

Woody Allen presents

Marcel Ophuls'

# The Sorrow and the Pity

Chronicle of a French City under the Occupation

*"An artistic and intellectual triumph."*

— *Time*

*"A magnificent epic on the themes of collaboration and resistance."*

— Pauline Kael, *The New Yorker*

*"The Sorrow and The Pity is about four and a half hours ... but, in terms of moral, intellectual, and emotional absorption, it is one of the shortest movies of the year."*

— Andrew Sarris, *Village Voice*

*"One of the greatest films ever made, The Sorrow and The Pity is a contribution to history, to social psychology, to anthropology, and to art. If there's any justice in the world, Marcel Ophuls' monumental labor will be studied and debated for years."*

— David Denby, *Atlantic Monthly*

Released by Milestone Films  
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**Please note: on the video press screeners, the names of the participants are missing in the subtitles, due to time restraints. The names *are* on the film prints and will be present on *all* future versions.**

Norddeutscher Rundfunk (Hamburg), Télévision Rencontre (Lausanne), and Télévision Suisse Romande (Lausanne) present:

## **The Sorrow and the Pity: Chronicle of a French City under the Occupation**

*Le Chagrin et la pitié: Chronique d'une ville Française sous l'occupation*

A film by Marcel Ophuls

Part I: The Collapse

Part II: The Choice

Producers ..... André Harris and Alain de Sedouy (T.V. Rencontre)

Script and Interviews..... Marcel Ophuls and André Harris

Director..... Marcel Ophuls

Photography..... André Gazut and Jürgen Thieme

Editor ..... Claude Vajda

Sound..... Bernard Migy

Mixing ..... Wolfgang Schröter

Documentarists..... Eliane Filippi (France)

Christoph Derschau (Germany)

Suzy Benghiat (Great Britain)

Production Director ..... Wolfgang Theile

Assistant Director ..... Claude Vajda

Editing Assistants ..... Heidi Endruweit and Wiebke Vogler

Assistant Cameraman ..... Alain Demartines

Music ..... The voice of Maurice Chevalier

“Notre espoir” by Maurice Chevalier, 1941

“Ça fait d'excellents français” by Jean Boyer, 1939

“Ça sent si bon la France” © des Publications Francis Day S.A., 1942

“Sweepin’ the Clouds Away” by Sam Coslow, 1930

### **A Woody Allen Presentation**

Total running time: 260 minutes (Part 1: 127 minutes; Part II: 133 minutes).

Black and White. Aspect ratio: 1:1.33 or 1:1.66.

Paris Theatrical Premiere: April 5, 1971 at Cinéma Studio Saint-Séverin; April 28 at Paramount-Elysées

U.S. Premiere: September 1971, New York Film Festival; March 1972 at the Beekman Theatre

Original French distributor: N.E.F. (Paris); Original U.S. distributor: Cinema 5 (New York)

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Academy Award® nominee, Best Documentary

Winner: National Society of Film Critics Special Award

A Milestone Film & Video Release, Harrington Park, NJ

### *Interviewed for the Film*

Marcel Verdier and family .....	Pharmacist, Clermont-Ferrand
Alexis and Louis Grave and families .....	Yronde farmers in the Auvergne region and former Resistance fighters
Pierre Mendès-France .....	Former Prime Minister of France and Air Force lieutenant tried and convicted of desertion in 1940
Emile Coulaudon (Colonel “Gaspar”) ..	Former head of the Auvergne Maquis
Helmuth Tausend .....	Former Wehrmacht captain stationed in Clermont-Ferrand
General Walter Warlimont.....	Former Deputy Chief of Operations Staff, adjutant to the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht
Sir Anthony Eden (The Earl of Avon) ....	Former Prime Minister of England and Foreign Secretary to Prime Minister Winston Churchill
Roger Tounze .....	Journalist for <i>La Montagne</i> , Clermont-Ferrand
Monsieur Leiris .....	Former mayor of Conbronde and Resistance fighter
Christian de la Mazière .....	Aristocratic former Nazi and veteran of the French division of the Waffen S.S. (“Charlemagne” group)
Georges Bidault.....	Former Prime Minister of France and former President of the National Council of Resistance
Jacques Duclos .....	Communist Senator and former Secretary of the clandestine Communist Party
Charles Braun.....	Restaurateur, Clermont-Ferrand
Major-General Sir Edward Spears .....	Head of the British Mission to General de Gaulle, June 1940
Dr. Paul Schmidt .....	Former Chief Interpreter for Hitler, 1934–1944
Dr. Elmar Michel .....	Chairman of Salamander Shoes and former economic advisor to the German Military Command in France
Colonel R. du Jonchay .....	Head of the Resistance Movement
Maitre Henri Rochat.....	Lawyer, Clermont-Ferrand and former defense attorney for Pierre Mendes-France
Georges Lamirand.....	Minister of Youth, 1941–43 and former mayor of la Bourboule
Messieurs Danton and Dionnet .....	Teachers, Lycée Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand
Marius Klein.....	Shopkeeper, Clermont-Ferrand
Pierre le Calvez .....	Theatre owner, Clermont-Ferrand
Matheus Bleibinger .....	Former Wehrmacht soldier and prisoner of the Auvergne Maquis, 1944
Raphael Geminiani.....	Champion professional bicyclist
Monsieur Mioche .....	Hotelier, Royat, north of Clermont-Ferrand
Flight Sergeant Evans .....	British R.A.F. pilot shot down in the Auvergne region
Denis Rake .....	Former S.O.E. agent for the British in occupied France
Maurice Buckmaster .....	Former head of the “F” section of the S.O.E
Emmanuel d’Astier de la Vigerie.....	Founder of the Resistance <i>Mouvement Liberation Sud</i>
Marcel Fouché-Degliame.....	Director of the <i>Combat</i> movement
Comte René de Chambrun .....	International lawyer and son-in-law of Pierre Laval, Prime Minister in Marechal Philippe Petain’s Vichy government
Dr. Claude Levy .....	Author and biologist
Commandant Menut.....	Resistance fighter, Clermont-Ferrand
Madame Solange.....	Beautician and victim of French reprisals after the Allied liberation of Clermont-Ferrand

Plus many citizens of the city of Clermont-Ferrand in the Auvergne region of France.  
Maurice Chevalier, Danielle Darrieux, and other French entertainment personalities also appear in

*The Sorrow and the Pity*, in French or rare German newsreels and motion pictures

## *The Sorrow and the Pity*

Essay by Elliot Wilhelm, *VideoHound's World Cinema*, Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 1999

Marcel Ophuls's great 1971 *The Sorrow and the Pity* is the result of the questioning of a widely held belief — that every man, woman and child who lived in Nazi-occupied France either joined the Resistance or helped it. Ophuls turned his attention to a single French town — Clermont-Ferrand — and interviewed those residents who remembered and who would speak, as well as government officials, writers, artists, and a stray German veteran or two. What Ophuls found has rewritten modern history, and changed forever the way we think of and understand the issues of collaboration and resistance, specifically as they apply to one particular nation at one particular moment in time. *The Sorrow and the Pity* is four-and-a-half hours long, and unfolds at the breathless pace of a great thriller. In fact, it *is* a great thriller. We learn bits and pieces about the way people behaved and how they rationalized their behavior; and our assimilation of these facts, each and cumulatively, results in a staggeringly clear and powerful portrait of how real human beings behaved in the most demanding of circumstances. Needless to say, not everyone was a hero. But Ophuls's intelligence and craft invites us to continually try to place ourselves in the positions of these witnesses; the more we hear the more we try to imagine how *we* would have behaved — what *we* would have done under the same circumstances. *The Sorrow and the Pity* opens our eyes and our minds in ways that predigested, pat documentaries cannot. It leaves us with more questions than we had when we went in, but feeling more wide awake — and more aware of the power and responsibility we each possess — than we have ever been. Exhilarating in its impact even though so much of what it shows us is appalling, *The Sorrow and the Pity* takes its place among the most valuable achievements in the histories of cinema and journalism.

