

## Maurice Pellé (Douai 1863 – Toulon 1924)

### Worksheet Level C



Source: Viktor Stretti: General M. Pellé, archive of the Military History Institute in Prague (VHÚ).

### I. Top Student in His Class, Bright and Quick Learner in Life

*Maurice was the second eldest son of Charles Henri Joseph Pellé, a French military officer, in the city of Douai in northern France. Maurice was lucky: besides strong moral and religious values, his family also encouraged the development of the boy's intellect and artistic talents. Already in high school, the prestigious catholic St. Stanislaus College, it was evident that Pellé was talented not only in mathematics, but also in drawing. His intelligence as well as his father's example predestined him to study at École Polytechnique in Paris, which he started attending in 1882. He knew already then that he would follow in his father's footsteps to become a professional soldier.*

*École Polytechnique.*

1883-84

*Liste, par ordre de mérite, Des Élèves Déclarés  
Services publics, le 11 Août 1884 avec indication de  
chacun d'eux est classé.  
(Cette liste ne sera définitive qu'après l'approbation)*

Noms		Noms		Noms	
1	Chapuy	M.in.	36	Guillaux	G. M.in.
2	Coque	M.in.	37	Bernheim	G. M.in.
3	Pellé	A	38	Roche	G. M.in.
4	Bernard	M.in.	39	Vernand	G. M.in.
5	Maurit	M.in.	40	Ripart	G. M.in.
6	Pelloux	M.in.	41	Marbais	G
7	Santenoid	M.in.	42	Mégard	G
8	Vieille Charles	P.C	43	Fayrabort	"
9	Nadal	M.in.	44	Corpet	"
10	Pouquet	"	45	Risler	"
11	Godard	P.C	46	Robin	A
12	Hozog	P.C	47	Brogni	A
			71	Perret	G
			72	Mange	"
			73	Bonnet Joseph Edmond	G
			74	Chaou	G
			75	Caillat	"
			76	Defrance	G
			77	Maugny	G
			78	Franck	G
			79	Courier	G
			80	Villecloux	G
			81	Renaud	A
			82	G. Lourdain	A

Source: Ranging of Graduates from Pellé's Class at École Polytechnique; VHÚ, AM, PP.

- From the document head find out in what academic year was the ranking compiled. Compare the information with the introductory text and find out how many years did Pellé study at the Polytechnique.
- In the left column find Pellé's name. Where did he rank in the list of the best graduates?
- Think about the meaning of the term POLYTECHNIQUE. From which two words is it composed? In your opinion, what subjects could have been taught at this type of institution?

Pellé completed his studies at the War College (École supérieure de guerre) in 1895. His original illustrated French-German dictionary dates back to this time. The notebook is inspired by monolingual type of dictionaries where students could write and draw their notes into the indicated spaces.

DOC 2: An excerpt from Pellé's Illustrated Dictionary<sup>1</sup>



Source: SANDIFORD-PELLÉ, I. *Generál Pellé, obrázkový deník*. Praha: MO ČR, 2010, p. 71.

- Observe carefully the illustrated DOC 2 and think about the main advantage of picture dictionaries. What purpose do pictures serve? Do you have your own proven method that you use to study a foreign language?
- Take a careful look at Pellé's drawings and evaluate them from an artistic point of view (on the left: chivalric romance; mask; on the right: midnight; moon).

<sup>1</sup> In the right column on top the word "Mittern acht" is spelled incorrectly. The word was left in the form in which it appeared in the original version. However, the correct form of the word is "Mitternacht".

