

# (UN)REAL STORY

## TRIBUNE

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**P**aris 2023, European Nazi-Germany. Adolf Hitler died 48 years ago in bed. The Normandy invasion was a success at the beginning, but the Nazis, joined by Francoist and a few French collaborationist forces, were finally able to push the Allies back. The war lasted a few more years, until a peace treaty was reached among the warring parties, which recognised a new union of countries called “European Nazi-Germany” made up of most territories in Europe. German was declared as the only official language in those territories, and the media and judicial system were tightly controlled by the regime. In France, in the years following the treaty, most dissidents were prosecuted, imprisoned and executed, particularly those defending the French culture and language.

Hitler’s death was followed by a transition period into a more democratic regime. This was a bloodless transition, allowing for multiparty elections and higher autonomy from the occupied states, which were able to elect their own national parliaments. However, the structure and key positions in the judiciary and much of the public administration remained occupied by people from the former fascist regime. What is more, the official head of state, a public figure that officially presided over the whole Union, appointed by Hitler himself as his successor, remained in power and handpicked his own successor, a member of his family.

Under the new demo-

cratic-style regime, a whole generation of French people that were born in occupied France are finally able to use the French language in public places and official documents, though most cinemas, radio and TV stations continue to broadcast in German. Furthermore, there are complaints from people coming from other states within the Union that in some schools they are teaching in French, instead of German, which they argue, is a “more cosmopolitan language” that is “understood by all”.

Despite the existence of the national parliaments, the main decisions are still taken in Berlin. Furthermore, the Berlin-based supreme court supervises the French parliament and sometimes overturns laws passed by it. More blatant has been the recent imprisonment of several pro-independence members of the parliament after a mock trial, for organising a referendum on French independence. Others have had to

go into exile, and are now able to travel freely anywhere except to Union states. Politicians from the French pro-Union parties, both conservative and socialists, disqualify the pro-independence politicians by warning about the “dangers of French nationalism”, the need to keep France “open” and “not to build more borders”, and to “avoid conflict with non-nationalists”.

Another grievance for French people is that they pay higher taxes than those in Berlin and adjacent areas, while much less is invested in their territory. Many French citizens complain about the state of non-toll roads, and that the functioning of trains is worse in Paris than in Berlin. They also bemoan the fact that French companies suffer competitive disadvantages because of higher taxes and less government support, and that Berlin-based companies are favoured by the administration. Unionist politicians retort to such com-

plaints by mocking the French as greedy whiners unwilling to show solidarity.

Despite all the opposition, a new impulse is felt throughout France, with demands for the right to self-determination and to save their language. The power of the Nazi-descended political institutions, media and tribunals is great and ready to be employed by all means to prevent it. As happened in the days of the resistance during World War II, it will be up to a few courageous leaders and citizens to free France as a nation. It is the hope of many democrats that this time they will not fail.

Note: Our dear reader will surely find parallels with the situation in Catalonia.



What if the Nazis had won the war? ARCHIVE