### *Background*

In 1967, André Harris and Alain de Sedouy, producers of a television current-affairs program, *Zoom*, for O.R.T.F. (L'Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française), and Marcel Ophuls, one of *Zoom*'s segment directors, chronicled the events leading up to the start of World War II in *Munich, ou La Paix pour cent ans (Munich, or Peace in Our Time)*. A television success, it was later withdrawn from circulation.

As a follow-up to *Munich*, the filmmakers planned to make *The Sorrow and the Pity*. They intended the film to counteract the standard fare presented by the state-run O.R.T.F. — “to react against the sort of simplistic patriotism that was in evidence,” and to demystify the prevailing, Gaullist myth that France's millions nobly resisted the Nazi Occupation. De Gaulle, leader of the Free French and later president of the Fifth Republic, promoted this idea in public speeches and on official radio and television networks by constantly referring to the glory of the Resistance. Perhaps de Gaulle's intentions were honorable — France *had* suffered deep humiliation during the war and his rhetoric provided a shot of self-esteem. However, as time went by, stories of the war years' horrors and injustices became shrouded in self-denial and lies. Increasingly, French children were only taught de Gaulle's “Official Version” of France during World War II. Ophuls believes that “one of the jobs of documentary filmmaking is to prevent people from reinventing the past” (*Los Angeles Reader*, June 19, 1992), and his stubborn pursuit of the truth opened many eyes.

May 1968 was the boiling point. The strikes and demonstrations of students and workers against the de Gaulle government produced lingering aftereffects, one of which was a move toward an examination of the past. Harris, de Sedouy, and Ophuls were among the TV journalists who rebelled against government control when de Gaulle called for a media blackout of coverage of the student barricades. After leaving O.R.T.F., the filmmakers eventually found funding in Germany and Switzerland, a fact that displeased the French television executives and statesmen. Allegedly, one Gaullist official said, in reference to the film's "anti-patriotism:" "Myths are important in the life of a people. Certain myths must not be destroyed." Stanley Hoffman, in his introduction to the English translation of the script of *The Sorrow and the Pity*, notes another reason the Gaullist regime would disapprove of a film which, overall, celebrates the Resistance: "While two of de Gaulle's wartime supporters and ministers, Mendès-France and d'Astier, speak very highly of de Gaulle, there isn't much else about him in the movie — the short newsreel clipping that shows him reading a speech on the BBC is hardly flattering. Even people less finely attuned to the nuances of anti-Gaullist *contestation* than the bosses of the O.R.T.F. could find in the film traces of the 'spirit of May.' Would this movie have been entirely the same, if it had been made, say, in 1967?"

In *The Sorrow and the Pity*, Marcel Ophuls wanted to explore the great courage, cowardice and commitment of a people under wartime occupation, specifically, the French under the Nazi regime during World War II. His intent was to create a film that would investigate the very nature of human existence. To ask: What will people do to survive and preserve their freedom? What motivates their specific choices? How do people become heroes? To do so, Ophuls and his filmmaking team filmed an amazing collection of incredibly candid interviews representing a wide range of perspectives. Combining these with fascinating newsreel footage, the filmmakers explored how the French people, their Nazi invaders and the British allies reacted, then and now, to the occupation. As Pauline Kael described it, the finished film is part "oral history and essay," the likes of which had never been seen before.

For Ophuls, a self-professed "left-wing intellectual," his priorities in making a film are emotional, narrative and lastly political. Yet, at the time of its release, there were many political comparisons to America's role in Vietnam and France's struggle with Algerian independence. The film served for many audience members as a mirror: in a similar situation, could they behave better?

*The Sorrow and the Pity* issues a call for remembrance. In the film, Ophuls interviews two elderly teachers who cannot seem to recall the fates of their students who fought in the Resistance. The director's reaction to this ignorance is barely audible, but unforgettable: "How can you forget?"

### ***The Process: The Preparation***

From the outset, the producers' long-term goal was to show the finished film on television; therefore, *The Sorrow and the Pity* was shot using a 16mm Eclair Coutant (NPR) and a Nagra, and later blown up to 35mm for theatrical exhibition. The budget was approximately 500,000

marks, the equivalent in 1972 of around \$160,000.

In a 1978 interview in *Wide Angle*, Ophuls described his process for making a documentary: “Start off by reading some essential books, some of them you read from cover to cover. Others you just look at the book-jacket, look at the photograph of the author for awhile and sort of absorb it by osmosis. Others you just pick up certain chapters. And from doing that awhile and looking at documentary footage, going through the archives in various countries, you can start setting up a list of interviewees.”

The filmmaking team worked to do the kind of thorough preparation that enabled the interviewers to ask informed and probing questions. They researched French, British and West German films of the period (including the holdings of the Actualités Françaises, British Pathé, the Bundesarchiv in Coblenz), and found remarkable newsreel material, including famous footage of de Gaulle’s triumphant return to Paris in which the cheering crowds are indistinguishable from those previously seen in newsreel coverage of Pétain’s march through the city. They also discovered German propaganda films originally seen only in enemy territory, including the surrender of French soldiers and a racist montage contrasting the “guardians of civilization” — German troops — with “the barbarians” — French North African soldiers. By re-examining French newsreels they discovered footage of anti-Semitic exhibition, “The Jew and France,” in which a photo of Ernst Lubitsch was used to illustrate how to recognize a Jew.

### *Clermont-Ferrand*

The biggest decision the filmmakers faced was which city to choose for their focus — a choice that would also determine who would be in the film. Though the events that occurred here mirrored what happened throughout the country, Clermont-Ferrand was chosen because of its proximity to Vichy (the capital of the “free” zone) and to Pierre Laval’s home base and because it was the site of the parliamentary “deserters” trials. The Maquis, the guerrilla army of the French Resistance, started in this region in 1943 and it was also here that d’Astier founded the Liberation movement. In ancient times, the Gauls fought against the Roman occupation as Julius Caesar pushed his way toward the continent’s edge. Still a major industrial and agriculture center (well known as home to the Michelin Factory), Clermont-Ferrand is located in the center of France, 242 miles outside of Paris. The capital of the Auvergne province since 1556 and the administrative center of the Puy-de-Dôme department, Clermont-Ferrand is a city of over 150,000 people. In arts and literature, Clermont-Ferrand is the locale of the Eric Rohmer’s *My Night at Maud’s* and is often the home town of the hick relative in Feydeau’s farces.

The people of Clermont-Ferrand finally had the chance to see *The Sorrow and the Pity* when FR3 aired the film in 1981. Those without television sets gathered in bars and watched local history to the background sound of pinball machines. Others assembled in groups at private homes. The local newspaper, *La Montagne*, interviewed a cross section of *Clermontois* for their reactions to the film. Resistance leader Emile Coulaudon, who appears in the film, offered corrections to some of the facts presented. War veterans told about their own experiences. One former *maquisard* hoped that younger generations would take hold of this “little lesson,” and thank their elders for the freedom they fought for and won in *their* own youth. Viewers under

forty years old claimed that they were already informed about what occurred in their country during the war. After the broadcast, Ophuls, along with television executives and scholars, participated in a discussion with students.

### *The Process: Interviews*

Part of *The Sorrow and the Pity*'s powerful appeal is the humanistic approach Ophuls employed in his interviewing technique. Everyone — from Jacques Duclos, the head of the clandestine Communist Party in France, to Madame Solange, a beautician who may or may not have been guilty of denouncing her countrymen — appears relatively at ease in the interviews, as if they were longtime friends with the interviewer merely enjoying good post-dinner conversation. Ophuls has said, “I get paid for being compassionate about people” and his influential interview style is compassionate, intelligent and discreet.