## II. Professional Soldier – Maurice Pellé and the “Great War”

*In January 1871, the German Empire was proclaimed at Versailles and Wilhelm I received the German crown. Prussian troops paraded down the Champs-Élysées... Young Maurice, son of a French brigadier general, belonged to a generation that considered it their duty to atone for the humiliation of the Franco-Prussian war. Pellé transferred from the Polytechnic Institute in Paris to the School of Applied Artillery in Fontainebleau. After graduation (1886) he became the commander of an artillery regiment and obtained the rank of lieutenant. For his intelligence, good judgment and moral qualities he was chosen by the future Marshal Joseph Joffre as an orderly officer. After the outbreak of the First World War, Pellé was called to the very top of the military hierarchy of command – the General Staff. Here he was promoted to brigadier general and in 1918 he was appointed divisional general for his achievements at the front.*

DOC 3: General Joffre about Pellé, His Subordinate in the General Staff in Chantilly

Pellé was perhaps the man of the brightest and most sophisticated intellect whom I met in my life. He was endowed with miraculous diligence, devotion that withstood every trial, broad range of knowledge and wit, which made him not only an excellent officer but also an admirable diplomat.

Source: JOFFRE, J. *Paměti maršála Joffrea*, II. Praha, 1933, p. 353.

- *List Pellé’s qualities that General Joffre emphasizes in the text.*
  
- *What other role, besides that of a military officer, was appropriate for Pellé according to Joffre?*

DOC 4: Brigadier General Pellé, Commander of the 153<sup>rd</sup> Division, at the Front in April 1917 (second from the left)



Source: Pellé in the Trenches, April 1917, VHÚ, AM, PP.

... I marched for five hours [Pellé, author's note] to see the trenches. I returned with mud behind my ears (...) I entered the passageway full of water and performed acrobatic tricks to prevent myself from getting wet. That lasted until the moment I slipped and the water poured into my boots, making a squishing sound with each step. Then I basically swam in liquid mud until my return [to the command post, author's note]. However, at the end of the promenade I was able to wash myself and change my clothes. Imagine what those who don't leave the trenches and sleep in a hole for four or five rainy days must look like!

Source: SANDIFORD-PELLÉ, I. quote, p. 146. (Original Source: Personal Letter from General Pellé from October 15, 1917. Translated.).

DOC 5: An Order Issued by Pellé to his Unit on April 13, 1917

... Tomorrow you will attack. (...) The enemy must be defeated in such way that he won't be able to rise again and his retreat, commenced on the Rivers Somme and Oise, will be final. Forward, children, long live the 153<sup>rd</sup> division!

Source: THOMASSON, R. *Le Général Pellé*. Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1933, p. 56. Translated.

- *Look at the image and read the text to DOC 4. Find General Pellé on the photograph and describe his appearance in your own words. Imagine yourself in a place of a French soldier and write a short letter home (4-8 sentences) about the conditions in the trenches and about the relationship between the soldiers and their commanders.*

- *To whom is Pellé referring in the last sentence of his quote in DOC 4? Compare it with the expression “forward, children” in DOC 5. Can you tell from these examples what type of a commander Pellé was, considering that he cares about the conditions of his subordinates and addresses them as “children”?*

### III. Diplomat in the Service of the French Republic

*In the years 1909–1912, Pellé served as a French military attaché in Berlin. He was predestined for this post due to his tactful demeanor, art of communication, the ability to predict and critically analyze events and of course his excellent knowledge of German. Thanks to his social awareness and perfect education he soon entered the higher circles of Berlin society; he maintained good relations with the German emperor and was invited to numerous social events (e.g. deer hunt). After so-called Moroccan Crisis (1911), Pellé kept a close eye on the changes in German legislation in favor of armament, i.e. the preparation of the imperial army for war. Pellé reported his findings to his homeland and proved himself as an excellent predictor of future events.*

#### DOC 6: The Duties of a Military Attaché

An attaché must closely monitor the press, reports from government meetings, debates in the parliament...and must expertly analyze the content of military laws. Besides that, he should also penetrate the mentality of the military circles and predict the reaction of the public.

The difference is that espionage is a hostile activity, while military attachés are part of a diplomatic mission [i.e. under the leadership of an ambassador, author’s note]. Espionage is targeted against the economic and military interests of another country. The duty of military attachés is only to evaluate the state of affairs.

