. On 1 April, Metman reported to him that the evacuation of Belgium had forced the commissioners of the Executive Council to gather in Lille when the Austrians reoccupied the Belgian provinces. This report and others responding to LeBrun's inquiries into the mistreatment of the Belgians provided detailed accounts of French fanaticism and confirmed earlier Belgian reports about the misconduct of the French armies.[44] On 4 April, LeBrun asked the Convention's commissioners at Lille for the number of Belgian patriots who had followed the army in its retreat from Belgium and invited them to reassure the patriots that the Executive Council had adopted measures to help them.[45] When on 18 June LeBrun handed the Executive Council his last report on Belgium, he described the events of the French evacuation and urged that the Belgians be compensated for the heavy losses they had suffered as a result.[46]

With the reconstitution of the Committee of General Defense and its transformation into the Committee of Public Safety, LeBrun effectively lost his control over foreign policy, though he remained nominally minister of foreign affairs and of war. Reflecting what he later admitted was his "by nature overconfident" character, he apparently considered his position in the government secure despite his connection with Dumouriez, which the Montagnards could exploit against him as effectively as they had against the Girondins in the Convention.[47] Indeed, he felt safe enough that at the 1 April meeting of the Committee of General Defense, LeBrun acknowledged that Dumouriez had been his friend and a hero, and that he regretted the loss of Dumouriez's friendship and great talents.[48] Only then did Jacobin suspicion of him surface.

The first Jacobin attack came on 11 May from Louis-Antoine Pio, an official of the Paris Commune who had become LeBrun's friend and advisor over the previous year. In his denunciation, Pio claimed that he had begun a surveillance of the foreign minister in March with the aid of an unidentified "insider" at the ministry.[49] He accused LeBrun of bad personnel choices, especially among the Belgians, and denounced his connection with Walckiers, whom he mistakenly accused of being a former aide-de-camp to General Lafayette. He further claimed that the ministry's staff was riddled with the "creatures" of Dumouriez and that when Dumouriez had been declared a traitor, LeBrun had ordered that the general's papers be brought to his office.[50] Finally, Pio claimed that the newspaper of the foreign ministry, *Parette de France,* had shown partiality to the Girondins by publishing the manifestoes of Cobourg and Dumouriez. In an attached comment, Pio admitted that although Danton had acknowledged receiving these accusations, the Committee of Public Safety, with the exception of Robert Lindet, had continued to support LeBrun. Although Pio's accusations did not prompt action against LeBrun, his charges were the earliest indication of the Jacobin's intention to bring LeBrun down because of his association with Dumouriez.

Anti-Girondin sentiment culminated with the 31 May-2 June insurrection in Paris, during which as many as 100,000 militants from the sections and a detachment of the 20,000 National Guard troops in Paris, commanded by General Hanriot, converged on the Convention, surrounding the Tuileries palace where the deputies were meeting. The Parisians demanded that the Convention purge the leading Girondin "traitors." Although the majority in the Convention initially resisted this abrogation of their authority, on 2 June the deputies ceded to the militants' demands, decreed the ministers LeBrun and Clavière and twenty-nine Girondist deputies under accusation, and ordered their arrest. The insurrection confirmed Montagnard control of the Convention.[51] But the remaining ministers on the Executive Council refused to acknowledge LeBrun's treason and, despite his arrest, he continued to direct the ministry of foreign affairs, accompanied to and from all meetings by an armed guard. Although no longer in control of foreign policy, LeBrun remained at his post and never gave up hope that he would be cleared of the charges against him.

Hearing of LeBrun's arrest, the Liégeois patriots expressed their sympathy and support and protested his arrest in an open letter to the French people read on the floor of the Convention.[52] The president of the Liégeois municipal administrators, LeBrun's old friend Bassenge, also wrote to LeBrun to express the Liégeois outrage at his arrest and their strong attachment to him.[53] Surmising that LeBrun's patriotism had been questioned, Bassenge indignantly described LeBrun as the Liégeois saw him:

> This is the man who, in 1789, was under a decree of arrest issued by the General Government of the Low Countries for having spread the principles of the French Revolution; who, in 1790, was outlawed by the Belgian Congress for having upheld democracy against the Brabançon aristocracy; who was put under a decree arrest by the Chamber of Wetzler when he dedicated his talents and his time to the defense of the unfortunate Liégeois, a people who have always worshiped liberty and been the victims of despotism; whom the Electoral College of the Empire, assembled at Frankfort for the crowning of Leopold, banished from the whole of Germany, because he had worked unremittingly to banish servitude from there; and whom the Imperial Commission established at Liège destined for the scaffold at the time of the return of the Bishop. Surely this man, raised by the French republic to the post of its foreign minister, could not have deceived it or betrayed it. As a guarantee of this we have your record of civic leadership with which you distinguished yourself in the eyes of our country, which in the fine days of its freedom bestowed on you the title Citizen and adopted you as one of its sons.

The Liégeois maintained that LeBrun had proved his love of liberty and hatred of tyrants long before becoming French foreign minister, and that the French government had wrongly accused him of counterrevolutionary sympathies. Because of LeBrun, according to Bassenge, France had aided the Liégeois in their struggle for freedom, and the Liégeois had overwhelmingly voted for annexation to France. LeBrun, he claimed, "has never ceased to console and cheer his brothers, to interest France in their cause, and to dedicate himself completely to their defense."

The house arrest under which the Girondin leaders were placed was so lax that many fled to their departments, where some joined the Federalist Revolt against the central government. The ensuing rebellions in Bordeaux, Marseille, and Lyon posed a growing threat to the government, which in response increased the power of the Committee of Public Safety. By late summer, under the threat of an imminent allied invasion, the Committee pressured the Convention to pass the decree of the *Levée en Masse* mobilizing of all the nation's resources for the war effort, including universal conscription and eventually producing the largest army in Europe.[54] On 5 September, the Parisian *sans-culottes,* increasingly fearful of the advancing Austrian forces, the counterrevolutionary threat in the Vendée, the Federalist Revolt, the surrender of Toulon to the British, and the ever-worsening economic conditions, again marched on the Convention demanding a revolutionary army, price controls, and a purge of internal enemies of the republic. In response, the Committee of Public Safety became a virtual dictatorship of twelve men who established "The Terror." The Committee expanded the scope of the Revolutionary Tribunal by enacting the Law of Suspects and arresting and trying all "enemies of the Republic" in a vast wave of repression.[55]

LeBrun had been replaced as foreign minister on 21 June. Yet firmly believing in his innocence, he remained in Paris and waited anxiously to be cleared of the charges against him. On 5 September, Isabeau, ever a loyal friend, warned LeBrun that the Committee of Public Safety had ordered his arrest on charges of treason. Once out of office, LeBrun had almost been forgotten until Jean-Nicolas Billaud-Varenne, on becoming a member of the Committee on 6 September, demanded in the Convention that the former foreign minister's name be added to the list of Girondins for arrest and trial by the Revolutionary Tribunal: "At a moment when the people are calling national justice down on the heads of all the guilty, there is one truly criminal man whom your decrees have not yet reached. I am referring to the ex-minister LeBrun, the man who made us quarrel with all the powers of Europe, the man who had the impudence to call Dumouriez a great man after his treachery; if the Convention had opened its eyes to the crimes of this traitor, he would have already paid with his head for all his perfidiousness."

Beginning in October with the execution of Marie-Antoinette, a wave of trials and executions of the Girondin leadership led to the guillotining of Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné and Madame Roland. To consolidate the dictatorial power of the Committee of Public Safety, Louis-Antoine Saint-Just declared to the Convention on 10 October that, "There is no prosperity to hope for as long as the last enemy of liberty breathes. You have to punish not only the traitors, but even those who are indifferent; you have to punish whoever is passive in the republic, and who does nothing for it. For since the French people has manifested its will, everything opposed to it is outside the sovereign. Whatever is outside the sovereign is an enemy."[56]

Finally aware of the danger he faced, LeBrun became a fugitive in Paris, disguising himself as a Liégeois citizen named Le Brasseur and living at the house D'Harcourt on 117, rue de la Liberté. In hiding, he wrote a soul-searching account of his conduct as foreign minister in response "to the grave and numerous imputations which have been made against me."[57] Knowing that, if captured, he was doomed to the same fate as the Girondins, he admitted to writing those reflections with "no hopes of disarming the enemies whom vengeance, jealousy, vindictive hypocrisy, despair of being found out, the weight of recognition, or the need of a certificate of civic virtue have successively unleashed upon me." His stated motives were therefore personal rather than political: "But if I owe to my country the sacrifice of my life, I owe to no one the sacrifice of my reputation. I have children whom I love—I must at least leave them a name for which they do not have to blush. . . . Thank heavens that my life, although driven hither and thither, has up till now been exempt from dishonor, and I have no remorse on my conscience." Acknowledging regret for some of his actions and shortcomings, he nonetheless acquitted himself of self-interested or dishonest inten-

tions and maintained that he had always loved his country. He protested the way in which his earlier associations were now being used to accuse him: "Because I had business or occasional connections or even connections of friendship with men who were scheming at that time secretly in their hearts, or who might since have conceived and brought into the open infamous treachery, wicked plots, and cowardly conspiracies against the liberty of all, against the safety of the country, and against the unity and indivisibility of the Republic, does it necessarily follow that I must have been their accomplice, known of their guilty schemes, and been their supporter, defender, and agent?" Given his service to the revolutionary cause, he vigorously dismissed the charges leveled against him as absurd:

> *Enemy of Liberty!* Great heavens! I, who have been fighting and suffering for it for ten years!
> *Conspirator!* And for whom? I, whom all the despots have proscribed and condemned to death!
> *Traitor to my Country!* I, who no longer know in what corner of the world I can lay down my head in safety, since this dear country of mine has ceased to be a sure place of refuge for me!
> Ah! I will declare it as openly as ever: No, no, I am not guilty of these great abuses. I can say this because I feel it deeply and it is the truth.

Shortly after completing this memoir, LeBrun was betrayed by his landlord, and on 23 December 1793 he was seized and imprisoned. According to the government, LeBrun's flight from revolutionary justice was itself an admission of guilt. Moving quickly, the public prosecutor, drew up charges of treason on 26 December, and LeBrun's trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal followed the next day. In his act of accusation, he charged LeBrun with being the principal accomplice of the major traitors of the republic, d'Orléans, the Girondins, and the Rolandists; of having conspired with "the Machiavellian Pitt" to open the Scheldt to international trade and thereby increasing the number of France's enemies; of having defended Dumouriez before the Committee of General Defense; and of having planned with Dumouriez the French defeats that had caused the loss of Belgium.[58] Finally, LeBrun was charged with treason for "having, whether by giving way to pressures from abroad or by joining with the enemies of the republic and by taking either spontaneously or at their instigation perverse or false measures, participated in their plots and plans, and even conspired with them against the unity and indivisibility of the republic."

Although Fouquier-Tinville admitted that "no papers were seized that could clearly establish the crimes with which LeBrun had defiled himself," that did not present an insuperable obstacle to a guilty verdict. Among the papers seized at his arrest had been his apologia of his tenure as foreign

minister, which Fouquier-Tinville now used against him, misquoting LeBrun's actual words, presenting rhetorical questions as admissions, and underlining phrases he claimed were especially treasonous and damning:

> Because fallacies, bolstered by all that is the most seductive about eloquence, most touching about sensibility, most specious about appearances of fairness and patriotism, may have misguided my mind and given my operations a false direction, it follows that my heart has been corrupted, that errors as such were dear to it, and that the wrong which may have resulted from them was done by me consciously, willingly, and on purpose.
>
> Because I had business or occasional connections or even connections of friendship with men who were scheming at that time secretly in their hearts or who might since have conceived brought out into the open infamous treachery, wicked plots, and cowardly conspiracies against the liberty of all, against the safety of the country, and against the unity and indivisibility of the Republic, does it necessarily follow, etc.

Although LeBrun's trial of 27 December was largely a formality, the revolutionary government provided eleven witnesses to accuse him, four of whom appear most significant in the notes of the juror Topino-LeBrun: Cambon, Dubois-Crancé, Pio, and Collot d'Herbois. In these unsubstantiated accusations, the major elements of LeBrun's Belgian plan—his organizing of patriots in the Belgian provinces and the United Provinces to foment revolution, his opening of the Scheldt to win the favor of the Belgians, and his close collaboration with Dumouriez—were represented as traitorous to the revolutionary cause to which he had devoted his adult life. Of little consequence to his accusers was his response that all his actions had been approved by the Executive Council and supported by the Convention, including many of those who now accused him.

The Revolutionary Tribunal found LeBrun guilty of treason, and he was executed on 28 December 1793. For his response to this sentence, we have only the closing passages of the reflections he had written while in hiding:

> And where are the men who have done more for the Revolution? Where are those who have served with greater fidelity and perseverance under the banner of liberty? Where are those who have dared during this long period of upheaval to defy tyrants on their thrones and declare terrible and hard truths to them, at a time and in places where there was true courage in so doing? Last of all, where are the past and present administrators, who after having submitted their political and revolutionary lives to the same test as I am to undergo, can flatter themselves that they can emerge with a clearer conscience than I? If there is one single one, let him tie me up to the stake of death, and let him cause the blade of national justice to fall on my head.

Conclusion

In April 1793, the Austrians consolidated their control of Liège and the Belgian provinces. In the following year, however, the French victory at Fleurus led to the French reconquest of Belgium and Liège, and in October 1794 both were annexed to France without new plebiscites, the deputies now deeming the requests from the communal assemblies in February and March 1793 as sufficient. Belgium remained part of France until February 1814, when the allied armies captured Brussels. In 1815, with the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, the Congress of Vienna joined Belgium to the United Provinces under William I of the House of Orange. In 1830, the Belgians finally achieved independence through revolution against the Dutch, and the following year they created a constitutional monarchy under Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. In Belgium today, almost two centuries later, the cultural divisions that doomed LeBrun and Dumouriez's efforts to create a united and independent Belgium continue to plague that nation.[1]

Following his defection in early April 1793, Dumouriez remained in Brussels for a short time and then traveled to Cologne, seeking a position at the elector's court. From the major European newspapers, however, he learned that he had become an object of suspicion and opprobrium not only among his own countrymen but among the royal houses, aristocracies, and clergy of Europe, who shared the elector's dismissive view that "General Dumourier never quitted the Republican party till he was vanquished."[2] In 1794 Dumouriez, eager for vindication in the eyes of *ancien régime* Europe and hoping to gain a military appointment from one of the royal governments, wrote and published in Hamburg a first volume of memoirs in which he offered his version of the previous year's events. In its preface, Dumouriez's bitterness is as palpable as his purpose is plain:

> It is among the misfortunes that attend General Dumouriez, to be abandoned by the world; to be the outcast of society; to be compelled to fly from city to city to seek an asylum from the rage and madness of his countrymen who imagine they will serve the public cause and rid the world of a traitor if they can but plunge a dagger into his breast; to avoid the wretch

> whose avarice would tempt him to gain the price offered for his blood by the Convention. Compelled to live among strangers under the disguise of an assumed name, and to submit to the pain of listening to opinions on his conduct equally severe and unjust, that are industriously circulated by hired journalists of the different courts of Europe, who bestow their praises only on the successful, and everywhere encountering emigrants who detest him with as little reason, and as much ferocity as the Jacobins . . . he obeys the call of duty by giving to the world the memoirs of his life.[3]

These memoirs, in which his selective account of events understated his revolutionary values and stressed his royalist associations, have since served as a self-generated source of misinformation on his life and career. This first volume was subsequently incorporated into a four-volume work published in Paris in 1822–1823.

For several years after his defection, Dumouriez wandered about Europe, unsuccessfully seeking asylum and a military appointment from the courts of the Germanies, Great Britain, Russia, and the exiled Count of Provence, the future Louis XVIII. His fortunes changed dramatically when he met Lord Horatio Nelson in Hamburg in October 1800. Europe was then engaged in the War of the Second Coalition against Napoleon, and Britain, France's most formidable enemy, rightly feared a French invasion. Dumouriez detested Napoleon as a tyrant and began a significant collaboration with British leaders to defeat him, including an elaborate plan for the defense of Great Britain that opens with the words, "It is time to cut the thread which holds Bonaparte's sword suspended over England." The work, finished in May 1804, ensured a position for Dumouriez in the War Office, where he served as an advisor to Pitt, Nelson, and Wellington.[4] Dumouriez thus found asylum in England, receiving a generous British pension and remaining there the rest of his life. Once in London, he became the man of the hour; as one of London's journals noted, "a dose of Dumouriez is the unfailing antidote to Bonapartist poison."[5] By 1822, Dumouriez had settled at Turville Park near Henley on Thames, where he died on 14 March 1823 and was buried in the Henley Parish Church. His epitaph reads, "Here lieth, awaiting the belated justice of his country, Charles-François Dumouriez born at Cambrai January 25th 1739."

Ironically, Dumouriez's most lasting achievement may have been to distort the truth about his life. The memoirs are so readily available and ostensibly authentic and fit so well with many historians' preconceptions that they have been taken largely at face value. Despite his large body of written work and others' references to him in European archives, no one has until now given Dumouriez's unpublished documents—or the un-

identified papers of LeBrun that were filed with them in the National Archives—a systematic reading.

The story of LeBrun and Dumouriez is, in the end, one of many such ironies. Not the least of these is that these two men of unusual intelligence and courage, both eloquent and prolific writers and speechmakers who left behind a voluminous written record of their lives and times, have been so overlooked in the histories of the period, Dumouriez dismissed as a traitor and LeBrun consigned to an occasional footnote.[6] The reasons for this are undoubtedly multiple. One is the temptation to read history backward, looking almost exclusively at the evidence that supports the known outcome. Knowing that Dumouriez defected to the enemy, for instance, makes it easy to assume that he had been driven by counterrevolutionary sympathies all along, or that being executed with the Girondins made LeBrun one of them. Another has been the tendency to view French revolutionary history through the lens of domestic politics, especially as it transpired within the National and Legislative Assemblies, the Convention, and the Jacobin Club. This has led to relatively little investigation of the records of the Executive Council and the ministries of foreign affairs and war, where most of the story of these ministers' direction of foreign policy is found. Similarly, the dependence of most historians of the French revolutionary period on French sources has led them to often neglect the relevant archival resources of other nations that provided much of the material on which this investigation is based. The historical importance of both men has all along been more evident to the people and histories of other nations, particularly in Belgium and Liège, where they have generally been viewed as revolutionary heroes.

But even as this work argues for greater recognition of the important role played by Dumouriez, LeBrun, and the Belgian plan in the foreign policy and history of the early years of the Revolution, it also recognizes their shortcomings and failures. To some extent, both were victims of their Enlightenment beliefs, especially their idealistic trust in reason, education, and the power of the written word. Both believed to the end that they could change the course of events through educating others in republican ideals and appealing to natural law and reason. While this made them eloquent opinion-shapers and inspiring leaders, it also led them to seriously, perhaps tragically, underestimate the power of emotions: the anger and frustration of the people of Paris; the deep attachment to the Catholic Church among the Belgians; and the mutually reinforcing distrust of and desire for power that led to the internecine power struggles among the French deputies. But if their devotion to Enlightenment ideals could sometimes render them naïve, overconfident, or even arrogant, in that they certainly were not alone in the extraordinary history of their times.

Should we view LeBrun and Dumouriez as traitors to or victims of the Revolution to which they devoted most of their adult lives? Surely their shared devotion to the Belgian plan contributed to conditions that led not only to the War of the First Coalition but also to the Terror that followed. Certainly the war and Dumouriez's defection contributed to the economic suffering and fear of invasion, retribution, and treason that motivated the actions of the *sans-culottes* and the Committee of Public Safety. It is true that both men and their compatriots at times appeared more responsive to the needs of the Belgians and Liégeois than to those of their own countrymen, and that their single-mindedness may have blinded them to the risks they were imposing on their already beleaguered nation. But the contemporary record gives no reason to believe their motivations were cynical or self-aggrandizing and offers considerable evidence that they genuinely believed that their efforts to liberate Belgium and Liège served the present and future well-being of France—an argument persuasive enough to have rallied most of the revolutionary government to their cause. While the war cannot be blamed on Dumouriez and LeBrun (or even their Girondin supporters) alone, a deeper understanding of how and why it unfolded as it did requires a fuller consideration of their role than is given in earlier accounts. And as of those so many revolutionaries with whom they pledged their lives to the cause of freedom and democracy, their story is ultimately a tragic one.

Notes

Introduction

1. This interpretation is based on the research in Patricia Chastain Howe, "French Revolutionary Foreign Policy and the Belgian Project, 1789–1793," PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1982.