There were no written releases signed for *The Sorrow and the Pity*. Ophuls explained exactly what he was going to do, giving each person a chance to be candid and to justify themselves. Of course, some people were not willing to speak. In a 1972 interview in *Filmmakers' Newsletter* Ophuls talked about an afternoon he spent with the German writer Ernest Juenger, who was cultural attaché to Paris during the occupation. Juenger was what Ophuls terms (and despises) a “literary spectator,” a person fully observant and aware of the awful truths but who chose only to reflect and not act. Juenger decided to decline an interview.

The interviews cover a diversity of class and political persuasion, and reap “genuine answers” from the famous and the anonymous. His subjects include Fascist aristocrats, German soldiers, peasant Resistance fighters, the “misfits” in the underground, political leaders of both sides, and ordinary people who tried to stay afloat by sitting on the fence. “It was not hard to make a collaborator talk. And of course it wasn't hard to make a Resistance man talk.... The most difficult thing is to make people talk who are aware of not having done anything” (Marcel Ophuls in a March 1972 interview by Jonas Mekas in *Village Voice*). Monsieur Mioche, a hotel owner in Royat, tolerated the Germans who stayed at his establishment, free of charge. Marius Klein does not see anything wrong with his wartime ad declaring that he is Catholic and not Jewish as his last name would seem to indicate.

Bookending the film are Helmut Tausend, a German officer stationed in France during the occupation, and Marcel Verdier, a pharmacist in Clermont-Ferrand and one of the millions of French “moyen,” middle-class people who were mainly apathetic. When he was arranging to film Tausend, Ophuls had offered three possible dates. “Not the first one, he told Ophuls, my daughter is getting married on that day.” Ophuls's dramatic instinct kicked in and all the while Tausend speaks of his experiences in France the lovely bride in her veil and the wedding party politely listen. Verdier's interview also takes place among his handsome, bourgeois family — a subtle connection linking these two seemingly dissimilar interviewees.

Why did other people choose to take up the fight? Emile Coulaudon, head of the Auvergne Maquis group, resented that the steaks from French cows, especially at a time of extremely limited food supplies, were reserved for the Germans. Denis Rake courageously tells that he became a British secret agent in occupied France because he had no family obligations and he



wanted to show that as a homosexual, he was just as brave as any other man. Louis Grave, a farmer from Yronde, had always been left-leaning. Turning the other cheek, he continued to live in his hometown with a neighbor whose report to the French militia landed Grave in a Buchenwald camp.

The two subjects who are the most articulate and philosophical about the French, and specifically their own experience during the occupation, offer another fascinating dichotomy. Easily, the “star” (and hero) of the film — for his eloquence and honesty — is former Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France, who originally had agreed to speak with Ophuls for only an hour. They ended up talking for more than seven hours. Despite his hardships and heroic struggles for freedom (including a daring escape from prison), Mendès-France did not allow the events of the war to affect his love of the French people. He carried himself with great dignity throughout the film. (Ophuls says that the only time he broke down was when he spoke of his wife’s suffering during this period.) French aristocrat and former Nazi Christian de la Mazière is also engaging as he frankly answers all of André Harris’s questions and discusses his past political choices and involvement with the Waffen S.S. with impressive clarity.

Sir Anthony Eden, Churchill’s Secretary of Foreign Affairs, surmises that it is difficult to judge the decisions made by people living in an occupied country if you have not experienced the same crisis situation. These are fascinating accounts from people who *did* survive this time, these “années noires.”

### ***The Process: The Editing***

After months of traversing three countries, Ophuls and crew had accumulated more than sixty hours of interviews. His working method is “very dependent on quantity” and he tends to maintain a 15 to 1 shooting ratio. Ophuls places complete trust in his camera operators (a characteristic he claims he inherited from his ultra-professional father) and allows them free reign. “I will sometimes say, ‘This is what you should watch for or concentrate on,’ but very often the cameraman has to make spontaneous decisions while he is filming, and I don’t even see him making them because he works with a zoom and I don’t know whether he is large on the face, or pulled back, because I am busy interviewing the guy.” (Marcel Ophuls in a December 1972 interview by B.J. Demby in *Filmmakers’ Newsletter*)

The structuring, or “scripting,” of an overabundance of material takes place in the editing room. Here Ophuls, in tandem with his editor, performs the artistry for which his films are famous. “You have fifty hours which you have to structure in the cutting room. What else do you do? You have to cut from one scene to another, which is cross-cutting.” Cross-cutting results in the film’s dynamic flow and is the director’s tool for analyzing the interviews and footage and for making subtly ironic points. Without making direct judgments, Ophuls allows the viewer *into* the filmmaker’s investigative process. Pauline Kael wrote: “You really process information, and doing so makes you are aware of how falsely the phrase is applied to the unconscious soaking up of TV commercials and banalities. You experience the elation of using your mind.”

### ***Conclusion***

*The Sorrow and the Pity* gives the viewer the opportunity to listen to the interviewees' words and at the same time, to watch their faces and eyes and to hear their voices — all windows to the truth. The viewer himself becomes an eyewitness to history. Stanley Hoffman summed up the power of these images in his introduction of the English transcript of *The Sorrow and the Pity*:

*Like all works of art that probe the truth about a society, The Sorrow and the Pity is a mirror presented by the authors to their audiences. How sharp a mirror a movie such as this one turns out to be, compared with novels or even with plays, not to mention memoirs or histories! The printed page, or words on a stage, are no substitutes for the faces, voices, gestures of "real" people. No written flashback has the power that explodes on the screen when a scene from 1940 and a scene from the present are juxtaposed, showing the same man at thirty years' distance. No narrative, no fictional reconstruction matches the newsreel or the live interview. Especially when the subject is nothing less than a nation's behavior in the darkest hour of its history, it isn't surprising that the reactions should be so passionate. In the skillful hands of clever people, movies or television films can be formidable weapons.*

### ***Interview with Marcel Ophuls by Chris Kijne, Damocles Journal Online***

I don't agree that *Le Chagrin et La Pitié* [*The Sorrow and the Pity*] is a condemnation of the collective French attitude during the war. If people think they recognize that, it is probably because they want to do the condemning. Which in many cases is a generation problem. 'Ha ha, look at dad, look at granddad, they always brandished their Legion d'Honneur and now they are shown in their true colors.' Why would I be interested in those sentiments?

The other side is that of people who were always pampered by the Gaullistic propaganda and who were encouraged to forget what it was really like. Make no mistake, *Le Chagrin et La Pitié* is one of the few films — not that that makes it a good one, because that doesn't have anything to do with it — that had real political consequences, because the myth of the heroic Gaullistic resistance was annihilated. And all those Vichyites who counted on de Gaulle to justify their Legion d'Honneur and their apartments in the sixteenth district were furious about the film. So both they and those who said: 'Ha ha, papa fait de la résistance' had their reasons to call the film denouncing.

### ***Marcel Ophuls***

Marcel Ophuls was born on November 1, 1927 in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, the son of the great director Max Ophüls (née Oppenheimer). When Hitler came to power in 1933, the Ophüls family emigrated to Paris where Marcel became a naturalized French citizen in 1938. Max joined the French army when war broke out, but he and his family had to flee yet another homeland and the invading Nazi persecution when the Germans occupied France in 1940. "I did live through the defeat of France. I was 12. And then we fled into the unoccupied zone where we more or less hid, without any money at all, for something like a year." The family managed to escape and arrived in America shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Marcel attended Hollywood High School and later continued his education at Occidental College in Los Angeles and the University of California at Berkeley, following a brief stint with a theatrical unit of the U.S. occupation forces in Japan.