Source: BŘACH, R. *Generál Maurice Pellé. První náčelník hlavního štábu*. Praha: MO ČR, 2007, p. 26.

- *From what public resources does a military attaché draw information for his reports?*
- *What is the difference between espionage and the intelligence provided by a military attaché? What is the goal of either of them?*

DOC 7: Pellé Analyzes the Situation in Germany in a Report to Raymond Poincaré from May 26, 1912

I repeat that all signs point to the fact that most Germans desire peace... I am convinced that today the supporters of war belong still to a minority. I would, however, like to draw attention to the signs indicating that the situation may at some point change rather quickly...

Opportunity – a spark that can ignite a barrel of dust – may arise from any incident between France and Germany or from external causes, such as the crisis in the Balkans. It is even more likely to result from an inept and brutal diplomacy, which is subjected to different pressures and from which a confrontation is expected.

(...) According to this hypothesis [after the enactment of the new German military law] (...) common sense tells us to get to work without any fuss and be prepared the best we can from the military, governmental, diplomatic and financial perspective before the deadline [i.e. within one year].

Source: POINCARÉ, R. *Au service de la France. Neuf années de souvenirs, I*. Paris, 1926–1933, p. 135–136. Translated.

- *How does Pellé describe the German public opinion regarding preparation for war?*
- *According to Pellé, what two possible causes might trigger the outbreak of war between Germany and France?*
- *Find the term “Balkan crisis” in your history textbook. What kind of conflict took place in the Balkans between 1912 and 1913? Explain why were the Balkans known as the “powder keg of Europe”?*
- *Prove the correctness of Pellé’s predictions regarding the epicenter of the conflict, which eventually resulted in World War I (use your knowledge, your history textbook and a historical atlas).*
- *What measures did Pellé propose to the French government in response to Germany’s war policy?*

## IV. The Head of the French Military Mission in Czechoslovakia

*On October 27, 1918, the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary accepted the demands of American President Wilson regarding the self-determination of the nations of the Habsburg Monarchy. This triggered a number of national rallies and demonstrations and the next day, Czechoslovak independence was declared in Prague. On November 11, a truce was declared on the Western front. For France – a victorious nation and the strongest representative of the Allies – this opened the way for peace talks with the defeated states and for collaboration with the newly emerging countries, such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc. Military experts – the so-called French military mission – were called into Czechoslovakia in order to help build an army and train the domestic, i.e. Czechoslovak, commissioned military officers. General Maurice Pellé became the head of this mission.*

DOC 8: Pellé Assumes His Duties in Czechoslovakia



### PERSONNEL BULLETIN

#### Of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Defense

Year II. Published on February 22, 1919 No. 14

#### General Pellé – Chief of Czechoslovak General Staff

Based on the agreement between the government of the French Republic and the government of the Czechoslovak Republic, starting on February 17, 1919, General Pellé will serve as Chief of the General Staff of the Czechoslovak Army under the Ministry of Defense and simultaneously as a Deputy to Marshal Foch, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Armies.

No. 173 N. o. pres./parl. from the year 1919

Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 73.



- *To what position was General Pellé appointed and when was he supposed to take charge?*
  
- *Pellé was a subordinate to two people. Who were they and what institutions did they represent?*
  
- *Pellé's double subordination was a delicate situation. Could you explain why? Could a conflict of interests be the case? What interests and whose against whom?*
  
- *Visit the webpage of the Ministry of Defense and find out the name of the current Chief of General Staff. What is his rank?*

DOC 9: In a Letter to Clemenceau (February 20, 1919), Pellé Reports about the Crisis in the Czechoslovak Army Officer Corps

Une crise profonde agite les officiers de l'armée tchéco-slovaque. C'est la grosse question du moment, la plus difficile à résoudre sans doute parmi celles qui intéressent la future organisation de l'armée.