Chapter 1

1. LeBrun was not illegitimate, as Frederick Masson claims in *Le Département des affaires étrangères pendant la Révolution 1787–1804* (Paris, 1877), 162. According to the Noyon archives, LeBrun was baptized 28 August 1754, "son of Mister Christophe-Pierre Tondu, churchwardern, and Elisabeth-Rosalie LeBrun." Becoming a Liégeois citizen, he changed his name to Tondu-LeBrun and later dropped the Tondu. G. de Froidcourt, "Les Réfugiés Liégeois à Paris en 1793 et Pierre LeBrun," *Le vieux-Liège* 114, no. 5 (1956): 55.
2. According to the Register of the Parish of St. Martin-en-Isle, they were married 28 July 1783; the Register of the Parish of St. Adalbert shows that Jean-Pierre LeBrun was born 21 July 1784, and baptized 27 April 1785, both in Archives de l'Etat à Liège, Liège (hereafter AL).
3. Henri Pirenne, *Early Democracies in the Low Countries,* trans. J. V. Saunders (New York: 1913), 239–40 ; Paul Harsin, *La Révolution Liégeoise de 1789* (Brussels, 1954), 1–23; Suzanne Tassier, *Les démocrats Belges de 1789* (Brussels, 1930).
4. Henri Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique* (Brussels, 1926), 343.
5. M. H. Francotte, "Essai historique sur la propagande des encyclopédistes français dans la principauté de Liège," in *Mémoires couronnés et autres mémoires publiés* (Brussels, 1880), 30:113–47, 154, 220–64.
6. In general, the democratic movement and the rising opposition to privilege were influenced by the ideas of Locke, Rousseau, Diderot and others, but it was the revolutionary events in America, the United Provinces, and France that best publicized the ideal of popular sovereignty. See R. R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution* (Princeton, 1959). For more on the conceptions of democracy and rights as understood in Liège at the time, see Pirenne, *Early Democracies,* and Harsin, *La Révolution Liégeoise.*
7. G. de Froidcourt, *François-Charles comte de Velbruck* (Liège, 1936), 135.

8. *Register of the Correspondence of the Journal général de l'Europe* came from the archives of the Société Typographique founded in 1785 by LeBrun in Herve, Belgium, and was photocopied from a copy found in a Belgian bookstore (Pierre M. Gason, Aubel). *Register*, J. J. Smits to M. Dejoye, 4 June 1785; LeBrun to M. Leclerc, 5 August 1789.
9. Ibid., LeBrun to Crapart, 25 July 1785.
10. Ibid., LeBrun to Angel, 19 July 1785.
11. M. Thiry, "Une carrière de journaliste au pays de Liège, P. M. H. LeBrun et le journal de Havre," *La Vie Wallonne*, 14 (1954): 375–92, 15 (1955):11–28, 43–54, 80–92. The complete collection of the *Journal général,* from 2 June 1785 to 26 August 1792, is contained in forty-seven volumes in the Bibliothèque Nationale (hereafter BN).
12. *Register*, LeBrun to Lagarde, 22 December 1789.
13. Ibid., LeBrun to Buchoz, 18 July 1785.
14. See also J. R. Censer and J. D. Popkin, eds., *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France* (Berkeley, 1987); K. M. Baker et al. (eds.), *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture,* vol. 1. (Oxford, 1987).
15. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* trans. Thomas Berger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, 1989); James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001).
16. Miles to Pitt, 13 November 1786, in William Miles, *The Correspondence of William Augustus Miles on the French Revolution,* ed. Charles Miles (London, 1890), 1:23–24. Miles's correspondence offers an important firsthand account and insight into the British view of many of these events.
17. *Journal général*, 1 June 1785.
18. Ibid., 3 January 1786.
19. Ibid., 27 July 1785.
20. Ibid., 24 May 1787, 12 September 1786.
21. M. Puttemans, *La censure dans les Pays-Bas Autrichiens* (Brussels, 1935), 290.
22. Fabry Papers, Bibliothèque de l'Université de Liège, Liège (hereafter BUL).
23. *Journal général*, 17 March 1788. On Joseph II, see Walter W. Davis, *Joseph II* (The Hague, 1974), 15.
24. Ibid., 8 September 1789.
25. Ibid., 21 July 1789.
26. As reported by LeClerc, Minutes of the Council of General Government, 1 August 1789, Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels (hereafter AGR).
27. *Register,* LeBrun to LeClerc, 5 August 1789.
28. Orient Lee, *Les comités et les clubs patriotes Belges et Liégeois* (Paris: 1931), 29.
29. Miles, *Correspondence*, 1:132–33.
30. *Journal général*, 10 September 1789.
31. Ibid., 20 August 1789.
32. Ibid., 2 November 1789.
33. Miles, *Correspondence,* 29. In January 1790, LeBrun translated and published in the *Journal général* Miles's *Cursory Reflections on Public Men and the Public*

Measures on the Continent (London, 1790), which argued that the Belgians and Liégeois must unite and become an independent republic.

34. The legislative proceedings of the French revolutionary government, including debates, committee reports, decrees, and correspondence, referred to in these chapters can be found in *Archives parlementaires,* Ière série, ed. Jérome Mavidel Émile Laurent et. (Paris, 1862–1913). The responses of the Assembly to these overtures are also discussed in A. Borgnet, *Histoire des Belges à la fin du dix-huitième siècle* (Brussels, 1844), 215–16.
35. *Journal général*, 8 May 1790.
36. *Plan de Municipalité pour la Cité, faubourgs et Banlieue de Liège* (Liège, 1790), BC. Bibliothèque Communale de la Ville de Liège, Liège (hereafter BC). Henckart, born in Liège in 1761, was a publicist, poet, city magistrate, and member of the Patriot party who fled to Paris with LeBrun when the revolution failed. His papers are in the BUL.
37. Ferdinand Henaux, *Histoire du Pays de Liège* (Liège, 1872–74; 3rd ed., 1958).
38. "Pierre Mari-Henri LeBrun admission à la bourgeoisie," 23 July 1790, Archives de l'Etat à Liège hereafter; *Journal général*, 23 July 1790.
39. Correspondence between the various ministers and rulers concerning these conferences can be found in J. P. L. van de Spiegel, *Résumé des négociations qui accompagnèrent la révolution des Pays-Bas Autrichiens avec des pièces justicatives* (Amsterdam, 1841).
40. See H. V. Evans, "The Nootka Sound Controversy in Anglo-French Diplomacy," *Journal of Modern History* 46 (December 1974): 609–40.
41. L. P. Gachard, ed., *Documents politiques et diplomatiques sur la révolution belge de 1790* (Brussels, 1834), 312–14.
42. *Journal général*, 24 September 1790.
43. Minutes of the Grande Commune, 23 December 1790, 170; Bassenge to Doncéel, 2 January 1791, BUL.
44. Bassenge Papers, Archives Nationales, Paris (hereafter AN).
45. The Austrian regime feared the paper's revolutionary message and wide readership. On 2 October 1791, Metternich, imperial minister to Brussels, sent excerpts to chancellor Kaunitz (AGR), and on 19 January 1792 it was banned from the Austrian Low Countries.
46. Masson, *Département des affaires étrangères*, 156.
47. Fabry to Levoz, 21 July 1791, BUL.
48. Fabry to LeBrun, 9 November 1791.
49. *Journal général*, 10 December 1791.
50. André Lasseray, "Les corps Belges et Liégeois aux armées de la République," *Revue d'histoire moderne* 4 (1919):161–95.
51. D'Aubreme to Vonck, 5 April 1791, Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels (hereafter BR).
52. *Journal général*, 11 January 1792.
53. Walckiers, *Un projet de Convention entre les patriotes belges tendant à établir la bonne harmonie parmi eux* and *Bases de la Constitution à établir dans les provinces Belgiques,* BR.
54. At the time, the population of Liège was roughly 1 million, that of the Belgian provinces 3 million.

55. Walckiers to Vonck, 26 October 1791, Vonck to Walckiers, 6 December 1791, BR.
56. Fabry to LeBrun, 26 November 1791, BUL.
57. Walckiers to the Diplomatic Committee, 17 December 1791, AN. Walckiers also sought support from General Biron of the Army of the North; Walkiers to Biron, 21 December 1791, Archives de la Guerre, (hereafter AG).
58. Vonck to van der Steene, Vonck to Leunckens, 5 January 1792, BR.
59. Vonck to LeBrun, 17 January 1792, BR.
60. Van der Steene to Vonck, 18 January 1792, BR.
61. Sta to Vonck, 30 September 1791, BR; Van der Steene to Vonck, 19 January 1792, BR.
62. Two letters attribute these works to LeBrun: Van der Steene to Vonck, 20 January 1792, Archives du Ministère des affairs Etrangères, Paris (hereafter AMAE); Levoz to Fabry, 17 March 1792, BUL.
63. Vonck to Van Schelle, Brussels, 25 March 1792, BR.
64. Maret published *Manifeste des Belges et Liégeois unis à Paris* and a laudatory review in *Le Moniteur*, 29 February 1792.

CHAPTER 2

1. Eugène Cruyplants, *La Belgique sous la domination Française (1792–1815): Dumouriez dans les ci-devant Pays-Bas Autrichens* (Paris, 1912), 1:103; P. Verhaegen, *Le conseiller d'Etat Cornet de Grez,* (Brussels, 1934), 192.
2. Dumouriez, *La vie et les mémoires du général Dumouriez, avec des notes et des éclaircissements historiques,* ed. Berville and Barrière (Paris, 1822), 1:7.
3. Ibid., 1:10.
4. Cruyplants, *La Belgique*, 1:230. Guibert was the author of *Essai general de tactique* (1770) and *Défense du système de guerre* (1779).
5. *Mémoires*, 1:237. Late in the war, Dumouriez was seriously wounded and captured by the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttell and convalesced under the care of his staff, who are believed to have saved his life. Ironically, Dumouriez would later defeat his brother, Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, at the Battle of Valmy in September 1792.
6. Dumouriez, *Essai sur l'Espagne* (1764), *Essai sur le Portugal* (1766), *Système d'attaque et de défense du Portugal* (1767), Dumouriez Papers, AN.
7. In his memoirs (1:137–39), Dumouriez had only admiration for Paoli and the Corsicans, and declared that "The conquest of Corsica is an inexcusable piece of injustice on the part of the court of France."
8. Dumouriez also consulted with the Marquis de Chauvelin, his former commander in the Corsican campaign, and with the Count de Broglie, who was in charge of the king's covert foreign policy. On this secret policy, see Broglie, *The King's Secret, Being the Secret Correspondence of Louis X with his Diplomatic Agents, from 1752–1774,* trans. E. W. Balch (London: 1879); Choiseul-Stainville, Etienne-François duc de, *Mémoires du duc de Choiseul* (Paris, 1904).
9. *Mémoires,* 1:177.
10. Ibid., 1:198.

11. Ibid., 1:241.
12. Ibid., 1:295–96.
13. The expansion of the harbor and fortifications at Cherbourg was central to Louis XVI's intention to keep France a major naval power According to William Doyle, the vast project employed 3,000 workers, and the king's visit to inspect the work in 1786 was the only time he traveled outside of Versailles and Paris until 1791.
14. Pouget de Saint-André, *Le Général Dumouriez, 1739–1823* (Paris, 1914).
15. Dumouriez to Montmorin, 14, 23 May 1789, BN.
16. *Mémoires,* 2:23. "Instructions of a Baillage." In this work Dumouriez also presented a plan for the division of the Estates General into chambers for a more equitable distribution of the duties involved. The Count de Crillon a deputy of the Second Estate, had 1,200 copies of this document printed and distributed at the convocation of the Estates General.
17. *Mémoires*, 2:25–30.
18. *Plan d'organization du Gouvernment de la République française de la main de Dumouriez,* AN.
19. *Mémoires*, 2:25–30.
20. Dumouriez Papers, BN; Dumouriez's correspondence with Kersaint, AN.
21. Maret to Dumouriez, 23 July 1789, BN. Maret and Dumouriez had become friends before the Revolution when both were agents for the ministry of foreign affairs. Their documented early correspondence covers only the period between June 1789 and June 1791 while Dumouriez was commandant of Cherbourg. Dumouriez Papers, BN.
22. *Mémoires,* 2:60–70; Dumouriez Papers, BN. The influential deputy Barnave considered sending Dumouriez and a detachment of troops to the French West Indies to suppress the colonial disturbances there.
23. Ibid., 2:66.
24. Theodore Juste, *Histoire des Etats-Généraux des Pays-Bas* (Brussels, 1864), 2:143; Eugene Hubert, ed., *Le voyage de l'empereur Joseph II dans les Pays-Bas* (Brussels, 1900).
25. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique,* 5:455.
26. Henri van der Noot, *Mémoire sur les droits du peuple brabançon,* 24 April 1787, BR; J. B. Coomans, "Episodes de la Révolution brabançonne," *Revue de Bruxelles*, September 1841, 32.
27. Ibid.; Herman Theodoore Colenbrander, ed., *Gedenkstukken der Algemeene Geschiedenis van Nederland van 1795 tot 1840* (The Hague, 1905–1922).
28. On Vonck, see *Biographie nationale belge* (Brussels, 1927), 24:668–671; Paul Struze, *Jean-François Vonck, Avocat et Conspirateur* (Brussels, 1927); Theodore Juste, *Les Vonckistes* (Brussels, 1878). Vonck's major work, *Abrégé historique servant d'introduction aux considerations impartiales sur l'état actuel du Brabant,* reflects the influence of Montesquieu, Mably, and Diderot.
29. "Bases de la Constitution à établir dans les provinces Belgiques," "Les Belges affranchis ou réflexions d'une société de citoyens," BR.
30. Mirabeau, "La liberté de l'Escaut," BR; Correspondence of Vonck, BR.

31. Pro Aris et Focis used conspiratorial techniques such as invisible ink, codes, and a system by which each member knew only the identity of the member who recruited him. This secrecy worked to the disadvantage of Vonck, whose name was barely recognized by the rank and file of the movement, let alone the wider Belgian public. Tassier, *Les démocrates Belges* (Brussels, 1936), 98.
32. The Vonckist leaders instructed each member to recruit "persons of all ranks and conditions." Charles Terlinden, "Les Souvenirs d'un Vonckiste," in *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire* (Brussels, 1936), 118–23.
33. Van der Mersch was a former colonel who had served with great distinction in both the French and Austrian armies and retired to Belgium the previous year. Tassier, *Les démocrates Belges,* 155.
34. Frederick William II to Hertzberg, September 1789, in Hans Schlitter, ed., *Geheime Correspondenz Josefs II mit seinem minister in den Osterreichischen Niederlanden Ferdinand Grafen Trauttmansdorff (1787–1789),* 739–41. Britain and the United Provinces never considered giving aide to the Belgian revolutionaries because a Belgian-Dutch affiliation would necessarily lead to an opening of the Scheldt River, which would later become a central issue in Britain's entering the war against France.
35. *Histoire de la Révolution Brabançonne,* BR.
36. "Manifeste du Peuple Brabançonne," BR.
37. Tassier, *Les democrats Belges,* 203. The city of Brussels officially honored van der Noot as "the Father of the Belgians."
38. Representatives of the estates of the ten Belgian provinces met in Brussels on 7 January 179, established a constitution for the United Belgian Estates, and elected a congress of forty deputies, Reports on the early debates in the Estates General appeared in the *Journal général,* 7–18 January 1790.
39. Van de Spiegel, *Résumé des négociations,* 114–21.
40. On Lafayette during this period, see Louis Gottschalk and Margaret Maddox, *Lafayette in the French Revolution from the October Days through the Federation* (Chicago, 1973), 3:24.
41. Suzanne Tassier, "Léopold II et la Révolution Brabançonne: La Déclaration du 2 mars 1790," *Revue d'histoire moderne* (March-April 1929), 213–33; Leopold's manifesto of 2 March 1790 in Hans Schlitter, ed., *Briefe des Ernhogin Marie-Christine, Statthalterin der Niederlanden an Leopold II* (Vienna, 1896), 276.
42. Lafayette, *Mémoires, correspondance, et manuscrits du general Lafayette, publiés par sa famille* (Paris, 1838), 3:24.
43. De la Sonde to Lafayette, 4, 6 April 1790, Lafayette, *Mémoires,* 3:33–34.
44. Camille Desmoulins, *Les Révolutions de France et de Brabant* (Paris, 1789–90), 3:238; *Journal général,* 19 June 1790.
45. De Jarry to the Congress, 5, 9 March 1790, BR. De Jarry also advised the Belgians to seek Lafayette's advice on strengthening their army.
46. Jolivet to Montmorin, 31 May 1790, in Eugene Hubert, *De la Correspondance des ministres de France accredites à Bruxelles de 1780 à 1790* (Brussels, 1920–1924), 2:340–41. For the French response, see *Journal général,* 27 January, 9 February, 23 March 1790.

47. E. J. Dinne, ed., *Mémoire historique et pièces justicatives pour M. van der Meersch* (Lille, 1791), 1:367–69.
48. Verhaegen, *Le conseiller d'Etat Cornet de Grez* , 187; "Tort de la Sonde," *Biographie Nationale Belge,* 25:481.
49. Dumouriez to Lafayette, 2 May 1790, AN.
50. Dumouriez to Lafayette, 30 June 1790, AN.
51. Dumouriez, "Notes sur la Belgique," AN.
52. Lafayette to the Congress, June 1790, AN. Dumouriez's notes on Layfayette's letter to the Congress, June-July 1790, AN.
53. Dumouriez, "Situation politique et militaire de la confédération Belgique," 22 July 1790, AN.
54. Dumouriez, "Mémoire concernant l'organisation de l'Armée des Etats-Belgiques-Unis, adressé par le général Dumouriez au Congrès souverain," 13–22 July 1790, AGR.
55. Van der Meersch to Dumouriez, 7 August 1790, AN.
56. D'Aubrémé to Verlooy, 26 July 1790, BR.
57. Janet L.Polasky, "Traditionalists, Democrats, and Jacobins in Revolutionary Belgium, 1787 to 1793" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1982), 178.
58. Tassier, *Les démocrates Belges,* 394–96.
59. Van de Spiegel, *Résumé des négociations,* 303–06.
60. Ibid., 306–10.
61. Juste, *La République Belge,* 224; *Le Moniteur,* 2 September 1790.
62. Maxime de la Rocheterie, ed., *Correspondance du Marquis et de la Marquise de Raigecourt avec le Marquise de Bombelles pendant l'émigration, 1790–1800* (Paris, 1892), 87; Mercy-Argenteau to Marshall Bender, 20 September 1790, and von der Goltz to Fredrick William II, 15 October 1790, in Hubert, *Correspondance des ministres de France,* 2:405–06, 416.
63. Gachard, *Documents politiques et diplomatiques,* 312–14.
64. Lafayette, *Mémoires,* 3:52; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:91–92.
65. Kaunitz to Mercy-Argenteau, 10 August 1790, in A. von Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Kaiserpolitik oesterreiches Während der Französischen revolutionskriege, 1790–1801* (Vienna, 1874), 2:11–19.
66. Borgnet, *Histoire des Belges,* 1:175.
67. *Journal général,* 14 September 1790.
68. Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 2:19–20. The full record of the Reichenbach and Hague conferences can be found in Vivenot and van de Spiegel, *Résumé des négociations.*
69. Van de Spiegel, *Résumé des négociations,* 321.
70. Ibid., 357, 328.
71. Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 26–35; van de Spiegel, *Résumé des négociations,* 332–37.
72. Ibid., 332–37.
73. Hubert, *Correspondance des ministres de France,* 2:422; van de Spiegel, *Résumé des négociations,* 332–37, 343–46, 351–52.
74. Ruelle to Montmorin, 15 December 1790, Hubert, *Correspondance des ministres de France,* 2:445.

75. Verhaegen, *Le Conseiller d'Etat Cornet de Grez,* 194; "Tort de la Sonde," *Biographie Nationale Belge,* 25:479–80. Dumouriez also corresponded with and continued to advise a few deputies in the Belgian Congress; Dumouriez Papers, AN.
76. Dumouriez, "Notes pour la conférence," August 1790, AN; *Mémoires,* 2:95–96; Dumouriez to Montmorin, 3 September 1790, "Mémoire sur la situation politique de France," AN.
77. Dumouriez to Montmorin, 27 October 1790, "Indication des pointes qui pourraient devenir la base d'un traité défensif entre la Prusse et la nation Française," AN.
78. Dumouriez to Lafayette, 24 November 1790, AN.
79. Dumouriez, "Notes," 15 December 1790, AN.
80. Ibid.
81. Polasky, "Traditionalists, Democrats, and Jacobins," 193–99.
82. Tassier, *Les démocrats Belges,* 425–33; Vonck, 17 December 1790, BR; Vonck, 10 January 1791, BR; D'Aubrémez to Vonck, 18 January 1791, BR; Vonck to Van Schelle, 30 January 1791, BR.
83. Miacksynski to Vonck, 17 January 1792, BR.