After acquiring American citizenship, he returned with his family to France in 1950, at which time he started to follow in his father's footsteps. Ophuls worked as assistant director for Julien Duvivier (*Marianne de ma jeunesse*, 1954), John Huston (*Moulin Rouge*, 1953), Anatole Litvak (*Un Acte d'amour*, 1954), and his father (on the poorly received *Lola Montes*, 1955). "After *Lola Montes*, the name Ophuls was so hated on the Champs Elysées that I couldn't find any work at all." Ophuls married Regina Ackermann, a German native, and worked for several years in Baden-Baden where he began what would become an illustrious documentary career. François Truffaut, whom Ophuls first met at his father's funeral in 1957 (Truffaut was one of the few contemporary defenders of *Lola Montes*), invited the fledgling director to participate in the omnibus film *Love at Twenty*. Truffaut also aided Ophuls immensely on two additional films: his fictional feature debut *Banana Peel* (a Hollywood-style comedy starring Jeanne Moreau, Jean-Paul Belmondo and Gert Fröbe) and the celebrated *The Sorrow and the Pity*. Ironically for a man so well associated with the non-fiction form, Ophuls declares that his two major influences are Truffaut and his father.

While working for French national television, Ophuls met André Harris and Alain de Sedouy and directed many segments on their monthly newsmagazine, *Zoom*. This experience helped refine his journalism and interview skills and taught him the basics of 16mm filmmaking. Together the three created *Munich, or Peace in Our Time*, an early foray into the exploration of World War II history. They all quit the state-run O.R.T.F. television network over the government's response to the May 1968 demonstrations, forcing a need to find outside sources for their next project, *The Sorrow and the Pity*. Funded by Swiss and German television, the film was Ophuls' breakthrough. A huge critical and commercial success around the world, it was such a hit that the American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) bought the rights to show it in the United States. However, the film so disturbed French television executives and state officials (it didn't help that Ophuls himself was a German Jew by birth although officially a French citizen) that it was only broadcast there *twelve* years after its completion.

After making a documentary about the conflict in Northern Ireland, Ophuls next turned to a mammoth undertaking. Intended as a "sequel" to *The Sorrow and the Pity* and inspired by *Nuremberg and Vietnam: An American Tragedy*, the book by Telford Taylor, U.S. Chief Counsel at Nuremberg, *The Memory of Justice* (1976) embroiled Ophuls in a protracted battle with his German and British financial backers. The German backers wanted a segment on the Stalinist concentration camps and the British producers wanted a "radical-chic version for America," in which the U.S. Marines' behavior in Vietnam would be compared to the German S.S. The BBC representative objected to a sauna scene with frontal nudity. Eventually, Ophuls was fired and his work print confiscated. The producers cut the film to suit their own needs, but Ophuls' loyal assistant managed to smuggle a scratch print out of London to New York. There, a group of "American opinion-makers" rallied behind the film and, with the financial help of Hamilton Fish and others, Paramount released Ophuls' version in America.

Over the years, Ophuls has produced radio plays, made documentaries in France, Germany and the United States. He worked for almost a year at CBS News to create documentaries on the McCarthy era and "Fred Astaire and the Protestant Work Ethic," though neither came to fruition. He also worked at ABC as a contributor to *20/20*. He pursued acting, taught classes on

Hollywood comedies at Princeton, and wrote for magazines such as *American Film* and *Positif*. He has also served on the board of the French Filmmakers' Society. It is, however, for his astonishing body of documentaries including *The Memory of Justice* (1976) and *Hotel Terminus* (1988, winner of the Academy Award<sup>®</sup> for Best Documentary) that Ophuls is regarded as the conscience of his generation and one of the finest filmmakers in world cinema history. As a sign of his often unrecognized lighter side, he has repeatedly stated that what he really wants to do is direct — a musical.

### *Filmography*

- 1960 *Matisse, ou Le talent du Bonheur*, director (short)
- 1962 *Love at Twenty (L'Amour à vingt ans)*, director, screenwriter — “Munich”
- 1963 *Banana Peel (Peau de Banane)*, director, co-screenwriter
- 1964 *Fire at Will (Feu à Volonté)*, director, co-screenwriter
- 1967 *Munich, ou la Paix pour Cent Ans*, director, screenwriter (TV documentary)
- 1967 *Clavigo*, director (TV documentary)
- 1970 *The Harvest of Mai Lai*, director (TV documentary)
- 1970 *The Sorrow and the Pity (Le Chagrin et la pitié)*, director, co-screenwriter
- 1971 *America Revisited*, director, screenwriter (TV documentary)
- 1971 *Zwei ganze tage (2 Whole Days)* , director (TV)
- 1972 *A Sense of Loss*, director, screenwriter (documentary)
- 1976 *The Memory of Justice*, director, screenwriter (documentary)
- 1980 *Kortner Gescichte*, director, screenwriter (TV documentary)
- 1982 *Yorktown: Le Sens d'un Bataille*, director, screenwriter (TV documentary)
- 1988 *Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie*, director
- 1990 *November Days: Voices and Choices*, performer, director (TV documentary)
- 1993 *François Truffaut: Stolen Portraits*, interviewed
- 1994 *The Troubles We've Seen: A History of Journalism in Wartime*, director

***Biographies of Selected Interview Subjects  
& Brief Notes on Relevant Historical Figures***

(Primary Source: *The Sorrow and the Pity* transcript, pp. xxix–xxxix. All quotes are from the film)

**Georges Bidault** (1899–1983)

Bidault was imprisoned by the Germans from 1941 to 1943. Upon release he joined the *Combat* wing of the Resistance movement and published the *Bulletin de la France combattante*. After Jean Moulin was arrested in 1943, Bidault became president of the *Conseil national de la Resistance* (CNR), the group created by Moulin to coordinate Resistance movements in both zones of France. After the war, Bidault became Secretary of Foreign Affairs and served as Prime Minister from 1949 to 1950. His strong opposition to de Gaulle's stance in favor of Algerian independence led him to exile in Brazil. After a general amnesty was declared for opponents of Algerian independence in 1967, he returned to France. Bidault is the author of *Resistance, the Political Autobiography of Georges Bidault* (1965, translated 1967).

*In reality, the French aren't normally very involved in politics. Once in a blue moon, they decide to take action and storm the Bastille ... But, normally speaking, they're just as peaceable as anyone else. One thing is for sure: the French, in general, like a peaceful regime, a regime that has authority, but is preferably humane. In any case, they feel the need to be protected. They're quite paternalistic.*

**Jacques Duclos** (1896–1975)

During World War I, Duclos was wounded and taken prisoner by the Germans. After the war he joined the Communist Party and was elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1926. He served until 1932, and was re-elected in 1935. In 1958 he was elected to the Senate. He played an important part in the Popular Front alliances prior to the outbreak of World War II, and during the war he became the head of the clandestine Communist Party of France.

*If the French police had not helped seek out the Communists, not to mention all the other patriots, the Germans would have made a stab in the dark, but they could never have hit as hard as they hit the French Resistance.*

**Robert Anthony Eden, First Earl of Avon** (1897–1977)

Anthony Eden served as Great Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1935 to 1938, and as Secretary of War during 1940. From 1940 to 1945 he was once again Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and from 1942 to 1945, leader of the House of Commons as well. He became Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1955 and remained in that office until 1957. He published his memoirs, *Full Circle*, in 1960.

*If one hasn't been through — as our people mercifully did not go through — the horror of an occupation by a foreign power, you have no right to pronounce upon what a country does which has been through all that.*

**Dr. Claude Levy**

A writer and biologist once active in the *Franc-Tireur* group within the Resistance movement, Levy has written an extensive account of Jewish persecution in France during the Occupation,

*Betrayal at the Vèl d'Hiv* (1967).