Pendant la guerre, ces officiers ont combattu dans les deux camps: les uns, ceux qu'on appelle les "Légionnaires" sont rentrés dans le pays avec l'aurole de la victoire. Libérateurs de la patrie opprimée, toute la popularité va à eux, surtout aux officiers des régiments "français", c'est-à-dire à ceux qui portent notre uniforme et ont combattu sur notre front.

Par contre, les officiers d'origine tchèque, qui sont restés jusqu'au bout dans les rangs de l'ancienne armée autrichienne, ont subi la dépression d'une effroyable débâcle. Restés au service, ils y sont en butte aux attaques et aux suspicions de tous. Les soldats ne les saluent pas dans la rue. Les officiers "légionnaires" réclament leur expulsion de l'armée (tout au moins celle du plus grand nombre d'entre eux). Les hommes politiques ne sont pas mieux disposés en leur faveur. Un Ministre faible, qui écoute le dernier qui lui parle, semble tantôt les sacrifier et tantôt les défendre.

Pourtant ces officiers constituent, au point de vue du nombre, la majorité du cadre actif; il y a parmi eux de bons éléments ~~de valeur~~, même des éléments de valeur.

... During the war, officers fought on both sides. One group, the so-called legionnaires, is returning home with the halo of victory. As liberators of the homeland they are reaping all the popularity, especially the officers of the "French regiments", i.e. those who are wearing a French uniform and who fought on our front. In contrast, the officers of Czech origin who stayed until the end in the ranks of the former Austrian army had experienced depression from a crushing defeat. Those who continue to serve face repression and suspicion from all. The legionnaires are demanding their exclusion from the army. Politicians don't have much regard for them either. However, these officers represent the majority of active officers. Among them can be found good, even valuable individuals.

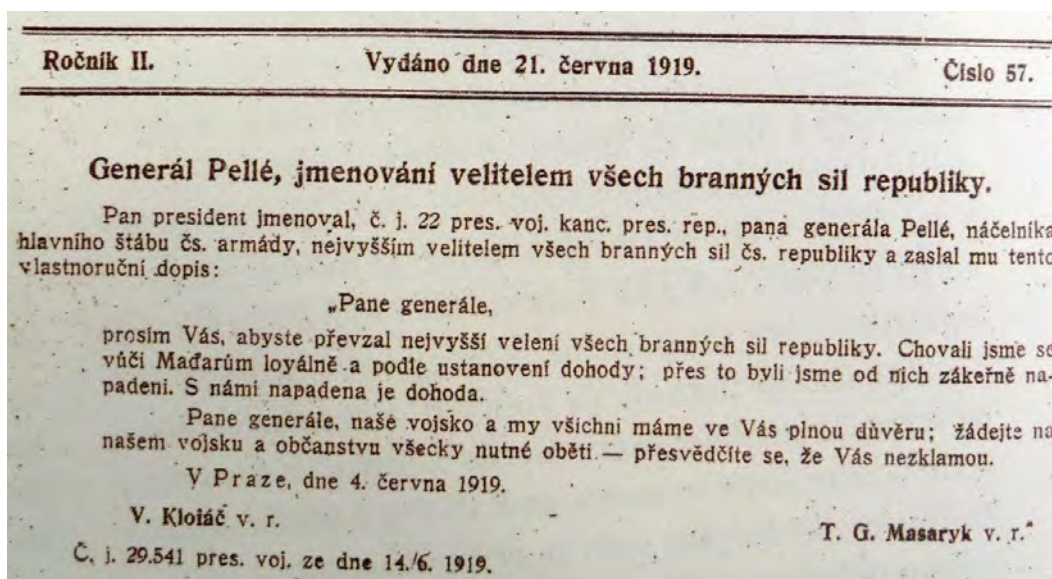
Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 78–79. (Original source: Rapports MMF 1918-1923, 1919, SHAT 7N 3094. Translated.).