CHAPTER 3

1. Evans, "The Nootka Sound Controversy"; Marc Dufraise, *Histoire du droit de guerre et de paix de 1789 à 1815* (Paris, 1867), 20.
2. B.-J.-B. Buchez and R.-C. Roux, *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française* (Paris:1834–1838), 6; *Annales Patriotiques,*14 May 1790.
3. See F.-A. Aulard, *Les orateurs de la Révolution française* (Paris, 1905), 63–64; E. Thompson, *Popular Sovereignty and the French Constituent Assembly* (Manchester, 1952), 18–20.
4. See Paul Beik, *The French Revolution Seen from the Right* (Philadelphia, 1956), 26–36; Claude Perroud, "Quelques notes François-Dominic-Raynaud Comte de Montlosier," *Mémoires de M. le comte de Montlosier sur la Révolution française* (Paris, 1830).
5. See Alfred Ritter von Arneth, ed., *Marie-Antoinette, Joseph II und Leopold* (Leipzig, 1866), 121–297.
6. Vaudreuil to Artois, 13 February 1790, Léonce Pingaud, ed., *Correspondance du comte de Vaudreuil et du comte d'Artois pendant l'emigration* (Paris, 1889), 1:100.
7. See F. Baldensperger, *Le mouvement des idées dans l'émigration française, 1789–18l5* (Paris, 1924); René de la Croix, duc de Castries, *Les émigrés* (Paris, 1959); Jacques Godechot, *La Contre-Révolution* (Paris, 1961).
8. See P. Muret, "L'Affaire des princes possessionnés d'Alsace et les origines du conflit entre la Révolution et l'Empire," *Revue d'Histoire moderne et contemporaine* 1(1899–1900):433–66, 478.
9. See Charles Soullier, *Histoire de la Révolution d'Avignon et du Comté-Venaissin* (Paris-Avignon, 1844; Marseilles, 1974); Aira Kemilainen, *L'Affaire d'Avignon (1789–1791)* (Helsinki, 1971); Pierre Charpenne, *Les grands épisodes de la Révolution dans Avignon et le Comtat* (Avignon, 1902).

10. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy was decreed by the National Assembly on 12 July 1790.
11. *Moniteur,* 9, 20, 26 July 1790; Dumouriez, "Notes pour la conférence," AN, August 1790.
12. *Moniteur*, 28 July 1790.
13. See Alfred Stern, "Mirabeau et la politique étrangère," *La Révolution française* 19 (1890): 385–406; Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution* (Paris, s.d.), 2:103–62; J. Hansen, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte des Rheinlandes im Zeitalter der Französischen Révolution, 1790–1801* (Bonn, 1931), 1:166; J. Godechot, *La Contre-Révolution*, 60–64, 151–53.
14. Facing increasing European hostility, in November 1790 the Assembly had insisted that all civil servants, including diplomats, take an oath to the nation, and all diplomatic agents were placed under the Assembly's scrutiny.
15. See J. Thomas Anne, Count d'Espinchal, *Journal of the Comte d'Espinchal during the Emigration,* (London, 1912), 221; François Claude Armour and Marquis de Bouillé, *Mémoires sur l'affaire de Varennes* (Paris, 1823), 17.
16. Jules Flammermont, *Négociations secrètes de Louis XVI et du Baron de Breteuil* (Paris, 1885), 8.
17. J. Hansen, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte des Rheinlandes im Zeitalter der Französischen Révolution, 1790–1801* (Bonn, 1931), 1:769–70; *Kölner Reichsoberpostamtszeitung,* 5 February 1791; *Mainzer Zeitung,* 7 February 1791, 18. D'Espinchal, *Journal,* 176–77.
19. Joseph Hyacinthe François, Comte de Vaudreuil, *Correspondance intime du comte de Vaudreuil et du comte d'Artois pendant l'émigration* (Paris, 1889), 1:319.
20. Fersen to Bouillé, 6 May 1791, ibid., 118; Taube to Fersen, 6 May 1791, ibid., 116.
21. Breteuil to Leopold, 3 May 1791, ibid; Flammermont, *Négociations secretes de Louis XVI*, 113–15.
22. Thompson, *Popular sovereignty,* 150. On 27 March, Count Axel de Fersen, a Swedish diplomat and friend of Marie Antoinette, wrote of his great concern for the royal couple's safety given the hostility of the Jacobins and division within in the National Assembly. R. M. de Klinckowström, *Le comte de Fersen et la cour de France* (Paris, 1878), 1:91.
23. See Timothy Tackett, *When the King Took Flight* (Cambridge, 2003).
24. Throughout 1791 and early 1792, Metternich, Mercy-Argenteau, and Marie-Christine continued to send alarming accounts to Vienna of the rapid spread of French principles in the Belgian provinces. On 5 July 1791, the emperor wrote to Louis of his concern for the safety of the royal family, reassuring him that Austria was his faithful ally. The next day Leopold wrote to the courts of Spain, Britain, Prussia, Naples, Piedmont-Sardinia, and Russia requesting their participation in a military concert against revolutionary France and sent a letter to the National Assembly in Paris demanding the restoration of full sovereignty to the French king. Meanwhile, Marie-Antoinette was urging her brother and all other European sovereigns to intervene militarily as soon as possible to restore Bourbon absolutism. Reports of Metternich and

Kaunitz, 18 August to 20 September, 1791, Archives of the Chancellery of the Austrian Netherlands, AGR.

25. Vaudreuil, *Correspondance,* 2:21, 34; Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 1:43, 212.
26. Vivenot, ibid., 1:212.
27. *Journal général,* 17 September 1791.
28. S. Wambaugh, *A Monograph on Plebiscites with a Collection of Official Documents* (New York, 1920), 7.
29. Louis XVI to Mercy-Argenteau, 26 October 1791, Arneth, *Marie-Antoinette, Joseph II, und Leopold,* 218.
30. Ibid., 98; Dumouriez to Louis XVI, 22 December 1790, AN; Dumouriez to Duportail, AN.
31. LaPorte to Louis XVI, 21 March 1791, AN.
32. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:113; Dumouriez, "Personnes s'assemblent chez Saint-Foy," AN.
33. C. F. Dumouriez, *Mémoire sur le ministère des affaires étrangères* (Paris, 1791).
34. F. A. Aulard, *La société des Jacobins: Recueil de documents pour l'histoire du club des Jacobins de Paris* (Paris, 1889–1897), 2:2866.
35. Dumouriez to Louis XVI, 19 March 1791, BN; also found in papers later taken from the king's apartment in the Tuileries (Armoire de fer, AN).
36. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:106; Dumouriez's notes on war council meetings, "Mémoire militaire," AN.
37. Duportail to Verteuil, 22 June–8 September 1791, AN. After the king's flight to Varennes Dumouriez wrote to the Assembly that he would mobilize his regiment of 8,000 troops and march to Paris to defend it against the king, which was read aloud to the deputies; Dumouriez to Barrère, 30 June 1791, AN.
38. The official French ambassadors included Noailles in Vienna and Bourgoing in Madrid. Esterhazy in St. Petersburg was an emissary of the king appointed by the king's brothers, and Breteuil in Brussels, Bombelles in St. Petersburg, and the Abbé de Fontbrune in Madrid were secret agents of the king. On 7 July 1791, Louis XVI had drawn up full powers for the Counts de Provence and d'Artois to negotiate with the courts of Europe in his name; Klinckowström, *Fersen,* 1:145.
39. D'Espinchal, *Journal,* 220–24, 281.
40. *Journal général,* 2, 16 October 1791.
41. In early October, for instance, Brissot demanded to know why the Assembly had not been informed of Austrian troop movements in the Netherlands and of the Prussians toward the French border; *Le Patriote français,* 5 October 1791. See also *Révolutions de Paris,* 15–22 October 1791. The term *siege mentality* is borrowed from historian Dieter Senghass by way of V. R. Berghahn, who in *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914* (New York, 1973) describes an analogous situation.
42. The Girondins, many of whom came from the department of Gironde, were a loose group or faction of ministers, deputies, and journalists dominated by Brissot and sometimes called Brissotins. See M. J. Sydenham, *The*

Girondins (Westport, 1961). The Robespierrists were a small group of Jacobins whose support came not from within the Assembly but from the sections and certain revolutionary clubs in Paris and later became known as Montagnards. But in 1791–1792, factions were considered antithetical to the values and institutions of the Revolution; as Georges Dodu asserts, "a party was considered a faction, and a faction was considered the result of intrigue." Dodu, *Les parlementaires sous la révolution, 1789–1799* (Paris, 1911), 208–20.

43. Dumouriez Papers, BN. The complete correspondence between Gensonné and Dumouriez has not been published nor extensively cited. In another example of their closeness, Dumouriez wrote to Gensonné on 22 October 1791 that "You have everything that it takes to succeed. . . . I offered you my experience and my friendship, and if you don't profit from all this to make yourself a reputation, a star, . . . you will have let me down; but I will not love you any less for that."
44. Gensonné to Dumouriez, 30 September 1791, BN.
45. Ibid., 3 November 1791, BN.
46. See Félix Feuillet de Conches, ed., *Louis XVI, Marie-Antoinette, et Madame Elisabeth, lettres et documents inédits* (Paris, 1846), 4:260–62; John Hardman, *Louis XVI* (New Haven, 1993).
47. *Révolutions de Paris,* 12–26 November 1791; *Le Patriote français,* 15 November 1791. The Feuillant leaders inspired the king's veto, hoping it would conciliate the extreme Right at home and abroad.
48. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:159. According to Lord Gower, English ambassador to France, DeLessart was known to be a pacifist, "intent to divert a war." Oscar Browning, *The Despatches of Earl Gower* (Cambridge, 1885), 150.
49. See Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York, 1954), 7.
50. Louis vetoed this decree on 19 December, reinforcing the deputies' suspicion of his disloyalty to the constitutional monarchy.
51. On 9 December, the queen wrote to Fersen that she believed France would go to war with the German electors and that the "imbeciles" did not see "how much such a war would help the Court." Klinckowström, *Fersen,* 1:266.
52. Flammermont, *Négociations,* 9.
53. Louis to Breteuil, 14 December 1791, Feuillet de Conches, *Louis XVI,* 4:271–76.
54. Lazare Carnot, *Mémoires sur Carnot par son fils* (Paris, 1861), 1:212.
55. After the king's speech, the Diplomatic Committee appointed its own minister to Trier, who demanded that the elector disperse the *émigrés* or face attack by the French army. Diplomatic Committee Minutes, AN.
56. Feuillet de Conches, *Louis XVI,* 4:296, 302–3.
57. Gensonné wrote to Dumouriez that the French government was on the verge of a crisis over the determination of foreign policy, saying that the two sides had become more clearly defined, and "it was impossible to stop the brawling." Gensonné to Dumouriez, 16 December 1791, BN.
58. Marc Bouloiseau, Georges Lefebvre, and Albert Soboul, eds., *Oeuvres de Maximilien Robespierre* (Paris, 1953), 8:25. From outside the Assembly, Robespierre,

Billaude-Varenne, d'Herbois, Desmoulins, Dubois-Crancé, Panis, and Santerre opposed the pro-war Jacobins led by Brissot. In early December 1791, Marat took an antiwar position, but his newspaper, *L'Ami du peuple,* was discontinued from December to April 1792, and we have no other record of his opinion during this time.

59. Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire,* 12:489–514.
60. Gensonné to Dumouriez, 16, 26 December 1791, BN.
61. Ibid., 24 January 1792, AN.
62. J. H. Clapham, *The Causes of the War of 1792* (Cambridge, 1892), 111.
63. The earliest such suggestion appeared in the Girondin deputy Antoine Joseph Gorsas's newspaper, *Le Courrier des 83 départments,* on 26 November 1791, when he published a report from Liège that Leopold had ordered more troops to the Franco-Belgian border near Valenciennes and warned that the emperor would attack France from Belgium and Liège.
64. *Journal général,* 10 December 1791.
65. Dumouriez to Gensonné, 28 September 1791, BN.
66. Théophile LeClair Benoit, "Considérations sur la situation de la France et les resources qui lui restent," 23 January 1792, AN.
67. Dumouriez, "Discours à prononcer à l'assemblée nationale ou à examiner au comité diplomatique," January 1792, AN.
68. Here Dumouriez refers to the corresponding work of his colleague, General Tilly, "Rapports de la France avec la Belgique," providing a history of Franco-Belgian relations so as to justify a French intervention and a guarantee of the rights of the Belgians and Liégeois.
69. Bouloiseau, Lefebvre, and Soboul, *Oeuvres de Maximilien Robespierre* 8:81, 84; *Le Patriote français,* 11 January 1792.
70. Narbonne to Biron, 11 February 1792, Archives de la Guerre, Paris (hereafter AG).
71. Narbonne to the National Assembly, 11 January 1792, AG. In the first campaign of the war the panic of the troops and the confusion and hesitancy of the generals proved that Narbonne had seen military preparations as he had wanted to see them rather than what they were. Narbonne would be called into account for his incompetence on 2 April 1792, when Dubois-Crancé denounced his failure to exert the full powers of his office to prepare the army. At the bar of the Assembly, his attempt to vindicate his record was as vague as his report of 11 January 1792.
72. See Georges Lefebvre and J. Poperan, "Études sur le ministère de Narbonne," *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 19 (January-February 1947):1–36, 193, 217, 292–321; John-Paul Bertaud, *The Army of the French Revolution: From Citizen-Soldiers to Instrument of Power* (Princeton, 1988).
73. Aulard, *La société des Jacobins,* 3:323–31.
74. Despite a temporary reconciliation at the Jacobins on 20 January that Gorsas in the *Courrier* and Brissot in the *Patriote français* interpreted as Robespierre's acceptance of the war, Robespierre refuted that assumption in a letter to Gorsas published in the *Courrier* on 23 January 1792. *Révolutions de Paris,* 14–21 January 1792; Aulard, *La société des Jacobins,* 3:333–34.

75. Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire,* 13:169, 183–209.
76. Alexandre Courtois observed that French foreign policy during the winter of 1792 was based on a deep-seated fear of attack and the destruction of the revolutionary government and claimed that the deputies sounded warlike because of their fear of annihilation. Courtois to LeBrun, 21 January 1792, AN.
77. Diplomatic Committee Minutes, 27 January 1792, AN. The Committee authorized the king to negotiate fair indemnities with the German princes, and the Assembly concurred. In the Assembly, Fauchet, a Girondin, denounced DeLessart as a traitor.
78. Ibid., 10 February 1792.
79. Ibid., 18 February 1792.
80. LaGravière to DeLessart, January-February 1792, AMAE. On 11 February 1792, LaGravière warned DeLessart that the Belgian provinces were filled with Austrian garrisons, estimating that Austrian reinforcements totaled about 30,000. Leopold ordered a continual augmentation of troops between 18 August 1791 and 27 February 1792. Metternich to Kaunitz, 18 August 1791–28 March 1792, AGR.
81. Diplomatic Committee Minutes, 20, 23 February 1792, AN.
82. The correspondence between the king and queen and the European courts was entirely preoccupied with the formation of a military concert and the invasion of France. See, for instance, Flammermont, *Négociations,* 17; Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 1:327–70; Arneth, *Marie-Antoinette, Joseph II und Leopold,* 147; Klinckowström, *Fersen,* 2:12.
83. Diplomatic Committee Minutes, 27 February 1792, AN.
84. A.-F. Bertrand de Moleville, *Mémoires particuliers, pour server à l'histoire de la fin du règne de Louis XVI* (Paris, 1823), 7:199; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:138; Gensonné to Dumouriez, 30 January 1792, BN; A. A. Ernouf, *Maret, duc de Bassano* (Paris, 1878), 48.
85. According to Dumouriez, DeLessart "stood greatly in need, because his talents did not reach above mediocrity, and the feebleness of his negotiations had embroiled foreign relations so much as to throw him into inextricable embarrassments." *Mémoires,* 2:131–32.
86. According to Vioménil, "Having known him since their school days, Dumouriez offered DeLessart his political talents while working through Gensonné to reinforce his own relationships with Brissot's party leaders, enemies of DeLessart. They were gaining the majority in the National Assembly, thanks to their oratorical talents. Dumouriez informed Gensonné of Delessart's pro-Austrian policy, and as of 10 March it resulted in his denunciation by the Girondins and he was found guilty at the National High Court established in Orléans, and Dumouriez was put in his position on 15 March." Baron de Vioménil, *Lettres particulières du baron de Vioménil sur les affaires de Pologne en 1771 et 1772* (Paris, 1808), 37–40; Gensonné to Dumouriez, 24 January 1792, AN. Moleville claimed that the Girondins told Dumouriez that it would be easier for him to succeed M. DeLessart than to support him; *Mémoires,* 2:117–20.

87. On 7 February, the Prussian king signed a defensive alliance with Leopold whereby the two countries would come to each other's defense should either of them be attacked by a third power, aid each other in cases of internal disorder, and to form a concert of crowns for the purpose of intervening in France. Hansen, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 2:47.
88. Blumendorf to Mercy-Argenteau, 2 March 1792, Hubert, *Correspondance des ministres*, 104–7.
89. Baron de Genlis Sillery, "Opinion de M. Sillery," 7 March 1792, British Library, London (hereafter BL).
90. Etienne Dumont, *Recollections of Mirabeau, and of the Two First Legislative Assemblies of France* (Philadelphia, 1833), 200.
91. Lefebvre and Poperan, "Etudes sur le ministère de Narbonne," 35.

CHAPTER 4

1. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 134.
2. Dumont, *Recollections*, 318.
3. According to Joseph Servan, who replaced DeGrave as minister of war in May, Dumouriez "led the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry of war." Servan, *Notes sur les mémoires de Dumouriez écrits par lui-même* (Paris, 1795), viii. Dumouriez admitted to General Biron that he also controlled the war ministry. Dumouriez to Biron, 13 April 1792, AG.
4. Van der Steene to Vonck, 20 March 1792, BR.
5. Dumont, *Recollections,* 203.
6. *Le Patriote français,* 14 March 1792; Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire,* 14:402.
7. Dumont, *Recollections,* 205, 217.
8. Mme. Roland, *Mémoires de Madame Roland* (Paris, 1840), 1:316.
9. In his memoirs, he credited his appointment to his earlier connection to Favier, the success of his memoir on the ministry of foreign affairs, and the support of the majority in the Assembly. *Mémoires,* 2:144.
10. Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire,* 13:414.
11. Browning, *Despatches of Earl Gower*, 178–79. Dumont, who dined frequently with Dumouriez at the Clavières', Rolands', and DeGraves', also described the foreign minister's enormous influence in the French government; *Recollections,* 336.
12. Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire,* 13:414.
13. Mme. Roland, *Mémoires,* 1:319.
14. Dumouriez, *Mémoires*, 2:144.
15. Clavière to Roland, 26 May, BN.
16. The National Assembly had debarred their members from being elected to the Legislative Assembly and, for the most part, the new deputies were inexperienced in foreign affairs.
17. Dumouriez, *Mémoire sur le ministère des affaires étrangères*, 5–12.
18. The foreign ministry had not been reorganized since 1725, when the Count de Moreville, secretary of state for foreign affairs (1723–27) under Louis XV,

had introduced sweeping changes. Amedée Outrey, "Histoire et principes de l'administration française des affaires étrangères," *Révue français de science politique,* 3 (1953):298–318, 491–510, 714–38.

19. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:155–156.
20. Ernouf, *Maret.*
21. Dumouriez to Caillard, 30 March 1792, AN.
22. Dumouriez to Bays, 22 April 1792, AN; Dumouriez to Bourgoing, 10 April 1792, AN.
23. Dumouriez to de Pons, 26 April 1792, AN; Dumouriez to Villars, 28 April 1792, AN.
24. Dumouriez to Barthélémy, 9 April 1792, AN.
25. Dumouriez to Bays, 22 April 1792, AN.
26. Dumouriez to Caillard, 8 April 1792, AN.
27. Dumouriez to Audibert-Caille, 1 June 1792, Diplomatic Committee, AN.
28. Ernouf, *Maret,* 78–82.
29. *The Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue, Esq., Preserved at Dropmore* (London, 1894–1927), Public Record Office, Foreign Office Papers, London (hereafter PRO-FO). Some courts also refused to accept the credentials of the new French diplomats. When Dumouriez appointed Huguet de Sémonville as minister plenipotentiary to the Court of Turin, Victor Amadeus III not only refused to accept him at court but had him arrested. The Imperial Diet at Ratisbon also refused to recognize Caillard as the French minister plenipotentiary.
30. Dumouriez, "Discours à examiner au Comité diplomatique," 17 March 1792, AN.
31. Dumouriez, "Note pour le conseil," 22 March 1792, AN.
32. Dumouriez, "Mémoire au Comité diplomatique," 22 March 1792, AN.
33. Dumouriez to Noailles, 19 March 1792, AN.
34. Dumouriez, "Note pour le conseil," 11 April 1792, AN. See also Dumouriez, "Sur la necessité d'établier la guerre offensive du côte de la Belgique," 22 March 1792, AN.
35. Dumont, *Recollections,* 336.
36. "Discours de Mathieu Dumas, député du Département de Seine-et-Oise," 19 June 1792, AN.
37. Upon the declaration of war, Vonck immediately wrote to Walckiers, giving much of the credit to Dumouriez and reporting that it had produced great joy throughout Belgium and Liège. Vonck to Walckiers, 23 April 1792, BR.
38. Dumouriez, "Des points qui pourraient devenir la base d'un traité defensif entre la Prusse et la nation française," AN.
39. Talleyrand to DeLessart, 10 March 1792, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris (hereafter AMAE).
40. Dumouriez, "Mémoire au Comité diplomatique," 22 March 1792, AN; "Note pour le conseil du 22 mars 1792," AN.
41. Dumouriez to Maret, 24 April 1792, AMAE.
42. LeBrun to the War Committee, 23 January 1793, AN.
43. Dumouriez explained his use of secret agents in the Belgium provinces in "Note sur les relations internationales," AN.