*France is the only country in all Europe whose government collaborated. Others signed an armistice or surrendered, but France was the only country to have collaborated and voted laws which were even more racist than the Nuremberg Laws, as the French racist criteria were even more demanding than the German racist criteria. I understand that history books only present the positive side, but historically speaking, that's wrong.*

### **Christian de la Mazière**

The son of an aristocratic family and a youthful supporter of the extreme right-wing in 1940, de la Mazière served during the war as a volunteer for the “Charlemagne” company, the French division of the Waffen S.S. who fought with the Germans on the Eastern Front. In 1972 he published his memoirs of this period, *Reveur casqué*.

*I think only an idiot would refuse to change their opinion. But I can only speak for myself. I have changed, but that's me. Young people have asked me what I think about their commitment. It's always interesting, fascinating, because commitment always brings on change, but sometimes this change has dramatic consequences. So I advise people to be cautious.*

### **Pierre Mendès-France** (1907–1982)

A lawyer, Mendès-France served as a deputy from the department of Eure in Normandy from 1932 to 1939. In 1934 he was elected Mayor of Louviers, a town in Normandy. In the 1939 Popular Front government of Léon Blum, he was named Undersecretary of State for Finance. In 1938 he flew on missions to Syria. As a consequence of the Massilia affair, he was arrested in Morocco in August, 1940, and taken to jail in Clermont-Ferrand in October, where he was convicted of desertion and sentenced to six years in prison. Two years later he escaped to London, where he joined the Lorraine unit of the R.A.F. and flew numerous missions over France. Immediately after the Liberation, de Gaulle named Mendès-France his Secretary of Finance. He served again in the Chamber of Deputies from 1946 to 1955 and, as Prime Minister from 1954 to 1955, he successfully negotiated an end to the war in Indochina. A firm critic of de Gaulle, he lost his seat in the 1958 election. He did return to the assembly for five years in 1967 and following this, he concentrated on Israeli affairs. His memoirs of his trial and imprisonment, *Liberté, liberté chérie*, were published by Didier in New York in 1943.

*It showed me that there are certain tendencies and habits, which, when they are fired, fed or stimulated, crop up like weeds, and so we must always be on the defense. We have to protect our youth from this type of propaganda. We have to talk to them about it more than we talked about it a generation or two ago.*

### **Major General Sir Edward Spears**

Spears became the British Prime Minister's personal representative to the French Minister of Defense in May 1940. A month later, after the German-French armistice, he was appointed head of the British mission to General de Gaulle. During the war he conducted missions to Syria and Lebanon. His book, *Pétain and de Gaulle, Two Men Who Saved France*, was published in 1966.

### **Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie** (1900–1969)

A navy officer who joined the Resistance after the collapse in 1940, he created the *Mouvement Liberation Sud*, one of the most important Resistance organizations in Vichy France. In 1942 he

was sent to London, and afterwards to Algiers. After the Liberation, he was appointed Secretary of Interior by de Gaulle, and published the daily newspaper *Liberation*. He later became president of the World Council for Peace and was named Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur (the equivalent of being knighted).

*But what did I find in the Resistance? The most important thing for me, other than dignity... was that it was a truly classless society.... What I'm going to say may sound mean, but I think that to be a resistant, you had to be maladjusted.*

### **General Walter Warlimont**

During World War I, Warlimont served as Battery Commander for the German forces in the West and in Italy. In 1929 he was attached to the U.S. Army to study internal mobilization. In the summer of 1939 he was appointed military ambassador of the Third Reich's War Minister to General Franco in Spain. In 1938 he was named chief of the National Defense section of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht. He was subsequently promoted to lieutenant general. In September of 1944 he was transferred to the O.K.H. Command pool. In 1962 he wrote *Inside Hitler's Headquarters 1939–1945*, which was published in the U.S. in 1964.

*We soldiers, unlike Hitler, were convinced that we were facing the same adversary as in 1914-1918, a determined, brave adversary, prepared to fight to the bitter end. Unfortunately, I must admit that Hitler was right in this case. He was always saying how the French were incapable of repeating their performance in World War I, and he never missed an opportunity to add to this statement a few disagreeable and derisory remarks or comments on the general emotional and moral state of France.*

Also of note:

### **Léon Blum** (1872–1950)

Prominent French politician and writer. As Socialist leader of the Popular Front government (Communist and non-Communist parties in alliance against Fascism), he served as Prime Minister from June 1936 to June 1937, and for one month in 1938, passing important labor reforms. His Jewish background made him a prime target for the anti-Semitic right. He was arrested in 1940 and imprisoned by the Germans until 1945.

### **Charles de Gaulle** (1890–1970)

During his service from 1932 to 1936 in the Supreme Defense Council, de Gaulle attempted unsuccessfully to convince French military chiefs of the need for tanks and motorized forces in modern warfare. He served in the Reynaud cabinet of 1940 as Undersecretary of Defense, coordinating British and French military activities, before leaving for England upon Pétain's accession to power. There he organized the Free French and was elected the provisional president of France in 1945. He stepped down when the Fourth Republic's new constitution did not grant enough power to the chief executive, but returned to lead the French people for six months during the Algerian crisis in 1958. When a new constitution was ratified that strengthened the president's position, he became the head of the Fifth Republic in 1959. De Gaulle's tenure came to an end a decade later when he resigned after his administration was nearly unhinged by the student and worker demonstrations of 1968.

### **Pierre Laval** (1883–1945)

Laval began his political career as a left-wing deputy from the Paris working class suburb of

Aubervilliers. In 1926 he slowly started moving to the right, serving as Prime Minister a number of times before 1940. Often portrayed as a Germanophile and ardent collaborator, his role in French history remains highly ambiguous since some sincerely believe that he tried to ward off German influence, at least in Vichy. Regardless, he did draft labor for Germany and initiated a roundup of the country's Jews — his form of “prophylaxis.” After the Liberation he was tried for treason, sentenced and shot (strapped to a chair after having his stomach pumped when he attempted to commit suicide by cyanide pill). Even though the nation was caught up in the Liberation's license for joy and even revenge, many denounced his poorly conducted trial.

*My father-in-law's philosophy, the one often shared with the family, was that the only realistic solution was for our country to gain time while Germany got increasingly involved in their war against the Russians — a war, which, in his opinion, would last for years, and in so doing, we would allow France to maintain its position in the world, as well as its empire. — Comte René de Chambrun, Laval's son-in-law*

### **Philippe Pétain (1856–1951)**

Commander-in-Chief of the French army during part of World War I, he is noted for successful defense of Verdun in 1916. Previous to becoming Head of State, he served as France's ambassador to Franco Spain in 1939. After succeeding Paul Reynaud as premier when France was on the verge of collapse, he quickly signed an armistice with Germany. On July 10, Pétain became the Head of Vichy France in the unoccupied southern portion of the country. Yielding to German demands, his government became increasingly unpopular (although by 1942, he was more of a figurehead while Laval pulled the strings). He was convicted of treason, but De Gaulle commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment.