- With the help of your history textbook or the Internet, find out what government position held the recipient of Pellé's letter.
- What two types of officers does Pellé mention in his report? How does the public feel about either of these types? Why do you think that the legionnaires are demanding their expulsion from the army?

- *It is logical that after the collapse of the Austrian army the newly formed Czechoslovak state faced an acute shortage of officers. Most were Austrians and as such unacceptable in the Czechoslovak Army Corps. How does Pellé describe these former Imperial-Royal army officers of **Czech origin** at the end of the text? It seems that the French General would like to count on at least some of them during the reconstruction of the army. Why? For their personal (patriotism, etc.) or professional qualities? Explain your opinion.*

*In the autumn of 1918, an armistice with Austria-Hungary and Germany was signed; however, that didn't mean the end of fighting in Europe. Especially the new, so-called successor states, which emerged after the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy, had to assert themselves and defend their borders. Pellé found himself between a rock and a hard place, obliged to balance the conflicting interests of the Allies, respectively France, and the newly formed Czechoslovakia, where President Masaryk appointed him as commander of all military forces. As such, he distinguished himself in the war with Hungary over Slovakia and the Teschen conflict.*

DOC 10: Pellé's Appointment by the President of the Republic in Reaction to the Invasion of Slovakia by the Troops of the Bolshevik Hungarian Soviet Republic



**General Pellé, Appointment as Commander of All Armed Forces of the Republic**

Mr. President appointed, doc. No. 1, MO of the Pres. of Rep., General Pellé, the Chief of General Staff of the Czechoslovak Army, the Supreme Commander of all Armed Forces of the Czechoslovak Republic, and sent him this personal letter:

“Mr. General,

I ask you to take over the supreme command of all armed forces of the republic. We treated the Hungarians with loyalty and according to the provisions of the agreement; despite of that they treacherously attacked us. With us the agreement was also attacked.

Mr. General, our army and we all have complete confidence in you; demand of our army and our citizens all necessary sacrifices – you will see that they will not disappoint you.

In Prague on June 4, 1919.

V. Klofáč, m.p.

T. G. Masaryk, m.p.

Doc. No. 29,541 MO from June 14, 1919

Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 110.

- *To what position was Pellé appointed and by whom? Who do you think is the Commander during peacetime (base your answer on what you learned in your Civic Knowledge class)?*
- *The appointment was signed by the President of the Republic and the Minister of Defense. Find out their names from the document.*
- *Who was attacked (2 subjects) and by whom (1 subject)? Find in the document a quote that proves the close cooperation between Czechoslovakia and the Allies, and the readiness of the Czechoslovak nation to make sacrifices.*

- *The war of Slovakia lasted from the end of May until June 30, 1919. Although the Allies did not intervene militarily, it enforced ceasefire and negotiations with the Hungarians (led by Pellé on behalf of Czechoslovakia). For each of the following “STATEMENTS” decide whether it represents the “INTEREST” of the Allies or rather of Czechoslovakia.*

STATEMENT:

INTEREST OF:  
(Allies /Czechoslovakia)

- *To prevent the bolshevization of Central Europe*
- *Preserve Czechoslovakia’s unity according to the borders determined by the Peace Conference*
- *Adjust Slovakian borders in order to preserve the Slovakia–Ruthenia railway connection.*
- *Don’t let Czechoslovakia fall but teach it a lesson for occupying a part of Hungarian territory on its own.*
- *If possible, increase the territory of Czechoslovakia at the expense of Hungary.*
- *Strengthen its political influence in Central Europe and use its new allies to limit the influence of Germany.*
- *Don’t antagonize too much the “defeated” Hungary, which could become Western allies’ future partner in Central Europe.*

*The result was an adjustment of the Czechoslovak border (in the spirit of subtle variations of Pichon demarcation line<sup>2</sup> from 1918), in order not to disrupt the railway network on the Czechoslovak territory.*