44. In describing his dinner with Dumouriez and his "confidential secretary," Bonne-Carrère, Gouverneur Morris gave Jefferson a perceptive account of the Belgian connection to the declaration of war: "You are already informed I suppose of the reasons which led to a declaration of war against the king of Hungary, and you know that the hope of an insurrection in the Austrian Flanders was among those reasons. Indeed the intention to excite it and the efforts made to that effect have (for the first time I believe in modern days) been publicly avowed." Morris, *A Diary of the French Revolution 1789–1793,* ed. Beatrix Cary Davenport (London, 1939), 2:439.
45. Maret to Dumouriez, 24 April 1792, Maret to Bonne-Carrère, 23 May 1792, AMAE.
46. Maret to Ruelle, 12 April 1792, AN; Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois to LeBrun, 9 April 1792, AN; Ruelle to Dumouriez, 17 April 1792, AN. Ernouf, *Maret,* 52. Maret to Dumouriez, 24 April 1792, AMAE. Although a French citizen, Ruelle had been living in Brussels since 1783. In 1790 he was assigned as an agent to the Belgian Congress and established close ties with Dumouriez that July when the latter served as a military advisor to the congress. After the French declaration of war, Ruelle remained in Brussels covertly, working with Maret until May 23, when the Austrian government arrested him for espionage. Claiming diplomatic immunity, he returned to Paris on 31 May 1792 and was made a clerk in the foreign ministry by LeBrun.
47. Dumouriez, "Notes," 25 April 1792, AN.
48. Maret to Dumouriez, 16, 22, 26, 28 May 1792, AN; Ibid., 26 April 1792, AMAE.
49. On 23 February 1792, the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois gained the support of the Assembly's Diplomatic and Military committees to create two Belgian-Liégeois legions, and on 19 March, LeBrun requested the necessary funding ("Demande de M. LeBrun relativement aux légions," AN). On 9 April, the Committee reported establishing the legions; Rens to LeBrun, 9 April 1792, enclosure: "Manifesto des Belges et Liégeois Unis," AMAE.
50. Dumouriez, "Mémoire sur l'utilité du système de Légion pour la Belgique de la main de Dumouriez," May 1792, AN.
51. Dumouriez to DeGrave, 23 April 1792, AMAE.
52. Dumouriez to the Diplomatic Committee, 21 June 1792, AN.
53. The correspondence between the foreign ministry and the Belgian and Liégeois partriots regarding this agreement can be found in the BR, AN, and AMAE. On 24 May, Bonne-Carrère gave the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois at Lille 60,000 livres for the maintenance of the two legions. "Proposition du comité Belgique à Lille, relatives à l'equipement d'un corps militaire de Belges, faites au ministère français dans le mois de mai 1792," 24 May 1792, AMAE.
54. Maret to Dumouriez, 16, 22, 26, 28 May 1792, AN. During the course of his ministry, Dumouriez sent Maret approximately 1,500,000 livres to support his operations in the Belgian provinces.

55. Dumouriez to Fortair, 24 April 1792, AMAE; dossier on Fortair, 24 April 1792 to 20 January 1793, AN.
56. Dumouriez to Maret, 23 May 1792, AMAE; Sta to Maret, 13, 18, 27 May 1792, AMAE. On 18 May, Sta reported "I have slipped ten pounds of pamphlets into Brussels. They have been posted up all around the square adjacent to the palace. This resulted in a terrible [Austrian] proclamation against the products of the infamous French liberty—a new source of encouragement to propaganda and its devotees." In May, they had fifty small balloons drop revolutionary leaflets over Belgium. Masson, *Le département des affaires étrangères,* 262.
57. "Etat des forces des trois armées du Nord, du Centre, du Rhine," 5 April 1792, AN.
58. "Instructions," 22 April 1792, AN; Général d'Aumont to Dillon, 22 April 1792, AG.
59. Maréchal Rochambeau, 29 April 1792, AG.
60. Dumouriez, *Mémoires*, 2:163–65.
61. On June 5, for instance, she told Fersen that "Luckner's army has been ordered to attack Brabant immediately; he is against this, but the ministry wants it. The troops are lacking in everything and are in the greatest disorder." Klinckowström, 2:317–23.
62. H. Fabry to Lafayette, 5 May 1792, BUL.
63. Levoz to Fabry, 7 May 1792, BUL.
64. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:233–41; *Révolution de Paris,* 28 April–5 May 1792; *Le Moniteur,* 4 May 1792.
65. Aulard, *La société des Jacobins,* 3:290.
66. Ibid., 3:549–52. Prudhomme expanded on the accusations concerning "the Austrian Committee" in *Révolutions de Paris*, 12, 19–20 May 1792.
67. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:202.
68. Arneth, *Joseph II und Leopold von Toscana,* 263.
69. Jacques Mallet du Pan, *Mémoires et correspondence* (Paris, 1851), 1:294–95.
70. Dumouriez to DeGrave, 4 May 1792, AN.
71. Luckner to Dumouriez, 3 May 1792, AN.
72. Lafayette, *Mémoires*, 3:434.
73. Ibid., 3:435.
74. Madame Roland to Servan, 9–10 May 1792, in *Manon Jeanne Roland: Lettres de Madame Roland,* ed. Claude Perroud (Paris, 1902), 2:423–25; A. Mathiez, "Danton et le premier ministère girondin," *Annales Révolutionnaires,* 10:673–76; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:131–52; Roland, *Mémoires,* 1:67–83, 225–57.
75. Kaunitz to Mercy-Argenteau, 26 May 1792, in Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 2:67–69; A. Mathiez, *La Révolution française* (Paris, 1922–1927), 187.
76. Luckner to Dumouriez, 16 May 1792, AG.
77. Eugène Cruyplants, *La Belgique*, 1:183. Luckner's stalling strategy would have positioned his army with its back to the sea and no line of retreat, an approach Jomini later called a "monstrous mistake." Lieutenant-Général

Jomini, *Histoire critique et militaire des guerres de la Révolution* (Paris, 1820–1824), 1:119.

78. Luckner to Dumouriez, 26 May 1792, AG. Luckner repeated his demands to Servan on 28 and 30 May 1792. The correspondence between Dumouriez and the generals is found in the papers of the Armies of the Rhine, Center, and North in AG.
79. Chépy to Brissot, 17 May 1792, in J. P. Perroud, ed., *Brissot: Correspondance et Papiers,* (Paris, s.d.), 287–90.
80. Dumouriez to Luckner, 24 May 1792, AG; Dumouriez to Lafayette, 24 May 1792, AG.
81. Lafayette to Dumouriez, 29 May 1792, AG.
82. Luckner to Servan, 7 June 1792, AG.
83. Servan to Luckner, 23 May 1792, AG. By early June, the Army of the North had 58,000 troops, six lieutenant generals, twenty *maréchal du camps,* seven adjutant generals, and seven colonels. Jomini, *Histoire critique et militaire,* 1:143, AG.
84. Biron to Servan, 11 June 1792, AG.
85. Servan to Luckner, 7 June 1792, AG.
86. Servan to Luckner, 9 June 1792, AG.
87. On 10 June, Ambassador Morris wrote to Jefferson that Dumouriez, "in his capacity as principal minister and certainly not as minister of foreign affairs," contemplated visiting the front "to bring the army to action; for having brought on a state of hostility for which he is personally responsible, he is deeply concerned in the success, and he has little hope unless from a *coup de main* before the armies of the enemy are collected" although Luckner and Lafayette had refused his orders to attack. Morris, *Diary*, 2:443.

CHAPTER 5

1. Bertrand de Moleville, *Annals of the French Revolution,* trans. R. C. Dallas (London, 1800–1802), 6:233.
2. A contemporary pamphlet on these debates is Georges-Victor Vasselin, *Dénonciation du ministre de la guerre* (Paris, 1792), 1–3.
3. Roland Papers, BN.
4. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:275.
5. In his *Mémoires,* Dumouriez declared that he had remained in the ministry only on condition that Louis change his position and sign the Assembly's defense decrees on the refractory priests and the *fédérés* (2:293).
6. 12 June 1792, in Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire*, 15:33.
7. Dumouriez's speech also alienated the bureaucracy within the Ministry of War, which was reflected on later attacks upon him by the future minister of war Pache and by Hassenfratz, first *commis* of the ministry, at the Jacobin Club.
8. *Le Patriote française,* 182, 15 June 1792; *Révolutions de Paris,* no.153, 480.
9. Maret to Dumouriez, 26 May 1792, AN; Servan to Luckner, 9 June 1792, AG.
10. Dumouriez to Gensonné, 15 June 1792, BN; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:304.

Dumouriez was detained in Paris until 27 June to complete his report on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Dumouriez to president of the Diplomatic Committee, 21 June 1792, and accounts of secret expense funds and extraordinary funds, AN.

11. Francis was not interested in saving the constitutional monarchy but in restoring an absolute one and knew that Louis did not wish to be rescued by Lafayette and thereby under obligation to him.
12. Lafayette to the King and Legislative Assembly, 16 June 1792.
13. In response to Lafayette's actions, on 18 June the Assembly also reconstituted the Commission of Twelve, which had been created on 6 March 1792 to investigate disturbances in Lozère and Cantal, recommend measures for reestablishing public tranquility, and increase the Assembly's executive power, although it had not met during the Dumouriez-Girondin ministry. When nine alternates were added on 18 July, it was called the Extraordinary Commission or the Commission of Twenty-One. H. Olive, *L'action executive exercée par les comités des assemblées révolutinnaires,* 53; Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:xlix.
14. See L. B. Pfeiffer, *The Uprising of June 29, 1792* (Lincoln, 1913); Aulard, *Jacobins,* 4:11; E. Mellié, *Les sections de Paris pendant la Révolution française* (Paris, 1898), 104–8. An account of the uprising is given in a letter to Dumouriez from Chazellez, Dumouriez's agent in Paris. Chazellez to Dumouriez, 23 June 1792, AN.
15. Lafayette to Lajard, 22 June 1792, AG; Lafayette to Luckner, 23 June 1792, AG.
16. Georges Lefebvre, *La Révolution française: La chute du Roi* (Paris, 1942), 41; Mellié, *Les Sections de Paris,* 121.
17. Chambonas to Koch, 30 June 1792, AN.
18. Chauvelin to Chambonas, 22 June 1792, AMAE.
19. This decree summoned all administrative bodies into daily session, militarized the National Guard for front-line service, and gave the Assembly the ability to negate the royal veto. See David Andress, *The Terror: The Merciless War for Freedom in Revolutionary France* (New York, 2005), 80.
20. Minutes of the Extraordinary Commission of Twelve, AN.
21. Guillaume Bonne-Carrère, *Exposé de la conduite de Bonne-Carrère depuis le commencement de la Révolution* (Paris, 1823), 10–11.
22. Correspondence of Maret, Dumouriez, Bonne-Carrère, and LeBrun, AMAE.
23. Luckner to Lajard, 25 June 1792, AG.
24. Lee, *Comités et les Clubs patriotes Belges et Liégeois*, 134.
25. Amiel, in Cruyplants, *Belgique sous la domination Française,* 2:199.
26. "L'ordre de Jarry", 27 June 1792, BR.
27. Deshacquets to LeBrun, 12 July 1792, AMAE; on 13 July 1792, Rens, Smits, and Dinne protested Luckner's retreat in *Moniteur*, 13:324.
28. Deshacquets to Bonne-Carrère, 8 July 1792, Deshacquets to LeBrun, 14 July 1792, AMAE.
29. Rutteau to Dumouriez, 16 June 1792–10 August 1792, AMAE; Rutteau to Bonne-Carrère, 18 July 1792, AMAE. In his intelligence reports on the Belgian

towns, Rutteau notes that the Prussian and Austrian forces believed they could launch an invasion of France from Vomerange because of lack of support for the patriot party there.

30. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:324–31; Dumouriez to Lajard, 2 July 1692, AG; Cruyplants, *Dumouriez,* 1, 234.
31. Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 2:67–68; A. Chuquet, *Les guerres de la Révolution* (Paris, s.d.), 1:143–44.
32. Dumouriez/Luckner/Lafayette correspondence, July 1792, AG; Chuquet, *Les guerres de la Révolution,* 1:49.
33. Luckner to the Extraordinary Commission of Twelve, July 1792, AN; Aulard, *Recueil*, 1:xxvi–liv.
34. Dumouriez, military memoire, 16 July 1792, AG.
35. Mathieu Dumas, *Souvenirs du Lieutenant Général Comte Mathieu Dumas* (Paris, 1839), 2:380–81, 477.
36. Dumouriez to Lafayette, 18 July 1792, AG; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:331–35.
37. Lafayette to Lajard, 19 July 1792, AG.
38. Lajard to Luckner, 18 July 1792, AG.
39. Minutes of the council of war at Valenciennes, 23 July 1792, AG.
40. Dumouriez to d'Abancourt, 27 July 1792, AG.
41. Luckner to Dumouriez, 28 July 1792, AG.
42. Dillon to Luckner, 30 July 1792, AG.
43. Dumouriez to the King, Dumouriez to d'Abancourt, 31 July 1792, AG.
44. D'Abancourt to Marshal Luckner, 30 July 1792, AG.
45. Lafayette to Dillon, 31 July 1792, AG.
46. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 2:355–56.
47. Dumouriez to d'Abancourt, 5 August 1792, AG.
48. Pierre-Louis Roederer, *Chronique de cinquante jours* (Paris, 1832); P. Sagnac, *La chute de la royauté* (Paris, 1909), 71.
49. Browning, *Despatches of Earl Gower*, 203.
50. "The Brunswick Manifesto," *Le Moniteur Universel*, 3 August 1792, 13:305–6.
51. On the Revolution of 10 August, see David Jordan, *The King's Trial* (Berkeley, 1979), 35–36; Michael Howell, "Danton and the First Republic," Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1982; Munro Price, *The Fall of the French Monarchy* (London, 2002), 296–303.
52. See Norman Hampson, *Danton* (London, 1978), 158; Howell, *Danton and the First Republic,* chapters 2–4. One letter from Dumouriez to Danton exists for this period, in which Dumouriez urged Danton to remain on the Executive Council. Dumouriez to Danton, 28 September 1792, BN.
53. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 11 August 1792, AN; LeBrun–Dumouriez correspondence, AG, AMAE, and AN.
54. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 14 August 1792, AN.
55. Although Jacques Godechot states that "LeBrun, as minister of foreign affairs, took a decisive role in foreign policy decisionmaking, given the circumstances of war" (*Les Institutions de la France sous la Révolution et l'Empire*

[Paris, 1968], 274), most historians of French revolutionary foreign policy have claimed that it was Danton who directed foreign policy during the Interregnum (e.g., Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française;* Chuquet, *Les guerres de la Révolution*; Soboul, *Précis d'histoire de la Révolution française*; Hampson, *Danton;* A. Mathiez, *Danton et la paix* (Paris, 1991), "Le lendemain de 10 août," *Annales Historiques de la Révolution française* 11 (1934): 395–96). Yet there is no available archival evidence to support this argument, which has always been inferred from the writings of the Rolands, who were Danton's enemies. Neither the records of the Executive Council; the correspondence of LeBrun, Dumouriez, and other major figures in the foreign ministry or Executive Council; nor the records of the Diplomatic and Military or War Committees of the Legislative or National Assembly substantiate Danton's influence on foreign affairs.

56. Minutes of the Extraordinary Commission, 6 August 1792, AN.
57. Masson, *Le Département des affaires étrangères*, 214. Bonne-Carrère remained under the patronage of Dumouriez and LeBrun and continued to work with them for the Belgian cause. After the conquest of Belgium and Liège, he was sent there as a troubleshooter until 20 December 1792, when he returned to Paris and worked with the Batavian patriots on plans for the invasion of Holland. Compromised by the general's defection to the Austrians, he was arrested on 2 April 1793. Bonne-Carrère, *Exposé.*
58. A. Aulard, "Organisation du service des agents secrets dans la première république," *Révolution française* 12 (January-June 1887), 117–28; Masson, *Le départment des affaires étrangères,* 275. LeBrun's *Mémoire sur l'organisation des agents secrets*, AMAE; LeBrun Papers, AN.
59. Most who worked with LeBrun within the foreign ministry, government, and patriot groups had praise for his capabilities, character, and loyalty. The French ambassador to Switzerland, François Barthélémy, for instance, wrote that "The department of foreign affairs was entrusted to M. LeBrun, a man who seemed to me to lack neither talent nor wisdom. . . . Truly, I do not know how he managed to save me from a denunciation [from the National Convention]. I owed him a great debt in this matter, by reason of which I conceived a high opinion of his common sense and moderation." Madame Roland described him as honest, intelligent, and hardworking but also as indecisive. Dumouriez briefly mentions LeBrun in his memoirs stating that: "LeBrun was very good, because he is hard-working and well-informed," but adding that "he does not have enough dignity and strength to carry on by himself." *Mémoires de Barthélémy,* ed. Jacques de Dampiere (Paris, 1914), 89–90; *Mémoires de Madame Roland*, 2:3–4; Dumouriez, *Memoires,* 3: 353–54.
60. This decree set a precedent for the later decree of 19 November 1792.
61. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 11 August 1792, AN; Dumouriez to LeBrun, 16 August 1792, AN.
62. LeBrun's circular of 18 August 1792, AMAE.
63. Danton's speeches to the Assembly reflected the same confidence given the urgent requirements of national defense.

64. Dumouriez to Servan, 14 August 1792, AG; Dumouriez to Clavière, 14 August 1792, AN; Dumouriez to Roland, 14 August 1792, AN; Dumouriez to the president of the Extraordinary Commission, 14 August 1792, AN.
65. Dumouriez to Servan, 14 August 1792, AG. Servan, although appointed minister on 10 August, did not assume office until 19 August. From 10 to 19 August, Clavière was interim minister of war.
66. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1: 6–7; Clavière Correspondance, AG.
67. Lafayette, *Mémoires*, 4: 295–400. The allied army arrested Lafayette and his followers, who were imprisoned first in Prussia and then at Olmütz castle in Austria. Lafayette remained there until Napoleon negotiated his release in a prisoner exchange in 1797.
68. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 20 August 1792, AN.
69. Dumouriez to Roland, 18 August 1792, Dumouriez to Clavière, 20 August 1792, AN.
70. Dumouriez to the president of the National Assembly, 18 August 1792, AG.

CHAPTER 6

1. Maret to LeBrun, 13 August 1792, AMAE. On 16 August, Maret wrote, "Sir, nothing is more urgent than to get the Committee to drive its operations with vigor" (AMAE).
2. Maret to LeBrun, 23 August 1792, AMAE.
3. Belgian-Liégeois Legions to LeBrun, 23 August 1792, AMAE.
4. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 7 September 1792, LeBrun to Dumouriez, 12 September 1792, AMAE.
5. Ruelle to LeBrun, 7 September 1792, AMAE.
6. Emphasis in original; LeBrun to Dumouriez, 19 September 1792, AN.
7. Rutteau to LeBrun, 20 August 1792, AMAE.
8. Dumouriez to Servan, 23 August 1792, AG.
9. Servan to Dumouriez, 24 August 1792, AG.
10. Conseil de Guerre tenu à Sedan le 29 August 1792, AG.
11. Dumouriez to Servan, 29 August 1792, AG.
12. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 29 August 1792, AMAE.
13. Servan, *Notes sur les Mémoires de Dumouriez*, 20–21.
14. Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire*, 17:360
15. On the September Massacres, see Pierre Caron, *Les Massacres de Septembre* (Paris, 1935); Michael Howell, "Danton and the First Republic"; Hampson, *Danton,* 82–83; Andress, *The Terror,* chapter 4. For the following six months, this event became one of the greatest sources of contention between the Girondins and Montagnards in the Convention and Jacobin Club.
16. The change was decreed by the Executive Council on 28 August 1792. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:36; Servan to Luckner, 2 September 1792, AG.
17. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 7 September 1792, AMAE.
18. Quoted in Chuquet, *Guerres de la Révolution*, 2:2.
19. Ibid., 3:176–78. Military historians have pointed out that instead of marching north with most of the French army to conquer Belgium and Liège, Du-

mouriez could have joined Kellerman, captured the allied army, joined Custine's army on the right bank of the Rhine, and eliminated the Austrian threat from Belgium. This Rhineland strategy, favored by Narbonne, Lafayette, and Luckner, was also supported by Pache, who became minister of war on 18 October.