### ***Chronology 1939–1945***

(Primary Source: *The Sorrow and the Pity* transcript, pp. 186–189)

#### **1939**

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| August 21    | Soviet-German agreement announced.   |
| August 22    | French Communist party supports Soviet-German agreement.                   |
| September 1  | Germany invades Poland.  |
| September 3  | France and Great Britain declare war on Germany.                           |
| September 17 | USSR invades Poland.   |
| September 26 | Prime Minister Daladier dissolves the French Communist Party.              |
| September 28 | Moscow agreements leading to partition of Poland between USSR and Germany. |
| November 4   | USA Neutrality Act.  |
| December 14  | USSR expelled from League of Nations.                                      |

#### **1940**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| March 20  | Reynaud succeeds Daladier as Prime Minister.  |
| March 28  | French-British agreement not to conclude a separate peace.  |
| May 10    | Germany invades the Netherlands.  |
| May 13–14 | French front broken on Meuse.   |
| May 18–19 | Cabinet shuffle: Reynaud takes over Defense Minister from Daladier, Weygand replaces Gamelin. Pétain enters government as Secretary of State and Vice-President of the Cabinet. |



- May 29–June 4 Evacuation at Dunkirk.
- June 10 French government moves to Tours. Italy declares war on France and Great Britain.
- June 11 Churchill, Eden and Pétain meet at Briare.
- June 14 Germans enter Paris. French government moves to Bordeaux.
- June 15 Hitler’s early morning visit to Paris.
- June 16 Reynaud resigns; Pétain becomes Prime Minister. Pétain asks Germany for an armistice.
- June 17 De Gaulle leaves for London with General Spears.
- June 18 De Gaulle calls from London for continued resistance against Germany.
- June 21 The *Massilia* leaves Bordeaux for Morocco. [The government of the Third Republic decided to send those wishing to pursue the fight against Germany on to North Africa; however, Pierre Laval led a faction of parliamentaries who opposed this “flight.” President Lebrun and a group of senators changed their minds at the last moment and consented to Pétain’s wishes to remain. Soon the newly established Vichy regime denounced the deputies and senators who did sail on *The Massilia* as “treasonous.” Pierre Mendès-France was among the eight passengers subsequently taken prisoner; two of them were later murdered, including Jean Zay, minister of education in the Popular Front government from 1936 to 1939, who was assassinated by the French Militia in 1944.]
- June 22 French-German armistice signed at Rethondes.
- June 24 French-Italian armistice.
- June 28 Great Britain recognizes de Gaulle as leader of the Free French.
- July 2 French government settles in Vichy.
- July 3 British sink the French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir. [In order to prevent yet another tool of war from falling under the control of the German juggernaut, Britain, panicked by their former ally’s quick and separate agreement with the enemy, decided to proceed with “Operation Catapult.” French Admiral Darlan gave the crews strict instructions “never to obey a foreign admiralty. All ships must remain under French colors.” In the morning of July 3, Commander Holland imparted an ultimatum consisting of three options to Admiral Jansoul, in charge of the ten ships that constituted one-fifth of the entire French Navy: “If you refuse these fair offers, I must, with profound regret, require you to sink your ships within six hours.” There is much confusion regarding these negotiations — especially whether or not the British even presented all the possibilities or that the French simply refused to disobey orders. The British fleet and aircraft commenced firing at 5:54PM; 1,297 were killed and 351 were wounded. Vichy was to greatly utilize the French public’s heightened Anglophobia that naturally resulted from this attack.]
- July 4 Diplomatic relations between Vichy and Great Britain severed.
- July 8 British blow up the *Richilieu* in Dakar.
- July 10 French parliament in Vichy votes 569–80 to give full powers to Marshal Pétain.
- July 11 Vote on constitutional laws abolishes the Third Republic and creates in its place the “French State.” Laval becomes Pétain’s head minister.
- July 30 Legislation creates the Chantiers de Jeunesse, the youth camps.

September Free French expedition to Dakar fails to rouse French North Africa.  
 October 24 Hitler and Pétain meet at Montoire.  
 December 13 Laval dismissed. Flandin as interim minister.

### 1941

February Admiral Darlan takes control of government.  
 June 21 Pierre Mendès-France escapes from jail in Clermont-Ferrand.  
 June 22 Germany invades USSR. French Communists begin Resistance.  
 June 30 Diplomatic relations between Vichy and Soviet Union severed.  
 September 24 Formation of Comité National de la France Libre.

### 1942

January 1 Jean Moulin, representative of de Gaulle and the Comité National Français (CNF), parachutes into unoccupied France.  
  
 April Trial of Blum, Daladier, and other ministers of the Third Republic becomes embarrassing to Vichy regime and is abandoned. Laval returns to power.  
 May 1 U.S. Ambassador leaves Vichy.  
 May 29 Jews in the Occupied Zone are required to wear yellow star.  
 July 16 “Vél d’Hiv Round-up”: 4,000 Jewish children arrested by Parisian police.  
 July 21 22,000 Jews are arrested in Paris.  
 November 8 Allied invasion of North Africa. Darlan, in Algeria, switches to support the Allies.  
 November 11 Germans occupy Vichy France.  
 December 24 Darlan assassinated. Giraud succeeds him as military commander in North Africa.

### 1943

January Casablanca Conference including Roosevelt, Churchill, de Gaulle, and Giraud.  
 January 30 French militia formed under Joseph Darnand.  
 February 16 Institution of compulsory labor (STO).  
 April Formation in the south of the United Movements of the Resistance (MUR)  
 May 15 Formation of the National Resistance Council (CNR).  
 June 3 Formation of the Committee of National Liberation (CFLN) in Algiers under de Gaulle and Giraud.  
 June 21 Jean Moulin taken prisoner. Georges Bidault becomes president of the CNR.  
 September Liberation of Corsica.

### 1944.

January Crisis in Vichy government. Collaborationists from Paris — Dèat, Darnand, Henriot — enter government.  
 March 27 Vichy law authorizing the French to join the Waffen S.S.  
 June 3. De Gaulle becomes president of the French Provisional Government.  
 June 6 Allied landing in Normandy.  
 June 9 Forces of the interior Resistance (FFI) integrated into the French Army.  
 July 10 De Gaulle meets Roosevelt.

August 15 French and American armies in Provence.  
August 20 Germans transfer Pétain to Belfort.  
August 25 . Liberation of Paris.  
August 26 De Gaulle enters Paris.  
September Pétain and Laval installed at Sigmaringen Castle.  
October 4 Reorganization of courts to facilitate prosecution of “collaborators.”  
October 5 Women’s suffrage.  
October 22 Allies recognize the Provisional French Government.

**1945**

October 21 Referendum brings official end to the Third Republic. Constituent assembly convened.

**1947**

January 22 Fourth Republic established.

## *The Resistance*

(Source: Appendix C in *The Sorrow and the Pity*, pp. 180–184)

Few episodes of World War II are so confusing as that of the French Resistance during the occupation. The Resistance was composed of different groups of people led by different motives. It ranged from listening to the BBC and reading underground pamphlets, to providing food and shelter for the maquisards, to spying on the Germans, to acts of sabotage and armed rebellion....

Until the German occupation of Vichy France in November, 1942, there was a clear difference between the nature of the Resistance there and in the northern, occupied zone. Of all the Resistance movements in the southern zone, the four most important ones were:

- 1) Combat — Army officers and Christian Democrats under the leadership of Georges Bidault and Henri Frenzy.
- 2) Libération — Unionists, Communists, and Socialists under the leadership of Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie.
- 3) Franc Tireur — Intellectuals, mostly Communists.
- 4) Témoignage chrétien — A Catholic group headed by a priest named Father Chaillet, one of the chief organizers of the rescue of Jewish children (who were either adopted by French families or smuggled into Switzerland). Intellectually but comparatively small....

In April, 1943, three of the main Resistance organizations in the south — Combat, Libération, Franc Tireur — were gathered into the MUR (Mouvements Unis de la Résistance).

In the Occupied Zone, resistance was much more dangerous from the start. But the very presence of the Germans in the north stimulated more activist reactions than in the south, which after all still had a qualified French government....

Among the most important Resistance groups in the Occupied Zone were:

Libération-Nord — Catholics and Unionists.

Organisation civile et militaire (OCM) — Soldiers and civil servants.

Défense de la France — Students, young intellectuals.

Lorraine.

Résistance — Scientists, teachers, other professionals.

Ceux de la Libération — Group in eastern France and Paris with right-wing political opinions.