*When the war over Slovakia ended in June 1919, Pellé was experiencing a period of great popularity among the Czechoslovak public. Under the General’s command, the Czechoslovak army proved its combat readiness and regained its honor. Pellé intended to use this in his favor when promoting his concept of a permanent Czechoslovak army (i.e. officers and regularly recruited soldiers) as part of the Allied army. He intended to reflect this in the new Czechoslovak National Defense Act (1920). Although it contained the acknowledgment that it is “built on the basis of militias” (which was enforced by the socialists), it secured a permanent army by temporarily establishing a two-year and later eighteen-month long military service.*

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<sup>2</sup> Between 1917 and 1920, Stephen Pichon served as French Minister of Foreign Affairs. During the peace negotiations in Versailles (1918-1919), Pichon determined the theoretical borderline between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

DOC 11: Pellé to Clemenceau about Antimilitary Tendencies in Czechoslovakia, December 20, 1919

Under the Austro-Hungarian rule, military was considered as an instrument of the Habsburg oppression in Bohemia. Leading thinkers – such as Professor Masaryk and his pupils or the current Minister of Defense Klobuč – professed pacifism and openly anti-military doctrine... Soon after the overthrow (October 28, 1918) the government promised that the national defense would be based on the system of militias.

Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 150. (Original source: SHAT 7 N 3098. Translated.).

DOC 12: Pellé's Reflection on the Role of Czechoslovakia in the Alliance System, October 23, 1920

Czechoslovakia can be considered a base in Eastern Europe – organized according to individual peace treaties – on which lean all the policies of the Allies, France especially... Czechoslovakia, isolated in the center of Europe and threatened by siege, can escape the subjugation and enslavement by Germany only by faithfully and truly committing to the policies of the Allies.

Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 150. (Original source: SHAT 7N 3109. Translated.).

- *Why did the army lose the trust of the public, according to DOC 11?*
- *Mention two supporters of Czechoslovak anti-militarism from DOC 11. What kind of national defense system was supposed to replace the Imperial-Royal army? What does the term mean? Use a dictionary or search for its meaning on the Internet.*
- *Compare DOC 11 and 12 and decide whether Pellé was a supporter of a militia system or a standing army.*
- *According to Pellé, what kind of danger is the newly formed republic facing? What is, according to Pellé, the only reasonable solution to this danger?*
- *Pellé's point of view prompts us to ask: how will Czechoslovakia benefit – and how will the Allies benefit, particularly France – “if Czechoslovakia faithfully and truly commits to the policies of the Allies”?*

ALLIES

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

DOC 13: Pellé on Borders and a Czechoslovakia's Possible Defense Strategy, December 20, 1919

*The shape of the territory is just as unfavorable as the political circumstances. It's a strip of land [of croissant shape] whose length is nearing 1000 km (more than the distance between Prague and Paris). The width does not exceed 150 km near Brno and 100km to the east of Košice. All forces actually guard the border and it is easy to infer what kind of difficulties will confront the strategic development [of the army in space].*

Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 151. (Original source: SHAT 7N 3098).



Source: *Europe After World War One* <http://modernworldhistory2010.wikispaces.com/World+War+One> [12/17/2014].  
Modified.

- *Based on DOC 12, 13 and the attached map of post-war Europe after 1918, argue in your own words why did Pellé advocate for a standing and modern Czechoslovak army that could operate even outside of the Czechoslovak territory in coordination with the Allies. Why did he find the shape of the territory as unfavorable as “the political circumstances” (i.e. relationship with neighboring countries)?*

*Pellé expressed his pro-Czechoslovak attitude in the spring of 1920, when he decided responsibly to command at any cost the Czechoslovak army during the imminent Czechoslovak-Polish conflict over Teschen (Těšínsko). By doing so he was risking the disfavor of his superior – Marshal Ferdinand Foch, as well as the entire French government. At last, the conflict was resolved diplomatically at the time when Poland fought for its own existence after the Soviet army pushed the Polish army all the way to Warsaw. Based on the final decision, the Karviná region and the Košice-Bohumín railway was incorporated into the Czechoslovak territory in July of 1920.*