20. Both Dumouriez and LeBrun had written extensively on the natural rivalry between Austria and Prussia and since the Belgian and Liégeois revolutions had believed in a possible alliance between France and Prussia. As foreign minister, Dumouriez in April 1792 outlined arguments for that possibility in instructions to his extraordinary ambassadors negotiating in Berlin. "Notes sur la guerre avec Autriche," AN.
21. LeBrun to Desportes, 3 September 1792, AN; Desportes to LeBrun, 8 September 1792, AN; Desportes to LeBrun, 8 September 1792, AN. Desportes agreed with LeBrun's decision, replying that the Duke of Brunswick had never liked Austria and "in his eyes, France is the true ally of Prussia." Von Dohm, a supporter of the 1789 revolutions in Belgium and Liège and an ardent partisan of the Principles of 1789, was at the same time loyal to the Prussian crown and shared with LeBrun and Dumouriez a hatred of Austria. In early September, von Dohm went so far as to suggest specific proposals that LeBrun might advance for an alliance with Prussia. Dohm's unofficial initiative appears to have been conducted solely on his own, and there is no record in the French archives that LeBrun responded to von Dohm. Dohm to LeBrun, 15 September 1792, AN.
22. Dumouriez to the King of Prussia, 22 September 1792, AG; Dumouriez to Lombard, 22 September 1792, AN.
23. This belief may have been influenced by the earlier attempt of the Giondins, Dumouriez's sponsors, to preserve the monarchy, or by his earlier association with Lafayette or the court. Nonetheless, there is no contemporary evidence to support the Prussians' assumption that Dumouriez harbored royalist views or connections, despite its acceptance by some historians based on Dumouriez's later defection.
24. Dumouriez to Manstein, 24 September, 1792, AN. Dumouriez appears to have concealed from the Prussians the seemingly hopelessness of their demands for Louis XVI. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 3:187–96; extracts from Prince Hardenberg's memoirs in Buchez and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire,* 40:178–83.
25. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 24 September 1792, BN. The previous day, LeBrun and Servan had sent Benoît and Westermann to participate in Dumouriez's negotiations with the Prussians, LeBrun instructing them that "The French nation will never allow anyone to use the authority of her name and or power in order to provoke trouble in her allies' affairs. Our nation always believes that the eternal book of nature and reason is an infallible instrument of propaganda, whose power is greater than that of its orators and its pamphlets. The king will be judged, and the nation will not suffer any foreigner to come and influence her justice or her mercy." LeBrun, "Instructions au M. Benoît et Colonel Westermann," 23 September 1792, AN.

26. Dumouriez to Servan, 26 September 1792, AN.
27. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 28 September 1792, AN. Dumouriez included all his correspondence with the Prussians.
28. Dumouriez to Pétion, 26 September 1792, AN; Dumouriez to Danton, 28 September 1792, BN; Dumouriez to Billaud-Varenne, 22 September 1792; BN; Dumouriez to Clavière, 26 September 1792, AN. Pétion and Billaud-Varenne offered their full support: Pétion to Dumouriez, 2 October 1792, AN; Billaud-Varenne to Dumouriez, 26 September 1792, BN.
29. Dumouriez to Maret, 28 September 1792, AN.
30. Chuquet, *Guerres de la Révolution*, 3:132; Henry Liebermann, *La défense nationale à la fin de 1792: Servan et Pache* (Paris, 1927), 138.
31. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 29 September 1792, AN.
32. That LeBrun directed the Prussian negotiations was confirmed by Servan in a letter to Dumouriez, 25 September 1792, AN.
33. LeBrun, "Projet d'instruction et bases d'après lesquelles il convient de négocier avec le roi de Prusse," October 1792, AN; LeBrun to Dumouriez, 30 September 1792, AN. That the two men were in direct contact and agreement during these negotiations is also supported by the letters of Dumouriez to LeBrun, 29 September and 1 October 1792, AN.
34. Dumouriez to Servan, 1 October 1792, AN.
35. Dumouriez's *Mémoire,* 1 October 1792; Vivenot, *Quellen zur geschichte,* 2:243. LeBrun remained interim minister of war until 18 October 1792, when Pache replaced him. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:71. Servan's stated support of Dumouriez during these negotiations challenges Chuquet's claim that he resigned in protest of Dumouriez's handling of the Prussian retreat. *Guerres de la Révolution*, 3:176–79.
36. Dumouriez to Biron, 5 October 1792, AG.
37. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:100–01.
38. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 7 October 1792, AN.
39. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:188–89.
40. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 16, 17 October 1792, AN; Dumouriez to LeBrun, 19 October 1792, AN.
41. *Journal de la République,* 4 October 1792; *Révolutions de Paris,* 169:59; *Courrier des départements,* 3 October 1792; *Chronique de Paris,* 15 October 1792.
42. Valence to Dumouriez, 22 October 1792, AN.
43. Dumouriez to Valence, 24 October 1792, AN; Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, 3:94;
44. Bucher and Roux, *Histoire parlementaire,* 20; Vivenot, *Quellen zur geschichte,* 2:296.
45. Lucchesini to Haugwitz, 26 October 1792, Vivenot, *Quellen zur geschichte,* 2:297–98.
46. Valence to Dumouriez, 26 October 1792, AN; Dumouriez to Valence, 28 October 1792, AN.
47. Vivenot, *Quellen zur geschichte*, 3:292.
48. Technically, the empire did not declare war on France until March 1793, but this technicality made little difference in the conduct of either side. See S. S.

Brio, *The German Policy of Revolutionary France* (Cambridge, 1957), 1, 91. That most of the Empire remained at peace was due in part to Dumouriez's carefully laid groundwork while minister of foreign affairs. In April, Kaunitz stated that "The plan of the ruling party in France appears to be to lull the German princes to sleep with fair words and fine promises in order that, should they desire action, they find resistance in their own provinces." Vivenot, *Quellen zur geschichte,* 2:86.

49. In a letter to Dumouriez, LeBrun enclosed Mettra's negative report of his negotiations in Cologne of 10 November 1792; 7 December 1792, AN.
50. Vivenot, *Quellen zur geschichte*, 2:325–26.
51. 26 October 1792, in A. Graf Thürheim, ed. *Briefe des Graven, Mercy-Argenteau an den Grafen Louis Starhemberg* (Innsbrück, 1884).
52. The newly elected deputies of the National Convention, influenced by Rousseau's notion of the General Will, viewed consensus as essential to the functioning of the Republic, which helps explain the vehemence with which positions were argued and the unwillingness to compromise or accept majority rule within the Convention.
53. Henry Liebermann, *Les Commissaires de l'Assemblée législative et de la convention depuis la Révolution* (Paris, 1927).
54. Hampson, *Danton,* 67; F. A. De Luna, et al. "Forum," *French Historical Studies* (Spring 1988), 15:3; François Furet and M. Ozouf, eds., "Girondins," in *A Critical Dictionary of the French* Revolution (Cambridge, 1989).
55. Based on contemporary documents and accounts, this interpretation differs from the standard depiction of the Girondins as radical revolutionaries and expansionists who formulated foreign policy based strictly on bourgeois class interests and promoted an ideological crusade to export French revolutionary doctrines abroad.
56. The Girondins also controlled a powerful press, including Brissot's *Patriote français,* Louvet's *Sentinelle,* Gorsas's *Courrier des départements,* and Condorcet's *Chronique de Paris,* founded by François Noël in 1789.
57. Intelligence report, "Aperçu sur l'état de la France," October 1792, PRO-FO.
58. LeBrun's speech to the Convention on 26 September, in which he discussed the changes brought about at the ministry of foreign affairs and in foreign policy, indicated both his confidence in and control over French revolutionary foreign policy.
59. G. Michon, *Robespierre et la guerre révolutionnaire 1791–1792* (Paris, 1937), 102.
60. For example, contrary to its stance the previous spring and summer, the paper now claimed that the French Republic was engaged in a "Holy War" (8–15 October 1792), a stance it continued until March 1793.
61. "Manifeste du général Dumouriez au peuple de la Belgique," 26 October 1792, AMAE.
62. LeBrun and Dumouriez were aware this plan was also likely to destroy hopes of a general peace and spark the formation of what would soon become the First Coalition against France. In his first major foreign policy statement on 26 September 1792, LeBrun predicted that "Next spring is the time when the

worst moment of danger will come; that is when the coalition of tyranny will make its last effort; that is when we will have to repulse the combined forces of all the kings at the same time." In November, Dumouriez urged LeBrun to act quickly because by the spring the crowned tyrants threatening France would likely be joined by the Germanies, Russia, Spain, and England and "could crush us" (30 November 1792, AN).

63. "Ordre de bataille de l'Armée de Belgique," 24 October 1792, AG.
64. Chuquet, G*uerres de la Révolution française,* 4:222–23.
65. Deshacquets to Lebrun, 14 November 1792, AMAE.
66. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique,* 95–148. LeBrun had predicted this event in late October. LeBrun to Jolivet, 28 October 1792, AMAE.
67. From Cologne, Metra reported that throughout Europe, "One remarkable thing is that, in general, the enemies themselves talk about Dumouriez with respect and do not seem to hold anything against him. According to an Austrian officer, Dumouriez is the greatest general that has lived for a long time; he surpasses le Condé and le Turenne. He has all the necessary military skills, and the ability with which he is able to maintain discipline and order in his army and form a group composed of all parties is not less praiseworthy than his military talents. Finally, this general is praised to the skies, even by those who fought against him." Metra to LeBrun, 1 December 1792, AN.
68. Grégoire proclaimed to the Convention on 21 November that "A new century is going to begin. . . . Freedom all across Europe will visit its land, and there will be no more fortresses and foreign masses on this part of the globe." On 16 November, the Jacobins enthusiastically discussed Cloots's plans for a universal republic (Aulard, *La société des Jacobins,* 4:234).
69. 13 November 1792, LeBrun to Dumouriez, AN.

CHAPTER 7

1. "Manifeste aux peuple de la Belgique," "Instructions pour les officiers proclamateurs de la souveraineté Belge," 8 November 1792, AN.
2. For more on LeBrun's agents and the ongoing correspondence among them, see Howe, "French Revolutionary Foreign Policy and the Belgian Project."
3. LeBrun to Cornet de Grez, 3 November 1792, AN.
4. Maret to LeBrun, 4 November 1792, AN.
5. LeBrun established French agencies to distribute revolutionary propaganda and facilitate local democratic elections for municipal assemblies. The agencies cooperated with the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois in the effort to transform the Belgian provinces and Liège into a democratic republic. Godechot describes the agency was France's "first official propaganda office." *La Grande Nation* (Paris, 1956), 1:160–62. Dumouriez asked LeBrun to appoint his aide-de-camp, Bourdois, as chief and Chépy, French secretary to the legation at Liège, as second-in-command, and to name Metman, secretary to the French legation at Munich, to the agency's staff.
6. On 13 November, Digneffe and Balza wrote enthusiastically that they had

already "municipalized" Mons, Lens, and Ath, and were on their way to Brussels with Dumouriez, and van der Steen reported that he, Rens, and Sta were organizing elections and creating an information service in Tournai. Digneffe and Balza to LeBrun, 13 November 1792, AN; van der Steen to LeBrun, 15 November 1792, AN.

7. LeBrun to Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, 18 November 1792, AN.
8. "Nous, Charles-François Dumouriez, Général en chef des armées de la République française dans la Belgique, nous avons proclamé les principes de la souveraineté nationale Belgique," 17 November 1792, AMAE.
9. Writing to the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, LeBrun maintained the Belgians should quickly form their own army, a lesson learned from the earlier Belgian and Liégeois Revolutions. 18 November 1792, AN.
10. Deshacquets to LeBrun, 22 November 1792, AMAE.
11. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*, 130–31.
12. Agent Camell Hector wrote from Mons that the election of provisional representatives had gone well because of Dumouriez's policy allowing the people to choose them freely. Hector to LeBrun, 14 December 1792, AN.
13. Walckiers and Dotrenge to LeBrun, 13 December 1792, AN. Torfs, Walckiers, Balza, "A la Convention Nationale, adressé des deputés du people Belge," 4 December 1792, BR. On 18 November, Chépy had told LeBrun that such a decree would coalesce Belgian patriot support behind a democratic republic. Chépy to LeBrun, 18 November 1792, AN.
14. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*,127.
15. Cornet de Grez to LeBrun, 6 December 1792.
16. Deshacquets to LeBrun, 14 November 1792, AMAE.
17. "Un mémoire sur trois colonnes concernant la situation politique de la ville de Bruxelles," 20 November 1792 AN.
18. Van der Noot to Dumouriez, 26 November 1792, AN.
19. On 22 November, Rens wrote to LeBrun from Ghent, reaffirming the Belgians' support for Dumouriez, "who refused to recognize any other authority other than that of the sovereign people." Rens to LeBrun, 22 November 1792, AN.
20. An additional blow to the Belgian democrats was the death of Vonck on 1 December 1792. Sta to LeBrun, 4 December 1792, AN.
21. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*, 131.
22. Ibid., 199–212. Tassier's argument that the Belgians and Liégeois were unable to create a viable republic based on a national consensus in 1792 because they resisted having democracy thrust upon them by French and Belgian militants understates the preexisting divisions in Belgian opinion and on other points conflicts with the evidence. Of the French agents in the occupied territories, only one, Chépy, was a revolutionary firebrand of the type Tassier describes and only six of the French commanders in Belgium could be considered extremists, most being moderates or without discernible political positions. Godechot agrees with Tassier (*La Grand Nation*, 1:160–62).

23. LeBrun's secret agent at The Hague, Mevrouw d'Aelders (Etta Palm), repeatedly warned LeBrun to have the Scheldt decree revoked, as it was the greatest threat to war between France and Great Britain and the United Provinces. Colenbrander, 1:194–96. As foreign minister in March 1792, Dumouriez had also understood the implications of the opening of the Scheldt when in March 1792 he used it as threat to discourage Great Britain from supporting Austria. "Réflexion pour la négociation d'Angleterre en cas de guerre," 30 March 1792, AN.
24. LeBrun to the Committee of United Belgians and Liégeois, 18 November 1792, AN.
25. Verlooy to Dumouriez, 8 December 1792, AN.
26. On December 19, Metman sent Dumouriez's address to the Brussels assembly to LeBrun, and Dumouriez and LeBrun ordered the convocation of the National Belgian Convention printed and distributed. Metman to LeBrun, 19 December 1792, AN.
27. Cornet de Grez to LeBrun and Dumouriez, 6 December 1792, AN. In her later works, Tassier appears more sympathetic to the radical Vonckists and argues that Verlooy's proposal was more realistic than Cornet's and Dumouriez's failure to accept it was one of his greatest blunders. Tassier, *Figures révolutionnaires* (Brussels, 1942), 68–94, and "La technique des révolutions nationales et le duel Cornet de Grez-Verlooy," in *Miscellanea historica in honorem Leoni van der Essen* (Brussels and Paris, 1947), 2:901–13.
28. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 13, 18, 25 November 1792, AN.
29. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 28 November 1792, AN. Dumouriez wrote about the "enthusiasm, the fraternity, and the energy of the brave and spiritual Liégeois people."
30. Rouhière, Chépy, and Courtois were discouraged by the gaining strength of the Statists and danger of civil war in Belgium and argued that the French must act quickly to organize Belgium if independence and democracy were to succeed, Chépy warning that the "Austrian party" was gaining in strength and civil war was possible. Rouhière to LeBrun, 14, 15, 18, 19 December AN;. Rouhière to LeBrun, 14, 15, 18, 19 December AN; Chépy to LeBrun, 19 December 1792, AN; Courtois to LeBrun, 19 December 1792, AN.
31. For more on Dumouriez's financial difficulties in Belgium, see Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*, 109–21, 151–52.
32. Charles Poisson, *Les fournisseurs aux armées sous la Révolution* (Paris, 1932).
33. Dumouriez to Pache, 24 November 1792, Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris, Paris (hereafter BHVP).
34. A report to the Ministry of War in December stated, "Regardless of its many commissioners and the pompous display of orders it has given, the Directory of Purchases had generated almost no revenue a month after its conception. The results of these operations were the depletion of the French frontier's departments, the rotting of most of the supplies, and the seizing of the rest, without having provided any relief to the Belgian army." 17 December 1792, AG.

35. Dumouriez to the president of the National Convention. 25 November 1792, AN.
36. Pache to Dumouriez, 22 November 1792, BHVP.
37. His own soldiers sent him letters of complaint, claiming that more than half the army had perished and the rest were sick and close to mutiny. Soldiers of the Republic to Dumouriez, 5 December 1792, AN. So too did his generals, Valence writing that given the state of the army in Belgium, it was impossible to execute Dumouriez's orders. Valence to Dumouriez, 11 December 1792, AN.
38. LeBrun to Pache, 5 December 1792, AMAE.
39. Rouhière to LeBrun, 13, 14 December 1792, AN.
40. Dumouriez to the National Convention, 5 December 1792, BHVP.
41. Generals Beurnonville of the Army of the Moselle, D'Anselme of the Army of Italy, and Carnot of the Army of the Pyrenees also bitterly complained to the Assembly of the inefficiency of Pache's supply system.
42. Papers of the commissioners of the Convention, Danton, Camus, Delacroix, and Gossin AN; the commissioners' correspondence can also be found in Aulard, *Recueil*, 1:289–90, 304–7.
43. "Rapport des commissaires nommés par la convention nationale près l'armée de la Belgique," AN.
44. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*, 150–57; Tassier, "La technique des révolutions nationals," 901–13; Poisson, *Les fournisseurs aux armées sous la Révolution*, 153–68.
45. Pache to Dumouriez, 7 November 1792, BHVP.
46. Dumouriez to Pache, 10 November 1792, BHVP.
47. Pache to Dumouriez, 28 November 1792, BHVP.
48. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 28 November 1792, AN.
49. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 30 November 1792, AN.
50. Aulard, *Recueil*, 1:295.4.
51. The wording of this decision echoed the "natural borders" arguments being made by some deputies, which called for the restoration of the lands that constituted ancient Gaul, extending French borders to the Rhine and the Mediterranean.
52. Miles, for instance, wrote to the British Foreign Office that "The decree which arrived yesterday from Paris is written in blood and announces war against all the world!" Miles to Aust, 26 November 1792, *Correspondence*, 1:355.
53. This examination of the 19 November decree within the context of the Belgian situation and the practical problems of occupation differs from the traditional historical interpretation of the decree as proof of a vast French program of subversive international propaganda. (See, for instance, François de Bourgoing, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe* (Paris, 1865–1885); Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*; Clapham, *Causes of the War of 1792*; and Emile Bourgeois, *Manuel historique de la politique étrangère* (Paris, 1925–1926). Marxist historians continued to see the decree as major statement of French foreign policy, arguing that it reflected the Girondins' desire

to advance a wider war to distract the French people from domestic class issues. (See Mathiez, *La Révolution et les étrangers*; Michon, *Robespierre et la guerre revolution*; Lefebvre, *La Révolution française*). For more recent works, see Jeremy Black, *British Foreign Policy in an Age of Revolutions, 1783–1793* (Cambridge, 1994); Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford, 1994); T. C. W. Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (London, 1986); J. Ehrman, *The Younger Pitt,* vol. 2 *(*Stanford, 1983).

54. In Paris, the Helvetic Club, a group of exiled Swiss patriots led by Jacques Grenus who worked for the "liberation" of Geneva and its "reunion" with France, had powerful friends in the French government, such as Clavière and Pache. The majority in the Convention, however, did not support the annexation of Geneva. Brissot instead called on the Geneva patriots to democratize their government and secured the passage of a decree promising that the French would respect Genevan neutrality and independence. For more on the Genevan case, see Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution* (Princeton, 1959), 1:111–39; Paul Maillefer, "Les relations diplomatiques entre la France et la Suisse pendant la guerre de la première coalition," *Revue historique vaudoise* 4(1896):1–19.
55. LeBrun to Desportes, 13 November 1792, AMAE.
56. Little of the crucial discussions that began on 12 December and culminated in the decree of 15 December has come to light. Lefebvre is not entirely accurate in stating that no minutes of these proceedings have survived, however. From the minutes of the War Committee, comprising the private jottings of various of its members, we learn that Ruebell, a member of the Diplomatic Committee, introduced an alternative, more moderate set of proposals and that Clavière argued that a coercive financial policy in Belgium might undermine all faith in the democratic cause (11–15 December 1792, AN).
57. This interpretation of the decree of 15 December differs from the prevailing view that it was intended to confiscate Belgian wealth to finance the war, hinted at the country's eventual annexation to France, and constituted a return to the most brutal occupation policies of the *ancien régime* and therefore a renunciation of the Principles of 1789. In that reading, the December decree was a call for the spread of the Revolution throughout the occupied territories and beyond to Europe and was more cynical than the November decree, since it no longer relied on reason and principle to achieve its ends but openly appealed to force. See, for instance F. A. Goetz-Bernstein, *La diplomatie de la Gironde* (Paris, 1912), 350–51; Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, 207, 233–36; Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*, 166. This traditional interpretation has its origins in contemporary reactions to the decree, as many in the occupied lands complained of its harshness, giving fuel to later historians who saw the measure as another French attempt to achieve political advantage on the continent.
58. LeBrun to Chépy, 17 December 1792, A.N.
59. S. Tassier, "Aux origines de la première coalition: Le ministre LeBrun," *Revue du Nord,* 36(1954):263–72; Brissot, *Mémoires* (Paris, 1877), 419–20. Yet

Brissot acquiesced to LeBrun's policies and did not determine a separate Girondin foreign policy in the Convention.