Front National — A group borrowing their ideology from the Popular Front of 1936.

After 1942 the various Resistance movements in north and south began to develop a measure of cooperation and unity. Military, political, and union organizations slowly began to spring up in the underground. Jean Moulin was sent to France from London by de Gaulle and the CNF (Comité National Français) at the beginning of 1942, with the goal of bringing some coherence to the multiple Resistance movements all over the country. On May 27, 1943, Moulin was able to officially constitute the National Resistance Council or CNR (Conseil National de la Résistance) of which he was the first president. The CNR coordinated the Maquis, the underground press, the political parties, and other Resistance movements in both the north and

the south. Once Moulin was taken prisoner by the Germans in June, 1943, his role was assumed by two men: Georges Bidault, Moulin's successor and the new president of the CNR, elected by members of the Council inside France; and M. Parodi, a general delegate representing de Gaulle, who by this time was operating mostly out of Africa.

By 1943 the Resistance movement possessed in the Maquis an impressive guerrilla army. "Maquis" means a scrubby, low-lying bush found in the hills of Corsica and southern France. This type of terrain served as a comfortable refuge for all those who were fleeing the law. During the occupation the term came to be applied to those resisters who conducted their guerrilla operations out of the hills in provincial France. The Maquis started in the French Alps in 1942, and in the Massif Central in 1943. Banks, post offices, and other institutions would let themselves be "robbed" by maquisards as the campaign of sabotage gained momentum. Until the end of 1943 and the first parachute drop, the Maquis had tremendous difficulty in obtaining weapons: the Allies, for fear of arming the Communists, were very reluctant to send them. Beyond the food, clothing, forged papers, and limited arms the underground network provided them, maquisards were adept at raiding the Chantiers de Jeunesse set up by Pétain and commandeering supplies.

The Maquis was very much a mixed group. The units varied in size, efficiency, and politics. Jews, refugees, anti-Franco Spanish revolutionaries, and even a few left-wing Germans fought in the Maquis. But the impetus which transformed the Maquis into a veritable army was the institution in February 1943 of compulsory labor laws, the STO (Service du Travail Obligatoire). These laws required all young Frenchmen to work directly under the Germans either in Germany or in German-controlled factories inside France. The laws directly affected the everyday life of many thousands and threatened the lives of millions. Effectively, those who did not wish to join up and work for the Germans were forced to flee into active Resistance. The number of deserters from the STO was approximately.

By the beginning of 1944 the sporadic guerrilla warfare of the Maquis could be developed into more organized military activity. The CNR had already formed for itself a "Comité d'action militaire" to coordinate strategy; on February 1, 1944, all guerrilla and sabotage activities were combined into the French interior forces, the FFI (Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur). The FFI served as a catch-all for Resistance forces in the months preceding the liberation.

### *Distribution*

One misconception about *The Sorrow and the Pity* is that it was *banned* from French television, the very audience of millions that the creators hoped to reach. Although *The Sorrow and the Pity* showed on TV in countries surrounding France (including those of co-financiers Switzerland and Germany) at least a decade before French viewers could see it in their homes, the film was never officially censored. Instead, French television executives, exercising what Ophuls calls "censorship by inertia" (refusing to even watch the film to consider buying it for broadcast). The director explained this situation in a 1978 *Wide Angle* interview: "Afterwards, the French journalists, who were the co-producers, tried to sell the film to French television, but I don't know why they tried. What they were trying to do was portray themselves as true martyrs and the

victims of Gaullist censorship. So they mounted big press campaigns complaining that French television had banned the film. French television hadn't banned the film, they hadn't bought the film!"

Ophuls' good friend, François Truffaut, and others who admired the film were able to leap over distribution and censorship hurdles by convincing the Malle brothers, who owned a small art house cinema, to exhibit it for a few days with no advance compensation or promotion. Ophuls recalled the nerve-wracking theatrical opening: "I remember that first morning I was in this Left Bank theater. It was ten o'clock in the morning, and there were three-and-a-half people in the audience in raincoats. The mackintosh brigade. After about three hours of depression, I went out into this very narrow Left Bank street to catch a breath of fresh air. It was black with people, lined with people. One of the great moments of my life. Well, it went on from there and became a very successful film shown on television throughout the world and was in New York in a place for, I believe, fifteen months." There was such a tremendous demand for the film, especially by younger generations, eager for knowledge and honesty. Ophuls, a teenager during the war, in a way represents the point of view of one generation confronting an older one — very much in the "spirit of May." Publicized mainly by word of mouth, the film moved to a larger theater on the Champs-Élysées to accommodate the round-the-clock crowds.

*The Sorrow and the Pity* first played in America at the 1971 New York Film Festival and garnered an avalanche of excellent reviews. The following year, New York independent distributor Cinema 5 Ltd. released an English-dubbed version at the Beekman Theatre, to enormous success. One of the most critically acclaimed films of the year and nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Documentary (won, shockingly, by *The Hellstrom Chronicle*, another Cinema 5 acquisition), *The Sorrow and the Pity* grew in stature to be one of the seminal films in cinema history. Cinema 5, led by the influential Don Rugoff, distributed such classics as *Z*, *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, *Scenes from a Marriage*, *The Fireman's Ball*, *Nothing But a Man*, and *A Sense of Loss*, Ophuls' 1972 documentary feature on the troubles in Northern Ireland). The company later merged into Cinema 5/Libra/Almi Pictures, which then simply became Almi and was sold off to Krypton International in the early 1990s. The film made industry news again when Columbia Pictures Home Entertainment released the home video in 1980, but the French owners sued to curtail the distribution.

In 1987, the American rights to *The Sorrow and the Pity* lapsed and as the owners of the film had gone bankrupt, the film sadly went out of distribution and remained so for the next thirteen years. Even more tragically, the monumental film faded from the public's memory. Over these years, Milestone Film & Video made repeated attempts to license the rights to this landmark film, but it wasn't until 1999 that the company finally ended its long quest by signing with Société Teledis. This is the first-ever theatrical release of the French-language version of *The Sorrow and the Pity* in the United States.

Interestingly, and coincidentally, Milestone licensed *The Sorrow and the Pity* shortly after acquiring Kevin Brownlow and Andrew Mollo's *It Happened Here* and the Boulting Brothers' *Pastor Hall* — two fictional films that earlier dealt with Nazi occupation.

## *A Woody Allen Presentation*

*Annie*: All right, what do you want to do?

*Alvy*: I don't know now. You want to go to another movie? Let's go see *The Sorrow and the Pity*.

*Annie*: Oh, come on. You've seen it. I'm not in the mood to see a four-hour documentary on Nazis.

...

*Alvy*: Interestingly, however, I did run into Annie again. It was on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. She had moved back to New York. She was living in Soho with some guy. And when I met her, she was, of all things, dragging him in to see *The Sorrow and the Pity*, which I counted as a personal triumph.

— *Annie Hall*, a film by Woody Allen

Milestone Film is grateful to Mr. Allen for presenting *The Sorrow and the Pity*.

### *More quotes from the film*

**Daughter of Marcel Verdier**: Was there anything other than courage in the Resistance?

**Marcel Verdier, pharmacist in Clermont-Ferrand**: Of course. But the two emotions I experienced the most frequently were sorrow and pity.

**Marcel Ophuls**: Weren't the Germans here as of 1942?

**Raphael Germiniani, professional cyclist from Clermont-Ferrand**: No. We only saw the Germans through the Resistance. Clermont was never occupied.

**Marcel Ophuls**: We've been told there were very few Germans in Clermont.

**Marcel Verdier**: I saw too many of them. I saw them everywhere. I saw them in my waking hours, and I saw them in my sleep.