60. Dumouriez to Pache, 21 December 1792, BHVP; Pache to the president of the National Convention, 24 December 1792, AN.
61. Society of Friends of Liberty and Equality: in Bruges to LeBrun, 24 December 1792, AN; in Mons to LeBrun, 28 December 1792, AN; in Tournai and Brussels to LeBrun, 26 December 1792, AN.
62. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*, 244–45, 248, 253–57.
63. Minutes of the Assembly of Provisional Representatives of Namur, 23, 24 December 1792, AN.
64. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique*, 254.
65. Thouvenot to Dumouriez, 27 December 1792, AN; General Harville to Dumouriez, 27 December 1792, AN.
66. "La Proclamation de Dumouriez au Peuple Belge," 17 December 1792, AN.
67. Dumouriez to Pache, 18 December 1792, BHVP; Dumouriez to the president of the Convention, 24 December 1792, AN; Pache to Dumouriez, 27 December 1792, AN.
68. Chépy to LeBrun, 26 December 1792, AN. Encouraged, General Thouvenot wrote, "You received your leave this evening, you are going to Paris, Belgium is safe!" Thouvenot to Dumouriez, 25 December 1792, AN.
69. Metman to LeBrun, 30 December 1792, AMAE.
70. "Proclamation au nom du peuple souverain fait en Assemblée générale tenue à Bruxelles," 29 December 1792, AMAE.
71. Metman to LeBrun, 30 December 1792, AMAE.
72. On 26 December, General Estienne, commander of the Belgian-Liégeois Legion, wrote to LeBrun that the Statists were deceiving the Belgians as to the true intent of the French and proposed increased propaganda to counteract the bad publicity (AN). A citizen from Ostend wrote that the general spirit in Belgium was "opposition to Dumouriez's attempt to convoke a Belgian national convention. Belgians don't like the *assignats* and won't pay for protection. Here they are slandering you; they say that although you are a virtuous man, you mean to be dictator of Belgium," 26 December 1792, AN. On 30 December Metman described the bullying tactics of the Statists, pointing out that Belgian opposition to the decree had given the Statists additional support (AMAE).
73. Lys to LeBrun, 1 January 1793, AN.
74. Ruelle to LeBrun, 3 January 1793, AN.
75. Proli to LeBrun, 5 January 1793, AN. Pierre Proli, born in Brussels, had been a Vonck supporter since 1789 and a friend of Dumouriez since July 1790. Proli became LeBrun's close confidant and agent in Belgium in the autumn of 1792.

CHAPTER 8

1. Dumouriez, "Quatre Mémoires," January 1793, AN; *Mémoires*, 3:304–11. The documentary evidence does not support Dumouriez's claim that he also

attempted to save Louis XVI during this period but that he was more concerned with gaining Jacobin support for his program. Dumouriez to Danton, 20 January 1793, AN.

2. Generals Miranda and Thouvenot bitterly complained to Dumouriez in January that Pache and the Directory of Purchases continued to hold up the armies' supplies in Belgium. Thouvenot to Dumouriez, 11 January 1793; Miranda to Dumouriez, 6 January 1793, AN; Miranda to Dumouriez, 19, 28 January 1793, AN. Miranda warned Pache that "I anticipate inestimable damage and the most grievous consequences for the Republic's armies, which can only be regarded as your responsibility." Miranda to Pache, 26 January 1793, AN.
3. Munro to Grenville, 7 January 1793, PRO-FO. For a more detailed treatment of this diplomatic history and the covert intelligence-gathering activities of French and British agents, see Howe, "French Revolutionary Foreign Policy."
4. Bourgoing to LeBrun, 10, 13, 17 November 1792, 3 January 1793, AMAE. By early January, Bourgoing warned LeBrun that if the king were executed, Spain would declare war. Bourgoing to LeBrun, 3 January 1792, AMAE.
5. Mourgue to LeBrun, 2 October 1792, AMAE; Noël to LeBrun, 23, 26 September 1792 and Chauvelin to LeBrun, 9 October 1792, AMAE.
6. LeBrun to Chauvelin, 19 October 1792, ANAE. As Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Provisional Executive Council, LeBrun would sign Louis XVI's death warrant.
7. Aulard, *Jacobins*, 5:31.
8. On becoming minister of war on 18 October, Pache, a former protégé of Roland, severed his Girondin connections and sided with the Montagnards. On 20 November 1792, Roland had discovered the secret papers of the king, including his correspondence with foreign powers, and opened them without official witnesses, resulting in the Montagnard accusation, led by Pache, that he had removed documents incriminating the Girondins, including Dumouriez. In January, Roland's attendance at the Council's meetings gradually decreased until, after refusing to sign the decree authorizing the king's execution, he resigned and withdrew from public affairs. Aulard, *Recueil*, 1:501.
9. Maintaining neutrality had served British interests as well as those of the French. See Blanning, *Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars,* 131–35.
10. Grenville to Auckland, 13 November 1792, BL; J. Debrett, ed., *A Collection of State Papers Relative to the War Against France* (London, 1794–1801).
11. Grenville to Eden [British ambassador in Berlin], 13 November, 1792, PRO-FO; Grenville to Alexander Stratton [*chargé d'affairs* in Vienna], 13 November l792, PRO-FO; Grenville to Francis Jackson, [British ambassador at Madrid], 1 November 1792, PRO-FO. In his dispatches to Eden and Stratton, Grenville indicated Britain's concern over the French invasion of Belgium and Liège and potential threat to the United Provinces. He also sought a rapprochement with Spain.
12. In addition to Noël, LeBrun's secret agents in England included Marc-Antoine

Jullien Benoît, a former agent for Dumouriez, and Goriani, an Italian publicist. In September, Scipion Mourgue replaced Benoît, and in early December LeBrun sent Jacob Pereyra to London to report on Chauvelin's activities and the British domestic situation.

13. The British ministry also believed that Chauvelin directed the clandestine activities of the French agents in London and was in league with British radical leaders. Fox's speech in parliament supporting recognition of the French Republic seemed to confirm these suspicions. *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803* (London, 1817), 80.
14. Walckiers to LeBrun, 5 October 1792, AMAE.
15. Inevitably, Noël and Chauvelin became rivals for LeBrun's favor. Noël urged LeBrun to replace Chauvelin, and Chauvelin reported that Noël was under British surveillance and his attempts to establish contacts with the opposition party were causing an unfavorable reaction at Whitehall. After a bitter confrontation in early October, they referred their differences to LeBrun, without much success. Chauvelin, apprehensive about his position, began to exaggerate his importance to the British ministry and the state of instability in Britain.
16. These agents included Captain George Munro, John Mason, M. Somers, and Bartholomew Huber. The British and Dutch were also able to buy intelligence from French agents, most notably Joubert. Although a Francophile and LeBrun's friend since their days in Liège, Miles was also a paid agent of the British. In the autumn and winter of 1792–1793, his connections on both sides of the Channel made him an invaluable mediator, and although Pitt and Grenville gave him no official title in the foreign office, he worked tirelessly throughout this period to prevent the expansion of the war.
17. The outbreak of revolution in France had inspired the revival of the parliamentary reform movement in England. Though rooted in the older Wilkite and Association movements of the 1770s and 1780s, the newer movement was more radical and involved the working classes. See Palmer, *Age of the Democratic Revolution,* 2:459; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class,* 122; Gwyn A. Williams, *Artisans and Sans-Culottes* (London, 1968), 67.
18. See Simon Schama, *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands* (New York, 1977), 56–60; Alfred Cobban, *Ambassadors and Secret Agents* (London, 1954), 22–25.
19. 9 November 1792, Grenville, *Manuscripts,* 2:329–30.
20. Leaders of the Batvian Revolutionary Committee included Johan de Kock, Hendrick Schilge, Johan van Hooff, Pierre Dumont-Pigalle, and Fredrick Gelderman.
21. LeBrun persuaded the Executive Council to postpone Dumouriez's request to invade the Dutch Republic, and he withdrew his support for the Dutch patriots. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:295; LeBrun to Dumouriez, 9 December 1792, AN. In a letter to his friend, Pio, an official of the Paris Commune, LeBrun explained his decision to drop his support for the invasion

of Holland because of strong British opposition. LeBrun to Pio, 29 December 1792, AMAE.

22. In early November LeBrun authorized Madame d'Aelders to gather intelligence and hold conversations with the grand pensionary. Schama maintains that she was a double agent, paid by both the Dutch and French (*Patriots and Liberators*, 150). Throughout the months before the war, she had made a formidable effort to prevent the outbreak of war between France and the United Provinces and repeatedly advised LeBrun to have the Scheldt decree rescinded. On 6 December she had written, "In my letter of the 27th and in my last one of 30th of November, I had the honor to inform you, citizen, that the decision by the Council about the opening of the Scheldt had thrown everyone here into a state of consternation, principally in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Dortrecht, and the province of Zealand. The so-called patriots are the most alarmed, because they stand to lose by it, as it will turn people's opinion further against them. Citizen, if I may be allowed to raise my feeble voice to give advice on behalf of my dear adoptive country, believe me, leave the good Dutch their pet fancy. . . . Believe me, if you are in good faith in wanting peace with Holland and England, do not open the Scheldt." Colenbrander, *Gednkstukken der Algemeene,* 1:194–204.
23. Following the opening of the Scheldt by French gunboats and the demand that French troops be allowed through Maestricht, the Dutch authorities and Auckland believed the French would soon invade. 15 November 1792, Grenville, *Manuscripts,* 2:334; van de Spiegel, 19 November 1792, Colenbrander, *Gednkstukken der Algemeene*, 1:234. Reports from Lord Elgin, British minister in Brussels, on his conversations about Dumouriez can be found in Elgin to Grenville, 14, 21 September 1792, PRO-FO.
24. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 30 November 1793, AN.
25. Grenville to Chauvelin, 28 November 1792, Grenville's minutes of 29 November 1792, PRO-FO. Chauvelin to LeBrun, 29 November 1792, AMAE.
26. *The Annual Register or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1792* (London, 1799), 502. The royal proclamation, reflecting the ministers' alarm, stated, "The utmost industry is still being employed by evil-disposed persons within this kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, with a view to subverting the laws and established constitution of this realm and to destroy and tumult thereby excited has lately shown itself in acts of riot and insurrection."
27. Aulard, *Recueil*, 7 December 1792, 1:300; LeBrun to Maret, LeBrun to Chauvelin, 9 December 1792, AMAE.
28. Chauvelin to LeBrun, 14 December 1792, AMAE.
29. Ibid., 18 December 1792, AMAE.
30. Noel to LeBrun, 16 December 1792, AMAE.
31. *Patriote français,* 20 December 1792; *Chronique de Paris,* 20 December 1729. *Révolutions de Paris* (15–22 December 1792) took a more extreme view against negotiations and urging an immediate appeal to the British.
32. LeBrun to Chauvelin, 20 December 1792, AMAE.

33. Chauvelin's précis of LeBrun's instructions and Grenville's replies, 27 December 1792, AN; Debrett, *State Papers*, 1:225–26.
34. Grenville to Auckland, 28 December 1792, BL. In a letter to LeBrun, Chépy and Metman added a postscript: "We just learned from a letter from Noël that England has decided to go to war," 27 December 1792, AMAE.
35. Grenville to Chauvelin, 31 December 1792, PRO-FO.
36. LeBrun and other French policymakers were aware that the British would sign a treaty of neutrality with France if the French would evacuate Belgium and thereby invalidate the Scheldt decree, a possibility the Belgian patriots had always feared. Metman argued against it: "Moreover, the most intelligent men in your Convention are now talking about pacification. Has not our nation [Belgium] been victimized enough already? Do we also have to fear that one of the possible clauses of the treaties that might be drawn up could be the restitution or the evacuation of the Belgian provinces by the French?" Metman to LeBrun, 6 January 1793, AMAE.
37. Although Grenville had not yet received responses to his November inquiries from Germany or Austria, who were preoccupied by the partition of Poland, on 20 December Count Woronzow, the Russian ambassador in London, had written to express Catherine II's apprehension over French military success and the republic's threat to European stability and to propose that Great Britain join with Russia in forming a concert of European powers to check French revolutionary aggression. On 28 December, Grenville accepted Woronzow's proposal. In his instructions to Charles Whitworth, British ambassador in St. Petersburg, Grenville outlined Britain's conditions for joining the proposed coalition and stating that the purpose of joint intervention on the Continent should not be to reestablish absolutism in France but to ensure "their own security at a time when their political interests are endangered by France. Count Woronzow to Grenville, 20 December 1792, BL; Grenville to Woronzow, 28 December, 1792, BL. Grenville wrote to Auckland, "The overture from Russia appears to me a very important event, and one which may lead to the happiest consequences." Grenville, *Manuscripts,* 2:361; Grenville to Whitworth, 29 December 1792, PRO-FO. In early January, Prussia and Austria responded that their intention was to defeat France and restore the Bourbon monarchy, and they and Russia informed Britain that, while welcoming Grenville's interest in an expanded alliance, they were not interested in negotiating for a general peace.
38. The Alien Bill Grenville introduced to Parliament on 15 December also provided for periodic examinations, frequent registrations, confinement to certain "safe" areas, and a system of passports and was passed on 8 January 1793. Cobett, *Parliamentary History of England*, 239–70. It was supposedly necessitated by the 8,000 French citizens living in Britain, including "persons disaffected to the government of this country." Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:370–71. Although LeBrun had always opposed the Commercial Treaty of 1786, he claimed that it had been faithfully observed in France. For more on the treaty, see Lucyle Werkmeister, *A Newspaper History of England, 1792–1793* (Lincoln, 1967), 151–58.

39. *Journal de la République Française*, 29 December 1792.
40. 17, 18 January 1793, *Le Journal Français,* ed. H. Nicolle de Ladevèze.
41. The Committee of General Defense was to serve as an intermediary between the Convention and the ministers, but its eighteen members were overwhelmed by the magnitude and urgency of the republic's problems. On 6 April 1793, it became the powerful Committee of Public Safety. Godechot, *Institutions de la France*, 294–96.
42. In January, the Girondins dominated the Convention's foreign policy debates. The major speakers were Vergniaud, Petion, Etienne, Brissot, Kersaint, and Ducos. Ducos's *Exposé historique des motifs qui ont amené la rupture entre la République Française et sa majesté Britannique* (1793) was a justification of French foreign policy toward Great Britain and a denunciation of the British ministry for provoking the outbreak of war between the two countries (BL). LeBrun continued to dominate foreign policy because the other members of the Executive Council deferred to his leadership in foreign affairs, as did the Girondin leaders who controlled the Diplomatic Committee and the Committee of General Defense (Brissot, Kersaint, Gensonne, Lasource, and Boyer-Fonfrède).
43. Brissot was the chairman for both the Diplomatic Committee and the Committee of General Defense in the Convention. Aulard, *Recueil,* 405–06, 451.
44. Despite their defiant and belligerent tone, it is a measure of the deputies' preoccupation with domestic affairs that the only practical step they then took to prepare for an expanded war was to approve a naval reinforcement of the channel ports on 13 January.
45. Aulard, *Recueil,* 440.
46. LeBrun to Thainville, 11 January 1793, AMAE. Noël, recently transferred from London to The Hague, was confused by this apparent ambiguity in LeBrun's policy toward the Dutch, on 12 January asking whether he should be seeking closer connections with the Dutch patriots or with the Stadholderate Court. Noël to LeBrun, 12 January 1793, AMAE.
47. Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken der Algemeene,* 1:84. Noël wrote to Dumouriez that the Dutch patriots were furious that LeBrun would not support a French invasion and that he and Tort de la Sonde in Brussels agreed that Dumouriez must free the "Bataves" (11 January 1793, AN). Ducange wrote to the Jacobin Club on 7 February 1793 accusing LeBrun of working against the Batavian Patriot Party and its plans for revolution in the United Provinces.
48. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 14 January 1793, AN. A letter to Noël indicated that the foreign minister had abandoned the Dutch patriot cause altogether (22 January 1793, AMAE).
49. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:482. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 30 November 1792, AN.
50. Dumouriez to the Executive Committee, 18 January 1793, AN. Miranda wrote Dumouriez that "I believe that your plan is going to be difficult to implement in such a status of nakedness and lack of inventory as our armies find themselves" (15 January 1793, AN)
51. Kock and Daendels to LeBrun, 20 January 1793, Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken der Algemeene* 1:86.

52. Dumouriez to Miranda, 23 January 1793, AN.
53. Chauvelin to LeBrun, 4 January 1793, AMAE.
54. Chauvelin to LeBrun, 7 January 1793 (enclosure), AMAE.
55. Grenville to Chauvelin, 31 December 1792; Grenville to Chauvelin, 9 January 1793, PRO-FO. Chauvelin's précis of LeBrun's instructions and Grenville's replies, 27 December 1792, AN; Debrett, *Collection of State Papers*, 1:225–226.
56. Chauvelin to Grenville, 12 January 1793, PRO-FO.
57. LeBrun to Chauvelin, 8 January 1793 (enclosure), AMAE.
58. Chauvelin to Grenville, 12 and 13 January 1793; Grenville to Chauvelin, 12 January 1793, PRO-FO.
59. Chauvelin to LeBrun, 13 January 1793, AMAE; Aulard, *Recueil*, 1:406.
60. Minutes of meeting between Grenville and Chauvelin, 13 January 1793, PRO-FO.
61. Miles, *Correspondence*, 2:28. In his letter, Maret elaborated on LeBrun's policy on the Scheldt decree and Belgium: "You demand that we should renounce the opening of the Scheldt. Tell me, I pray you, if this trivial object can become a veritable subject for war. By this act, in conformity with all the principles of the right of nature and of nations, have we made any attack on the interests of your country? Are even the rights of Holland sensibly injured? Does she not possess the most important arms of the Scheldt? Would it be equitable to demand the sacrifice of the sacred rights of the Belgian people because the exercise of these rights promises them a prosperity which excites the jealousy of a neighboring people?"
62. Miles, *Correspondence*, 2:37, 40, 57. In this instance, Miles, Maret, and LeBrun never believed the Scheldt decree to be the major source of contention for the British ministry. Yet in his notes of 31 January 1793, Miles did recognize the full significance of the issue: "This country would have escaped the condition of soliciting as an act of forbearance on the part of France what she might have granted as a favour to the Liégeois and the Austrian Netherlands, and, by so doing, the question of opening the Scheldt—the source of our present controversy—would have been avoided" (ibid., 57).
63. Ibid., 2:43. Burke had vehemently denounced the Scheldt decree on 17 December, telling the House of Commons that by the passage of the decree, "the laws of nature supersede the laws of nations." *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, 30:112.
64. *Correspondence of Edmund Burke,* eds. J. Marshall and John Woods (London, 1968), 7:306.
65. Grenville to Auckland, 13 January 1793, PRO-FO.
66. Intelligence reports from The Hague had indicated that French gunboats were active in the Scheldt at the time of the 13 January *démarche.* Auckland to Grenville, 11 January 1793, BL. On 16 January, M. Somers informed Grenville that Dumouriez's plans for an attack on the United Provinces had been submitted to the Committee of General Defense for approval and an invasion was believed imminent.
67. Grenville to Chauvelin, 18 January 1793, PRO-FO.

68. Miles, *Correspondence,* 2:47.
69. Grenville to Auckland, 20 January 1793, PRO-FO; Grenville to Murray, 20 January 1793, PRO-FO.
70. The Earl of Malmesbury, a Whig leader, recorded in his diary on 20 January that Pitt had told Lord Loughborough "that war was a decided measure, that he saw it as inevitable, and that the sooner it began the better" and that he was confident of success because of the strength of the coalition and Britain's naval preparations and surplus revenue. James Harris, Earl of Malmesbury, *Diaries and Correspondence* (London, 1844), 2:501–2.
71. Maret to LeBrun, 31 January 1793, AN.
72. Grenville to Chauvelin, 20 January 1793, PRO-FO.
73. Grenville, *Manuscripts,* 2:372–73.
74. G. Martin, another French secret agent in London, informed LeBrun of Grenville's communications with the European capitals and warned that concerted military action was being planned against France if Grenville's ultimatum was not accepted. Martin and Chauvelin reported receiving information from a cipher clerk working at the British Foreign Office. Martin to Compatriote, 31 December 1792, AMAE; Chauvelin to LeBrun, 23 January 1793, AMAE. See also "Correspondance de LeBrun: Rupture entre la France et l'Angleterre, 1793," AN.
75. LeBrun to Chauvelin, 22 January 1793, AMAE. Furthermore, Chauvelin was to explain that "The note of the 13th contains all the explanations the British Minister could require regarding our sincerity and our bond with the English nation. There is nothing you need to add to it. You will assure the British Minister, that when he wishes to reconcile with us, he will find us ready to do everything possible to see that good relations be reestablished between the two nations."
76. LeBrun to Noël, 22 January 1793, AMAE. LeBrun had consistently taken this position toward the Batavian patriots since becoming prime minister. In a proposed treaty of alliance with the British in August, LeBrun had promised to withdraw all support from the Batavian patriots in the Dutch Republic and to disband the Batavian legion. LeBrun to Noël, 29 August 1792, AMAE.
77. Aulard, *Recueil,* 2:20. Joubert reported these meetings to van de Spiegel (Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken der Algemeene,* 1:250–59) and continued to supply the Dutch and British with intelligence as a result of the "provision for life" promised to him by van de Spiegel and Auckland in December.
78. Dumouriez to Auckland, 23 January 1793, AN. Through intelligence sources, the British ministry had learned in advance the purpose of Maret and de Maulde's missions, and other reports from Grenville's spies indicated that Dumouriez was preparing to invade the Dutch Republic. Somers to Grenville, 28 January 1793, PRO-FO; Huber to Grenville, 29 January 1793, PRO-FO. The British were therefore highly skeptical of LeBrun and Dumouriez's motives. Pitt and Grenville also believed that LeBrun had sent Maret to London after, rather than before the French had learned of Chauvelin's expulsion from Britain. Maret to Grenville, 5 February 1793, PRO-FO.

Given the British view of the French peace initiative, neither mission had much chance of success.

79. Dumouriez to General Miranda, 23 January 1793, AN.
80. Chauvelin had left London on 24 January. On the road to Dover at Blackheath, he met the courier with LeBrun's dispatch recalling him to Paris, but continued on to Paris without informing the British government of Maret's mission as instructed. Chauvelin and Maret passed each other during the night on the Paris-Calais road at Montreuil. Maret to LeBrun, 31 January 1793, AN; Ernouf, *Maret*, 123–24. The British were informed unofficially of the purpose of Maret's mission by Miles and Talleyrand on 28 January, Talleyrand saying that the French government wanted to avoid war with Great Britain and was sending Dumouriez to propose a general peace plan. Grenville, *Manuscripts,* 2:374–75.
81. Maret to LeBrun, 31 January 1793, AN. Maret had written for new orders immediately upon learning of Chauvelin's expulsion (Maret to LeBrun, 29 January 1793, AMAE; "La Rupture entre la France et l'Angleterre," AN). Maret's sources included Miles, who despite being ordered to cease all communications with the French had discussed with Maret the basis for a new French peace overture on 30 January, which according to Miles included that France would repeal the Scheldt decree and "also give up Nice and Mayence, renounce the Belgian Provinces, and release Savoy from being a portion of French territory." *Correspondence,* 2:55. Nonetheless, there is no evidence that LeBrun ever changed his position concerning the Scheldt decree or the status of Belgium and Liège while negotiating with the British government.
82. Maret to Dumouriez, 31 January 1793, AN.
83. Dumouriez to Auckland, 23 January 1793, AN. LeBrun to de Maulde, 10 February 1793, De Maulde to LeBrun, 29 January 1793, AMAE. Auckland informed Grenville that Joubert had "told me in great confidence that the desire on the part of the Executive Council to avoid war with England and Holland was extreme and that I might rely on this because the particulars of what had passed between M. de Maulde, Dumouriez, and LeBrun on Tuesday night had afterward been discussed in his presence." Auckland to Grenville, 28 January 1793, PRO-FO.
84. De Maulde explained that during his stay in Paris, Dumouriez had observed that it was controlled by "two or three thousand armed and desperate ruffians capable of any excess" and finding himself powerless to prevent the king's execution, had returned to Belgium to command his army. The general, aware that an invasion of the United Provinces would be hazardous in view of the probable expansion of the war and the condition of his army, had convinced the Executive Council to approve negotiations with Auckland and van de Spiegel. Ibid.
85. Ibid.
86. Auckland to Dumouriez, 30 January 1793, AN. On 19 January Joubert wrote, "I am dining with de Maulde tomorrow, in the company of Dumouriez. I will probably learn some information. I am being introduced by de Maulde." On 21 January Joubert wrote to van de Spiegel, "LeBrun,

Dumouriez, de Maulde, and four members of the Convention will have a meeting, tomorrow, Tuesday, to work on either peace or war, and deliberate on the state's interests, which have been neglected because of the king's trial. I will then be able to tell you something. Regardless of de Maulde's language in the Diplomatic Committee, Le Brun argues, clumsily, that it is the British who want war."

87. Aulard, *Recueil*, 2:29; LeBrun to Dumouriez, 6 February 1793, AN. LeBrun wrote to Noël at The Hague, "We must not doubt the treacherous schemes planned by the Court of St. James and the Dutch Government. It is very likely that Spain, Russia, and maybe Portugal will join this unfair league to crush our newborn republic" (LeBrun to Noel, 30 January 1793, AMAE).
88. LeBrun wrote to Grenville on 1 February, officially recognizing the state of war between France and Britain. He indicated that he was distressed by the prospect of hostilities, which could not be avoided after the expulsion of Chauvelin from England, replacing the high esteem that had heretofore bound the two nations together and predicted that only the ruin of one of them would bring the war to an end (AMAE, PRO-FO).
89. Aulard, *Recueil*, 2:30.
90. LeBrun to Comps, 31 January 1793, Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken der Algemeene,* 2:88.
91. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 9 February 1793, AN.
92. LeBrun's first instructions to implement an annexationist policy in Belgium were to Alexandre Courtois on 20 January. LeBrun to Courtois, 20 January 1793, AN.
93. Moreton to LeBrun, 11 January 1793, AN. LeBrun wrote to another Belgian agent, Frenne, that the great threat to Belgium was the approaching campaign and that it was imperative to organize Belgium and Liège immediately for the requirements of war. LeBrun to Frenne, 27 January 1793, AN. In early December 1790, LeBrun's *Journal général* had similarly advocated the "réunion" of the Low Countries to France to avoid the imminent Austrian restoration.
94. On 20 January, General Thouvenot had written to Dumouriez to announce the Liégeois provisional representatives' decision to request annexation (AN). On 28 January Waleffe, president of the municipality of Liège, informed General Miranda that 9,660 out of 9,700 had voted for annexation (AN).
95. LeBrun to the National Commissioners of the Republic in Belgium, 31 January 1793, AMAE.

CHAPTER 9

1. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 4 February 1793, AN. According to Somers, "Dumouriez is angry at the way the Convention declared war against England and Holland. Now all of Europe sees France as the aggressor." Somers to Grenville, 9 February 1793, PRO-FO.
2. Dumouriez to Miranda, 15 February 1793, AG.
3. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 9 February 1793, AN.

4. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 16 February 1793, AN.
5. LeBrun to Tronquet Saint-Michel, 5 March 1793, AN.
6. Beurnonville to Dumouriez, 14, 19, 20, 23, 24, 28 February 1793, AN. Beurnonville quickly did much to repair the damage done to the armies' supply system by Pache and the Directory, and Dumouriez was extremely pleased with Beurnonville's work; Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 16 February 1793, AN. Writing to Grenville, Somers described the changes that had taken place in the French government since the execution of the king, especially in the ministry of war, where "almost all of the commissioners of the department have changed." Somers to Grenville, 10 February 1793, PRO-FO.
7. See Correspondance between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of War, February-March 1793, AN.
8. Custine to LeBrun, 16 February 1793, AMAE; Custine to Beurnonville, 19 February 1793, AMAE. Commissioners of the National Convention to Beurnonville and LeBrun, 11 February 1793, AMAE; Simond and Grégoire to LeBrun, 4 February 1793, in Hansen, *Quellen,* 2:701.
9. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 13 February 1793, AG.
10. Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken der Algemeene,* 1:100–01, 112–13, 269.
11. Aulard, *Recueil*, 2:171, 190.
12. LeBrun to van der Capellan, 21 February 1793, AN.
13. Dumouriez to Miranda, 7 February 1793, AG. Dumouriez wrote to LeBrun that the Batavian Revolutionary Committee agreed that Nimwegen should be the major French objective: "Whether the Prussians or us, whoever is master of Nimwegen is master of Holland." Dumouriez to LeBrun, 3 February 1793, AN.
14. Chuquet, *Guerres de la Révolution,* 5, 34.
15. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 19 February 1793, AN.
16. Somers to Grenville, 10, 13 February 1793, PRO-FO. Somers claimed his information came from reports by the commissioners in Belgium and the Committee of General Defense.
17. Miranda to Beurnonville, 16 February 1793, AG.
18. Chuquet, *Guerres de la Révolution,* 5:29–30. Jomini, the Swiss military historian, has argued that Dumouriez "seemed to have been oblivious to the enemy army stationed between the Meuse and the Rhine on his right flank," and Parra-Perez, Miranda's biographer, claimed that Dumouriez was taking a foolish risk. Jomini, *Histoire des guerres de la Révolution,* 3:74; C. Parra-Perez, *Miranda et la Révolution française* (Paris, 1925), 137. Although it could be argued that Dumouriez's desire to ensure the security of Belgium and Liège blinded him to the risks, the evidence indicates that he recognized that under the prevailing conditions such a conquest of the United Provinces, while strategically possible, would be extremely difficult.
19. Asked by Dumouriez to assess the condition of the Army of the North, A. Liebaud, a commissioner for the Executive Council, reported that the French army was too small to face the large armies of Austria and Prussia and "each day the French army breathes, it is a miracle," predicting tragedy unless it

received reinforcements. Liebaud to LeBrun and Dumouriez, 22 February 1793, AMAE; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 4:34.

20. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 4 March 1793, AG.
21. Valence to Beurnonville, 20 February 1793, AG.
22. Beurnonville to Miranda, 22 February 1793, AG; Beurnonville to Valence, 26 February 1793, AG.
23. On 12 February, Dumouriez wrote to LeBrun about his final plans for the campaign and enclosed his manifestoes, "Manifeste au peuple Batave," "Le Général Dumouriez au peuple Liégeois," and "Manifeste au peuple de la Belgique," also sent by Somers to Grenville. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 12 February 1793, AN; Somers to Grenville, 19 February 1793, PRO-FO.
24. Batavian Revolutionary Committee, 10 February 1793, AN.
25. Camus, a commissioner for the Convention, reported the French seizure of Breda and the "fraternal reception" of the Dutch for the French troops, but also the impoverished condition of the French army. 1 March 1793, AN.
26. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 27 February 1793, AMAE.
27. Beurnonville to Dumouriez, 3 March 1793, AG; Beurnonville to Dumouriez, 6 March 1793, AN.
28. Somers reported that Dumouriez was making rapid progress in Holland and that the French were successfully annexing Belgium and Liège and preparing a declaration of war against Spain. He also noted bitterly that a group of English Jacobins had read a congratulatory address to the Convention in anticipation of the collapse of Great Britain. Somers to Grenville, 4 March 1793, PRO-FO.
29. Chuquet, *Guerres de la Révolution,* 5:76–8.
30. Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte,* 2:462. LeBrun wrote to Milon on 24 March asking for evidence of the secret treaty or enemy plans for a Belgian-Bavarian exchange, planning to use such information to alienate the Belgians from the Austrians.
31. "Le rapport de Miaczynski au commissaires de la Convention Nationale," 1 March 1793, AN. Gossuin, Delacroix, de Douay, Commissioners of the Convention, 3 March 1793, AN. The commissioners in Liège also submitted a report to the Convention on the Austrian attack, "Rapport sur la position effrayante de l'armée forcée de quitter Aix-la-Chapelle et ses environs," AN.
32. Auckland to Grenville, 5 March 1793, BL.
33. Valence to Beurnonville, 5 March 1793, AG.
34. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 12 March 1793, Dumouriez to LeBrun, 12 March 1793, AN.
35. "Lettre adressée à LeBrun de Bruxelles," AG. Accusations against Generals Stengel and La Noue in Chuquet, *Guerres de la Révolution,* 5:74.
36. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 13 March 1793, AN. Generals La Noue and Stengel were tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal and acquitted on 27 March 1793.
37. Somers to Grenville, 11 March 1793, PRO-FO.
38. Milon to LeBrun, 4, 7 March 1793, AN.
39. LeBrun to Gigneffe, 14 February 1793, AN.

40. LeBrun to Fabry, 20 January, Fabry to LeBrun, 26 January 1793, AN.
41. See, for example, LeBrun's three reports on Belgium to the Committee of War, January-June 1793, AN; "Le ministre de la guerre au sujet de la Belgique," February-March 1793, AN.
42. LeBrun to Lye, 26 February 1793, AN.
43. This argument differs from those of earlier historians, most of whom have given too early a date for its official adoption and have overlooked the Belgian-Liégeois movement as the determining factor in French foreign policy and the military necessity behind the decision to annex the occupied territories. See Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française,* 3:152–53; G. Zeller, "La monarchie et les frontiers naturelles," *Revue d'histoire moderne* (August-October 1933), 330–31; Godechot, *La Grande Nation,* 1:78–80; Lefebvre, *La Révolution française,* 271; A. Soboul, *Précis d'histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris, 1962), 134; Lee, *Les comités et les clubs,* 153–54. If the French annexation policy appears a triumph of French realpolitik, it arose out of defensive necessity and not out of imperialist drives.
44. On the activities and actions of the commissioners for the Convention, see *Rapport des citoyens Delacroix, Gossuin, Danton, Merlin de Douai, Treilhard, membres de la Convention Nationale et nommés par elle Commissaires près l'armée et dans les pays de la Belgique et de Liège*, and other documents in LeBrun, Correspondance with Commissioners of the Convention, AN.
45. LeBrun to the National Commissioners of the Republic in Belgium, AMAE.
46. 31 January 1793, AMAE.
47. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique,* 268.
48. LeBrun, Correspondance with Commissioners of the Convention, AN; LeBrun to the president of the National Convention, 28 February 1793, AN.
49. Milon to LeBrun, 21 February 1793, AN.
50. Saint-Michel to LeBrun, 19 February 1793, AN.
51. LeBrun to Dumouriez, 9, 11 February 1793, AN; Beurnonville to Dumouriez, 14 February 1793, AN; LeBrun to Beurnonville, 10–22 February 1793, AN. Gouget-Deslandres, Chépy, and Robert wrote to LeBrun that Dumouriez's success in Holland had made a vivid impression on the Belgians and that once the French conquered Maestricht, all obstacles to annexation would fall away. Commissioners for the Executive Power to LeBrun, 28 February 1793, AN.
52. LeBrun to LeVoz, 15 February 1793, AN.
53. LeBrun to D'Amandry, 6 February 1793, AN.
54. Deshacquets to LeBrun, 2 February 1793, AN; Metman to LeBrun, 15 February 1793, AMAE.
55. Commissioners of the National Convention to the Minister of War and the Committee of General Defense, 17 February 1793, AN.
56. "Sicilian vespers" is a reference to an event that took place in Sicily in 1282, when the Sicilians massacred the French occupation forces at the sound of vespers.
57. Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique,* 309–11; Correspondence of the Diplomatic

Committee and the Generals, March 1793, AN; "Tableau: des villes et communes de la Belgique réunies à la République française," AN.

58. Tassier advances several possible reasons for this, including that Belgians attending the primary assemblies voted for annexation because they believed an Austrian reconquest otherwise inevitable, may have been intimidated by Belgian patriots and Belgian and French soldiers, or, discouraged by the failure to establish an independent Belgium, settled for annexation as an acceptable alternative. Some voters may have calculated that they would be treated more considerately by the occupying French if they voted for union, although this must also account for the clergy, nobility, and beneficiaries of the old municipal corporations and guilds who opposed French rule and remained Statist. There is also considerable evidence that most independent peasants and tenant farmers supported annexation because the decree of 31 January suppressed tithes and the seigniorial regime, especially in Flanders, Hainaut, and Namur. On the other hand, the suppression of taxes actually seemed to have had a negative effect by exhausting local treasuries and stopping payment of public employees, leaving peasants and bourgeois unable to redeem French promissory notes given for merchandise and supplies. Thus people who supported the French when they abolished seigniorial dues might simultaneously have been critical of them for closing the public treasuries. See Tassier, *Histoire de la Belgique,* 295–97.
59. LeVoz to LeBrun, 19 February 1793, AN; Publicola Chaussard to LeBrun, 27 February 1793, AN; LeBrun to Chaussard, 4 March 1793, AN; Valence to LeBrun, 28 February 1793, AMAE.
60. LeBrun to the president of the Convention, 28 February 1793, AN.
61. LeBrun to the president of the Convention, 1 March 1793, AN. Throughout March, LeBrun announced requests from the various Belgian provinces for annexation to France and urged his commissioners and agents to send representatives from the annexing areas to the Convention. LeBrun to Metman, 17 March 1793, AMAE.
62. Gasbeeke, president of the Provisional Administration of Brussels to Commissioners of the Executive Power of Brussels, 15 March 1793, AN. From Ostende, D'Amandry indicated that "the minister citizen is aware of the countless protests against the French in every city of the Low Countries." D'Amandry to LeBrun, 18 March 1793, AN.
63. D'Amandry to LeBrun, 4 March 1793, AN; Milon to LeBrun, 10 March 1793, AN; Commissioners of the Executive Power to LeBrun, 5 March 1793, AN.
64. Commissioners of the Executive Power from Antwerp to LeBrun, 9 March 1793, AG; Commissioners of the Executive Power from Ghent to LeBrun, ibid.; General Bécourt to Beurnonville, ibid.
65. Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, *Mémoirs, 1773–1793*, trans. John Hartman (New York, 1977), 377; Commissioners of the Executive Power in Ghent to Beurnonville and LeBrun, 9–21 March 1793, AG.
66. LeBrun to Beurnonville, 5–29 March, AN; Beurnonville to LeBrun, 9, 14, 19, 21 March 1793, AN.

67. LeBrun to the president of the Convention, 11 March 1793, AN.
68. LeBrun wrote to Milon, "One fact should strongly encourage those who are dedicating themselves to the service of the nation. Despite the momentary success of the enemy on his approach and the atrocities of his revenges, and despite the effort to confuse and frighten the Belgians, the number of communes asking to be reunited to France is growing every day. The setback we had seems to have happened to show the Universe that freedom and equality do not need to be supported by victorious armies, but only to be well-received by all." 4 March 1793, AN.
69. According to Milon, "Nothing I could write on paper would reflect the chaos and discouragement of the French army since the defeat at Aix-la-Chapelle. The volunteers left their battalions, and without shame took the road back to France." Milon to Lebrun, 7 March 1793, AN.
70. Commissioners of the Executive Power to LeBrun, 4 March 1793, AG. They wrote "Everything is in a frightening state of affairs. The army is almost completely disbanded; the enemy might be in Liège tomorrow or even maybe tonight."
71. Chuquet, *Guerres de la Révolution,* 5:61.
72. Danton and Delacroix went to Paris; Gossuin and de Douai met Camus and Treilhard at Lille. Delacroix, Gossuin, Danton, and de Douai to LeBrun, 5 March 1793, AN.
73. Gadolle to LeBrun, 13 March 1793, AN.
74. Troisième report on Belgium, 17 June 1793, AN; Report of A. F. Charles, Commissioner of the Executive Power at Grammont, 16 March 1793, AMAE; Rens to LeBrun, 13, 18 March 1793, AN.
75. Chépy, Gouget-Deslandres, and Robert to LeBrun, 11 March 1793.
76. Dumouriez to Miranda, 9 March 1793, AG. Although most historians maintain that Dumouriez was ordered back to Belgium, this letter and Beurnonville's 6 March letter (AN) telling Dumouriez that he had the full confidence of the Council indicate it was Dumouriez's decision to return and deal with the Belgian situation himself. Tassier, *L'Histoire de la Belgique*; Chuquet, *Les Guerres de la Révolution,* 5:73; Beurnonville to Dumouriez, 6 March 1793, AN.
77. Publicola Chaussard, *Mémoires historiques et politiques sur la Révolution de la Belgique et du pays de Liège en 1793* (Paris, 1793). Duprey and Tronquet Saint-Michel admitted to LeBrun that the Belgians distrusted the French administrators and that the measures that Dumouriez had taken had restored calm and confidence in Antwerp. Duprey and Tronquet Saint-Michel to LeBrun, 13 March 1793, AN.
78. Dumouriez's order to General Duval to arrest Chépy, 11 March 1793, AN. Chépy protested to LeBrun on 11 March (AN) that they had only been carrying out the orders of the commissioners of the Convention and accusing Dumouriez of seizing extra-legal power in an attempt to make himself dictator of Belgium. Gouget-Deslandres wrote to Chépy on 12 March (AN) that Dumouriez had imprisoned him for threatening to carry out the revolution in Belgium with the aid of an executioner.