**Matheus Bleibinger, former Wehrmacht soldier and prisoner of the Maquis**: Nowadays we have to wonder if we're not better off like this. After all, if we had won, Hitler may have continued, and where would that leave us today? Perhaps we'd be occupying some country in Africa or America.

**Denis Rake, former British S.O.E. secret agent in occupied France**: I can honestly say that the people who helped me the most were the railroad men. And though it's hard to admit now, the Communists. French workers were wonderful people. They would do anything, they'd give you the shirt off their backs.... The bourgeoisie... I must say, were very neutral.... They had more to lose, and I think that in life, no matter where you go, people often consider what they have to lose. I had nothing to lose, that's why I did it.

**Helmuth Tausend, former Wehrmacht captain** (when Ophuls comments on the fact that he is wearing Nazi-awarded medals with his dress outfit): What's the difference between a medal then and a medal now?

**Emile Coulaudon, "Colonel Gaspar," former head of the Auvergne Maquis group**: One thing I find appalling is when people who were Pétain supporters come up and tell me what they did for the resistance. Sometimes, it's unreal. "Oh Mr. Gaspar, if you only knew what we did for the Resistance." OK, pal, tell me all about it. I try to stay calm. I'm a salesman, and I want to sell my product. The company doesn't pay me to do politics and pick fights.

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## ***Milestone Film & Video***

*“Since its birth 10 years ago, the Milestone Film and Video Co. has steadily become the industry’s foremost boutique distributor of classic and art films — and probably the only distributor in America whose name is actually a guarantee of some quality.” — William Arnold, Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

Milestone is a prestigious boutique distribution company with ten years experience in art-house film distribution. The company has earned an unparalleled reputation for releasing classic cinema masterpieces, new foreign films, groundbreaking documentaries and American independent features. Thanks to Milestone’s rediscovery, restoration and release of such important lost films as Mikhail Kalatozov’s award-winning *I am Cuba*, Pier Paolo Pasolini’s *Mamma Roma*, and F.W. Murnau’s *Tabu*, the company now occupies an honored position as one of the most influential independent distributors in the American film industry. In 1999, the *L.A. Weekly* chose Milestone as “Indie Distributor of the Year.”

Amy Heller and Dennis Doros started Milestone in 1990 to bring out the best films of yesterday and today. The company has released such remarkable new films as Bae Yong-kyun’s *Why Has Bodhi-Dharma Left for the East*, Luc Besson’s *Atlantis*, Yoichi Higashi’s *Village of Dreams*,

Hirokazu Kore-eda's *Maborosi*, the films of famed artist Eleanor Antin, the art documentaries of Philip Haas (director of *Music of Chance* and *Angels and Insects*), Edoardo Winspeare's *Pizzicata*, and Takeshi Kitano's *Fireworks (Hana-Bi)*.

Milestone's re-releases have included restored versions of Luchino Visconti's *Rocco and his Brothers*, *Tabu*, Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack's *Grass and Chang*, Michelangelo Antonioni's *Red Desert*, and Hiroshi Teshigahara's *Woman in the Dunes* and *Antonio Gaudí*. Milestone is also working with the Mary Pickford Foundation on a long-term project to preserve, re-score and release the best films of the legendary silent screen star. In 1999, Milestone released restored versions of Roy and John Boulting's anti-Nazi drama *Pastor Hall* (1940), Roland West's *The Bat Whispers* (1930), Frank Hurley's *South: Ernest Shackleton and the Endurance Expedition*, and lastly, Kevin Brownlow's feature films, *It Happened Here* (1964) and *Winstanley* (1975).

Milestone is also known for rediscovering, acquiring, restoring and distributing unknown "classics" that have *never* been available in the US and Canada. These include Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Mamma Roma*, Alfred Hitchcock's "lost" propaganda films, *Bon Voyage* and *Aventure Malgache*, *Early Russian Cinema* (a series of twenty-eight films from Czarist Russia from 1908–1919), *I am Cuba* and Jane Campion's *Two Friends*.

Milestone is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2000 with its most ambitious theatrical release schedule yet. Michael Powell's *The Edge of the World* (1937) opened in January at New York's Film Forum and is a Martin Scorsese presentation. *La Grande Strada Azzurra* (1957, *The Wide Blue Road*) by Gillo Pontecorvo is a Jonathan Demme and Dustin Hoffman presentation. Milestone's restoration of Rolando Klein's *Chac* (1976) premiered in Seattle at the Seven Gables Theater. Milestone's most recent acquisition, Henri Georges Clouzot's *The Mystery of Picasso*, will be released to theaters in the fall.

The Milestone 10th Anniversary Tour is yet another project the company has scheduled for 2000–2001. This nationwide tour of Milestone's most famous releases will premiere at the Film Society of Lincoln Center in New York in August. All revenues earned by Milestone from retrospective screenings will be donated to five major archives in the United States and England to help restore films that might otherwise be lost.

Upcoming video restorations for 2000 include fifteen remarkable films, most never before available in the US. Working with the Mary Pickford Foundation and the UCLA Film and Television Archive, Milestone will release beautifully restored versions of four Hollywood classics: Rouben Mamoulian's charming south-of-the-border musical romp, *The Gay Desperado* (1936); pioneering woman screenwriter and director Frances Marion's *The Love Light* (1922); Mervyn LeRoy's delightful *Tonight or Never* (1931), starring Gloria Swanson and Melvyn Douglas; and Dolores Del Rio in the heartbreaking classic *Evangeline* (1929).

Milestone is joining forces with the National Film, TV and Sound Archives of Canada to release two films on video featuring silent star Nell Shipman: *Back to God's Country* and *Something New* (1919–1920). After a ten-year search that went around the globe, Milestone finally located the owner of the breathtaking documentary *People of the Wind*, and thanks to remarkable color

restoration work by Tape House in New York, this Oscar®— and Golden Globe-nominated film will be available on home video and DVD in 2000.

Milestone received a Special Archival Award in 1995 from the National Society of Film Critics for its restoration and release of *I am Cuba*. Six of its preserved films — *Tabu*, Edward S. Curtis' *In the Land of the War Canoes*, Mary Pickford's *Poor Little Rich Girl*, Clarence Brown and Maurice Tourneur's *The Last of the Mohicans*, Winsor McCay's *Gertie the Dinosaur* and *Grass* — are listed on the Library of Congress's National Film Registry.

Megan Powers started working at Milestone as an intern in 1997 and is now director of non-theatrical sales. Cindi Rowell joined the company in 1999, and is head of acquisitions.

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*Film Notes by Cindi Rowell, Milestone Film & Video*

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History, war, documentary. Director: Marcel Ophüls. From 1940 to 1944, France's Vichy government collaborated with Nazi Germany. Marcel Ophüls mixes archival footage with 1969 interviews of a German officer and of collaborators and resistance fighters from Clermont-Ferrand. They comment on the nature, details and reasons for the collaboration, from anti-Semitism, More xenophobia, and fear of Bolsheviks, to simple caution. Part one, "The Collapse," includes an extended interview with Pierre Mendès-France, jailed for anti-Vichy action and later France's Prime Minister. At "The Sorrow and the Pity" makes it clear that such was not the case. This stunning documentary includes interviews from people from all shades of the spectrum politically, philosophically and socially. The interviewers did a great job of coaxing the truth from these people by being friendly rather than confrontational. Some of the most amazing footage is from German newsreels, with the ghastly "pure race" prejudices being illustrated with a very sarcastic commentary on some of the French prisoners of war. Still, there are heroes and villains in "The Sorrow and the Pity," and a great number of people in between whom, we finally come to realize, probably acted not much differently than we might have. In its complexity, its humanity, its refusal to find easy solutions, this is one of the greatest documentaries ever made. War. History. Documentary. Roger Ebert. Roger Ebert was the film critic of the Chicago Sun-Times from 1967 until his death in 2013.