79. "Discours prononcé par le Général-en-Chef, Dumouriez, à l'assemblée des représentants provisoires de la Belgique à Bruxelles," 11 March 1793, AG.
80. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 12 March 1793, AN.
81. Dumouriez to the National Convention, 12 March 1793, AN.
82. See, for instance, LeBrun to Milon, 13, 20 March 1793, AN.
83. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 12 March 1793, AN; LeBrun to Milon, 12 March 1793, AN.
84. LeBrun to Commissioners of the Executive Power, 18, 24 March 1793, AN.
85. LeBrun to Milon, 20 March 1793, AN.
86. LeBrun to Rens, 21 March 1793, AN.
87. LeBrun to Beurnonville, 15, 17, 20 March 1793, AG.
88. Gouget-Deslandres and Robert to LeBrun, 14 March 1793, AN.
89. Commissioners of the Executive Power at Namur to LeBrun, 17 March 1793, AMAE.
90. Baret to LeBrun, 17 March 1793, AN.
91. Milon to LeBrun, 12 March 1793, AN; Milon to LeBrun, 17 March 1793, AG.
92. Rens to LeBrun, 18 March 1793, AG.
93. The War Archives include an unsigned account of Dumouriez's effect on morale: "Confidence is being reborn. Here is what a man can do. You assessed him well, this dear Dumouriez." 12 March 1793, AG.
94. "I know that I shall be called in accusation but I also know that I shall defeat my enemies." Dumouriez, Address to the Commissioners of the Executive Power, 14 March 1793, AG.
95. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 4:69–97. Military historians have agreed with Dumouriez: Jomini, *Histoire des guerres de la Révolution,* 3:97–119; Chuquet, *La Trahison de Dumouriez* (Paris, 1878), 5:114–17; Cruyplants, *La Belgique sous la Domination Française,* 2:601–04. Dumouriez was also supported by Marshal Champmorin's report, 29 March 1793, AG.
96. Beurnonville to Dumouriez, 24 March 1793, AG.
97. Louis-Philippe, the Duke de Chartres, observed, "With the passing of every moment it was becoming more difficult to persuade the troops to sustain any combat." *Memoirs,* 387.
98. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 21 March 1793, AN. Dumouriez wrote to Beurnonville that "the disorganization of the army is such at all levels only a very small number of courageous people remain under the flag. The rest are only ransacking, fleeing, and committing all types of crime."
99. Dumouriez to Duval, 22 March 1793, AG.
100. Dumouriez to the president of the Convention, 21 March 1793, AN. The letter was sent to the Committee of General Defense on 24 March.
101. Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 4:172. Fersen claimed that Dumouriez was forced to march against the Convention instead of resigning "to save himself from the overall collapse and to have his faults forgotten through a great service." Klinckowström, *Fersen,* 2:241.
102. Historians who view Dumouriez as an anti-republican traitor overlook the

enormous archival literature of Dumouriez's works. These include his last republican work, an early 1793 plan for the organization of the government of the French Republic, in which he states that "The perfection of a Republic based on the equality among its citizens is that the legislative power supervises and restrains the Executive power within equitable boundaries, and without hindering its activity, which should be continuous and never stop." Here he blames the Senate for the failure of the Roman Republic, an obvious allusion to the Convention. Dumouriez, "Plan d'organisation du gouvernement de la République française," early 1793, AN.

103. Because many, probably a majority, of the French could not envision a legitimate regime without a king, Dumouriez's coup d'état, if successful, would have broadened the social and political base of the revolutionary government. The Convention itself could claim no such mandate, as it had been elected by only about 12 percent of the eligible electorate.
104. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 24 March 1793, AN. This contradicts earlier claims that Dumouriez opened secret negotiations with the Austrians without informing the government in Paris.
105. In his memoirs, Dumouriez claimed that his army "went through Brussels extremely well-ordered and retreated to Hal, where it was to march in two columns, to reach the border with France. There was no looting, no insults, and no remarks on either side. The inhabitants of this capital city did not forget this and showed their gratitude to the General Dumouriez through public signs of respect" (4:234). Jomini, however, describes the retreat of Louvain as extremely disorderly. *Histoire des guerres de la Révolution,* 3:120.
106. In the final volume of the first edition of Dumouriez's *Mémoires,* the Belgian editor noted that "The name of Dumouriez would always be dear and honorable to the Belgians. It is because he wanted to save them from the 15 December decree that he lost himself. They will never forget his generosity and his humanity." Delacroix wrote Danton that he was suspicious of Dumouriez's behavior in conferring with the Belgian deputies. Delacroix to Danton, 25 March 1793, AN.
107. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 24 March 1793, AN.
108. According to the Commissioners of the Convention, "A lack of concern, discipline, and order dwells in the army. It is disorganized, lacks everything, and is exhausted from lack of sleep." Commissioners of the Convention at Tournai to the Committee of General Defense, 25 March 1793, AG.
109. Louis Mortimer-Ternaux, *Histoire de la terreur 1792–1794* (Paris, 1868–1881), 6:281–85; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 4:121.
110. Chuquet's claim that Mack threatened to annihilate Dumouriez's army in Belgium if he did not agree to evacuate Belgium and withdraw behind the French lines (*La Trahison,* 5:145) seems unlikely, as Dumouriez had begun the evacuation of Belgium on 22 March.
111. Miranda denied Dumouriez's charge that he had failed to inform his commander of his intention to retreat and claimed that therefore the deputies' decree against him was a mistake. Miranda, *Miranda á ses concitoyens* (Paris, 1793). The Convention acquitted Miranda and he returned to Venezuela,

where he fought in the wars for Latin American independence in 1806–1812 and died in a Spanish prison in 1816.

112. Aulard, *Jacobins*, 5:98; Chuquet, *La Trahison,* 5:160. Parra-Perez supports Miranda's claim that he was not responsible for the French defeat at Neerwinden, although he does not mention Miranda's appearance before the Jacobins on 24 March; *Miranda et la Révolution française,* 187–91.
113. Aulard, *Jacobins,* 5:102–07.
114. Minutes of Three Conferences of Proli, Pereyra, and Dubuisson with Dumouriez, 31 March 1793, AN. Proli, Pereyra, and Dubuisson had all been involved in the Belgian revolutionary movement. Proli was a Belgian Vonckist (reputed to be the illegitimate son of Prince Kaunitz) and a friend of LeBrun since the Belgian and Liégeois Revolutions of 1789. From November 1792 to January 1793, Proli was one of LeBrun's agents in Belgium, then returned to Paris and became an influential member of the Jacobin Club. Pereyra was one of LeBrun's secret agents in London from December 1792 to February 1793, then in Belgium, returning to Paris in early March. Dubuisson, a playwright, Vonckist, and friend of General van der Mersch had lived in Brussels after the Belgian Revolution of 1789, returning to Paris in 1791 and becoming a high-ranking member of the Jacobin Club. Dumouriez had met with Proli and Dubuisson at Bonne-Carrère's home in January seeking support against the attacks of Hassenfratz at the Jacobins.
115. According to Louis-Philippe's account, "three emissaries from Paris had been let loose on General Dumouriez in order to extract imprudent revelations, or at least utterances, that could furnish ammunition against him." He claimed that they "were in reality sent by the Jacobin Society, but to give their mission a pretext, they had been provided with a letter from LeBrun, then minister of foreign affairs, and known to be very closely associated with General Dumouriez, asking him to receive and listen to them." *Memoirs,* 395–96.
116. For a detailed discussion of the varying accounts of these interviews by Dumouriez and the three Jacobins, see Howe, "French Revolutionary Foreign Policy," chapter 11.
117. Earlier historians have not examined or distinguished between the Jacobins' and Dumouriez's conflicting accounts of these interviews. Chuquet, for instance, interprets the incident as a genuine plot between the Jacobins and Dumouriez in which the agents got cold feet and upon their return to Paris exposed the plan as Dumouriez's treason (*Les guerres de la Révolution,* 5:148–49), overlooking the three Jacobin's report and Dumouriez's 29 March letter to Beurnonville, cited below.
118. In their report, the three claimed that Dubuisson hinted at this possibility to invite Dumouriez to reveal his intentions, while Dumouriez reported to Beurnonville that the emissaries from the Jacobin Club had "offered me the most wonderful things in the world provided I help them to overthrow the Convention." In his memoirs, Dumouriez maintained that he would never have allied with the Jacobins, whom he considered the cause of all the disasters that had befallen France, and that he intended to restore the Constitu-

tion of 1791 that the Jacobins had in effect overthrown. Without denying the self-serving intentions of the memoirs, this explanation best fits Dumouriez's opinion of the Jacobins at that time. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 29 March 1793, AN; Dumouriez, *Mémoires,* 4:128.

119. Dumouriez to the president of the Convention, 28 December 1792, AN; Dumouriez to the Committee of General Defense, 18 January 1793, AN. If Dumouriez harbored ambitions of returning to Belgium as its leader—and there is no evidence of this fact outside of the accusations of the Jacobins—there is little in his actions, or even in the language of this accusatory report, to support the claim among historians that Dumouriez was merely an opportunist who pursued the liberation of Belgium and Liège during 1790–1793 in order to become their prince or dictator. These claims do reflect, however, his contemporaries' awareness of the primacy of the Belgian plan throughout Dumouriez's career.
120. Carnot to Guyton de Morveau, 28 March 1793, quoted in R. M. Brace, "Carnot and the Treason of Dumouriez," *Journal of Modern History* (December 1949): 313–16.
121. Commissioners of the National Convention to Dumouriez, 29 March 1793, AN.
122. Dumouriez to the commissioners of the Convention, 29 March 1793, AN.
123. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 29 March 1793, AN.
124. Mortimer-Ternaux, *Histoire de la terreur,* 6:307–09.
125. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 30 March 1793, AN.
126. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 31 March 1793, AG. General d'Harville had been arrested and called before the bar of the Convention because of his defeat at Namur.

CHAPTER 10

1. The exception was Marat, who would never forget being snubbed by the general in October 1792 and in late March would lead the Montagnard opposition to Dumouriez.
2. Aulard, *Jacobins,* 5:80.
3. *Moniteur,* 15:695.
4. Aulard, *Jacobins,* 5:38.
5. The Convention had established the Committee of General Security the previous October and given it supreme police power and responsibility for internal security.
6. Beurnonville received 336 votes out of 530.
7. Aulard, *Jacobins,* 5:86.
8. Dumouriez understood the effect that his actions would have on the Convention, writing to LeBrun the same day that he was aware of the "type of storm I will be creating against myself" by dismissing its commissioners. Dumouriez to LeBrun, 12 March 1793, AN.
9. Aulard, *Jacobins,* 5:92.
10. Aulard, *Recueil,* 1:376, 389; 2:514, 518.

11. Dumouriez angrily referred to this attack in his letter to Beurnonville on 30 March 1793, AN.
12. Dumouriez to Beurnonville, 28 March 1793, AN.
13. Aulard, *Recueil,* 2:563.
14. Ibid., 564.
15. This information on the arrest of the delegation comes from an anonymous report of a member of one of the deputies' staff who accompanied the prisoners as far as Coblenz, which has not been cited in earlier historical accounts. According to this account, the members of the delegation "pondered Dumouriez's behavior, they questioned their own motives, but all agreed that Dumouriez should give himself up according to the Convention's decree. We had to convince him to do it. We were to suspend all his functions because of his disobedience. We did it. We were going to name another general as an interim commander and to order the minister to put the decree into effect when Dumouriez instead had us arrested. If we had tried to put up a resistance to the armed force that surrounded us, our attempts would have discredited us" AN.
16. *Mémoires,* 4:144–49. Citing the close bond and mutual respect between them, Dumouriez reported being surprised that he had received "no letter, no preliminary notice" from Beurnonville informing him that his loss of support in the Convention had reached "a point of no return." He claimed that when asked by Dumouriez "what he would do if he were in his place, the minister had answered him: 'I do not have any advice to give you; you know what you have to do'" and told him that "My position is terrible; I see that you are determined, and that you are going to take a desperate course of action. I am begging you to treat me the same way you will treat the other deputies." Describing his old friend as an honorable and brave man, he added, "If only, dear Beurnonville, you could receive some relief from this justification of your behavior and if only your heart, rightly ulcerated, be reopened to friendship." *Mémoires,* 155–59.
17. "Proclamation du général Dumouriez à l'armée du française," 1 April 1793, AG. The delegation remained in Austrian captivity until 25 December 1795, when they were exchanged for the daughter of Louis XVI, Marie-Thérèse, the duchesse d'Angoulème. Returning to France, Camus and his colleagues took places on the Council of Five Hundred and on 11 January 1796 presented an extremely bitter account of their journey to arrest Dumouriez, their own arrest, and their captivity upon which earlier historians have depended, 11 January 1796, AN.
18. 2 April 1793, AG; Valence to Biron, 2 April 1793, BN.
19. *Mémoires,* 4:287.
20. Carnot and Lesage-Senault, 2 April 1793, AG. For instance, the Committee of Safety and General Defense of Lille sent Second Lieutenant Perrin of the nineteenth battalion of the Fédérés as an emissary into the Camp de Maulde, who reported on the chaos and lack of discipline within the ranks: "The gunner volunteers told him that the men of the line seemed to have received a lot of money from their commanders and that they were having orgies in their tents." Report of Lieutenant Perrin, 3 April 1793, AG.

21. Commissioners of the Convention to Lieutenant-General Egalité, Commissioners of the Convention to to Lieutenant-General Valence, 3 April 1793, AN; Commissioners of the Convention to General Neuilly, 4 April 1793, AG.
22. "Lequinio, Bellegarde, et Cochon sur la trahison de Dumouriez," 3 April 1793 AN; "Général Ferrand déclarait qu'il verserait ce qui lui restait de sang pour la République," April 1793, AG.
23. Maubeuge and Tourville to the Commissioners, April 1793, AG.
24. "Proclamation du Général Dampierre," 4 April 1793, AG; Aulard. *Recueil,* 3:59, 888.
25. General Neuilly to the Commissioners of the Convention, 4 April 1793, AG.
26. Carnot and Lesage-Senault to the Convention, 3 April 1793, AG.
27. "Le Général Dumouriez à ses frères d'armes," 3 April 1793, AG.
28. According to an Austrian source, "General Dumouriez had his army take an oath to reinstate the constitutional authority of a king in France. All the troops of the line declared that they wanted to do so, and that they were ready to follow their general. The national volunteers refused." "Extrait d'une lettre de Maestricht," 4 April 1793, AG.
29. Gonchon to LeBrun, 25 March 1793, AN
30. Louis-Philippe later observed that his "abiding impression of this visit is that their main consideration was a growing distrust of General Dumouriez's relations with the Austrians; and I believe that the rest of my account will leave no doubt that it was this mistrust, more than anything else, that kept the army loyal to the National Convention; for in the French army the feeling of nationalism has always predominated, and there is no doubt that handing the commissioners over to the Austrians made more of an impression on the troops than their arrest."
31. Dumouriez's plans to republicanize the army as he had the foreign ministry can be found in several documents, most notably "Mémoire concernant l'organisation de l'Armée des Etats-Belgiques-Unis adressé par le general Dumouriez du Congrès souverain," 22 July 1790, AGR; Dumouriez's notes on the Council of War meetings and "Mémoire militaire," May 1791, AN; Dumouriez to the National Convention, 18 August 1792, AG.
32. *Révolutions de Paris,* 1–8 April 1793.
33. Louis-Philippe makes no reference to the Austrian escort in his description of Dumouriez's return to the French army from the Austrian camp, a significant omission. Historians have followed Dumouriez's account exclusively and seen the Austrian escort as proof of Dumouriez's treason. Either way, Dumouriez's life was in grave danger. Dumouriez, *Mémoires*, 4:173; Louis-Philippe, *Memoirs,* 412–13; Chuquet, *La Trahison,* 5: 224; Cruyplants, *La Belgique sous la domination Française,* 2:673.
34. Aulard, *Jacobins,* 5:113–16.
35. Ibid., 117–18.
36. Gensonné was particularly singled out. Unfortunately for the Girondins, on 1 April Brissot's *Patriote français* had defended Dumouriez against the Commune's petition for his arrest, arguing that the indignation aimed at the

victor of Jemappes should be directed instead toward those who had subsequently disorganized the army. *Le Patriote français,* 1 April 1793.

37. Bouloiseau, Lefebvre, and Soboul, *Oeuvres de Robespierre,* 9:363.
38. This association between Dumouriez and the Girondins as the architects of a failed revolutionary foreign policy during 1792–93 was established by Sorel in the 1880s (*L'Europe et la Révolution française*), adopted by Mathiez (*La Révolution et les étrangers*), Lefebvre (*La Révolution française*), Godechot (*La Grande Nation*), and Soboul (*Précis d'histoire de la Révolution française*) in the twentieth century, and largely accepted by recent historians such as Schroeder (*The Transformation of European Politics*) and Blanning (*The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars*).
39. Aulard, *Recueil,* 3:91. The members of the committee of public safety formed on 6 April 1793 included Barère, Cambon, Danton, Delmas, Guyton de Morveau, Treilhard, Delacroix, Lindet, and Bréard.
40. Aulard, *Recueil,* 2:575.
41. Aulard, *Jacobins,* 5:80. De Maulde complained that LeBrun had fired him as ambassador because he had begun fruitful negotiations with Auckland over Britain's recognition of the French Republic, although he had been removed from his post because of charges of financial malfeasance, for which he was soon to be tried.
42. *Révolutions de Paris*, 23–30 March 1793.
43. Ruelle to the Committee of General Defense, 29 March 1793, AN. After the outbreak of war with the Austrians, Ruelle had returned to Paris to become a *comis* in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He ended his denunciation with words reminiscent of Dumouriez's warning against the 15 December decree: "It is time to reflect that revolutionary power can reside only in those who are dissatisfied with their political organization, and that a nation cannot exercise that power with impunity toward another against its will, especially when, like ourselves, it has an enormous number of enemies to fight. One must likewise beware of confusing countries which have a constitution with those which do not, and constitutions of which one is jealous with those with which one is dissatisfied; in a word, one must sense that the mind of the public must everywhere be the only rule and the only measure of political decisions, because without these considerations we would be changing once and for all the war against the kings into a war against the peoples and that would ruin all our chances." Yet his criticism of LeBrun overlooks the fact that the Belgians had not been able to create or defend a democratically constituted government by themselves. Although he may have sincerely blamed LeBrun for the loss of Belgium, he was also in danger of being denounced for his own association with the perpetrators of the Belgian plan.
44. Deputy Paymaster and Commissioner of War for the 5th Division to LeBrun, 2 April 1793, AG.
45. LeBrun to the Commissioners of the Convention near the Army of Belgium, 4 April 1793, AG.
46. LeBrun, "Troisième rapport sur la Belgique," 18 June 1793, AN; LeBrun,

"Note relative au troisième rapport sur la Belgique, 27 juin 1793, à l'occasion des réclamations des commissaires nationaux et de leurs agents," AN.

47. LeBrun, "Mémoires historiques et justificatifs de mon ministère." AN.
48. "L'Acte d'accusation contre LeBrun, ex-ministre"; Aulard, *Recueil,* 3:9.
49. Pio's denunciation of LeBrun, 11 May 1793, AN.
50. Both charges were true: Dumouriez, Bonne-Carrère, and LeBrun had staffed the ministry with persons committed to their strategy for a Belgian-Liégeois Republic, and Dumouriez's seized papers had been delivered to the foreign ministry for safekeeping. Sometime after LeBrun's tenure as foreign minister, his own papers were boxed together with Dumouriez's and eventually deposited in the National Archives as the Papers of Dumouriez. That LeBrun preserved Dumouriez's papers, including the extensive correspondence between them, is another indication that LeBrun believed he had nothing to hide. That LeBrun's papers were subsumed, unmarked, into Dumouriez's also helps explain his near absence from most accounts of this period.
51. See Morris Slavin, *The Making of an Insurrection: Parisian Sections and the Gironde* (Cambridge, 1986).
52. Municipal Administrators and Officers of Liège to the French people, 6 June 1793, AN.
53. Municipal Administrators and Officers of Liège to LeBrun, 6 June 1793, AN.
54. For more on this threat, see John A. Lynn, *The Bayonets of the Republic* (Boulder, 1996), chapters 3 and 10.
55. Andress, *The Terror,* 220–33. The Committee of Public Safety gained the key power of naming members of all committees of the Convention, including the Committee of General Security now empowered to enforce the Law of Suspects.
56. Palmer notes that with those words, "The doctrine of the Social Contract, with these moral overtones, became the theory of the Terror." Palmer, *Twelve Who Ruled* (Princeton, 1941), 76–77.
57. LeBrun, "Mémoires historiques et justificatifs de mon ministère," AN.
58. Fouquier-Tinville, public prosecutor, "Acte d'accusation contre LeBrun, ex-ministre," 24 December 1793, AN.

Conclusion

1. According to Roger Cohen, "It has three regions, three language communities that are not congruent with the regions, a smattering of local parliaments, a mainly French-speaking capital lodged in Dutch-speaking Flanders, a strong current of Flemish nationalism and an uneasy history." 17 December 2007, *New York Times.*
2. *Memoirs of General Dumourier, Written by Himself,* translated by John Fenwick (London, 1794), xv.
3. Ibid., ii.
4. Dumouriez wrote to Pitt that the fate "of Europe depends upon the safety of your country, which is the reason I desire to assist it." The Peace of Amiens in

1802 postponed his work on the British defense strategy, but when war between France and Great Britain resumed in May 1803, Pitt wrote Dumouriez, "I am sure from our long habit of acting together, and from the many proofs I have received of your friendship and good opinion, you will resume the essential article of what related to the defence of the country" (Dumouriez, "General Reflections on the Defense of England" [BL]). Once invasion was no longer a threat and after the French invasion of Spain and Portugal in 1808, Dumouriez and the Duke of Wellington collaborated on war plans for the Peninsula Campaign and the defense of Portugal (BL). He continued advising Wellington until his famous victory at Waterloo that ended the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon. J. Holland Rose and A. M. Broadley, *Dumouriez and the Defense of England Against Napoleon* (London, 1909).

5. Ibid., Preface, X.
6. LeBrun is given only a passing mention in Dumouriez's memoirs, and is the only French foreign minister since the seventeenth century not to have a portrait in the French Foreign Ministry (Quai d'Orsay) in Paris.

Bibliography

Archive Abbreviations

AG	Archives de la Guerre, Paris
AGR	Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels
AL	Archives de l'Etat à Liège, Liège
AMAE	Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris
AN	Archives Nationales, Paris
BC	Bibliothèque Communale de la Ville de Liège, Liège
BL	British Library, London
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
BHVP	Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris, Paris
BR	Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels
BUL	Bibliothèque de l'Université de Liège, Liège
PRO-FO	Public Record Office, Foreign Office Papers, London

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