DOC 14: Pellé to Marshal Foch about the Eventuality of a Czech-Polish Conflict, May 23, 1920

Even though a Czech-Polish conflict might seem unlikely to you, (...) its possibility is increasingly occupying the government and the public opinion... Personally, I have decided to – in the extreme case – make use of the presented opportunity [of French officers choosing to serve at their own risk in the service of a foreign country, after asking their French superiors for vacation] and in the case of conflict remain in the service of the Czechoslovak army.

Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 180. (Original Source: SHAT 7N 3103).

DOC 15: Marshal Foch to General Pellé, June 12, 1920

In the case of a Czech-Polish conflict, the French government would not be able to allow (...) the officers of the French mission to be entitled (while on a vacation leave) to lead Czechoslovakia's (our ally) military operations against Poland (our ally). Should such conflict occur, it seems that the only solution would be – on the contrary – the simultaneous withdrawal of our military mission from both Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Source: BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 180. (Original source: SHAT 7N 3103).

- *Which option did Pellé choose in the case of war between Czechoslovakia and Poland? What was he risking?*
  
- *Why didn't Marshal Foch approve Pellé's loophole in the military service law? What did he suggest instead?*
  
- *After learning about the crisis situation in the Czechoslovak officer corps, think about the possible consequences of a withdrawal of the French mission, i.e. most top officers, from Czechoslovakia just before the outbreak of an imminent war.*



## V. Two Homelands: “Mother and Daughter” and a Wedding

*As Chief of Staff, General Pellé led the French mission in Czechoslovakia since the beginning of 1919 until the end of 1920, i.e. for almost two years. As a soldier and diplomat, he fully understood his unique position in Czechoslovakia: that of an intermediary between the Czechoslovak President (the Minister of National Defense) and the French military command (the French government and Marshal Foch). Several times, Pellé slightly overstepped his competences in Czechoslovakia’s favor, or more precisely in his effort to build for France and its military mission a good reputation in the Czechoslovak public’s mind. He also had personal reasons for this: after his arrival to Prague he met Jarmila Braunerová, whom he married in 1921.*

*Pellé celebrated a double triumph in Czechoslovakia: the first one after the defense of the Slovak border in the war with Hungary (June 1919) and the second one after the settlement of the Teschen conflict (July 1920), where he was personally involved to the extent that he risked a dispute with the French General Staff. At that time, Pellé was “doing magic”: thanks to the Teschen crisis he succeeded in pushing through a Defense Act that would guarantee a permanent corps of officers of the Czechoslovak army with a set number of soldiers, i.e. regularly replaced conscripts. On the basis of this law was established the first Czechoslovak military academy<sup>3</sup>, inaugurated in October of 1920 with the goal to train domestic high-ranking officers. Despite the volatile nature of politics of the French governments towards Czechoslovakia (in 1920, a change of course in response to the Bolshevik peril), Pellé stood firmly behind his opinion that Czechoslovakia must be a key partner for the Allies in Central Europe.*

*DOC 16: Pellé Was Present during the Vote for Defense Act in the Czechoslovak Parliament, March 19, 1920; Discourse by František Udržal<sup>4</sup>*

I consider it my duty to thank warmly our Chief of Staff, General Pellé, the great son of our sister republic France, and the spiritual architect of our armed forces and the proposal of the government bill.

... A great soldier is certainly an enemy of long speeches...and if he could understand well, if he had already mastered our language, he would correct me and say that he is not a friend of the Czech nation, but rather that he sincerely and wholeheartedly feels to be a Czechoslovak, as he tends to say.

Source: Stenographic Reports from Meetings of the National Czechoslovak Assembly, Volume IV, Meeting 132 (*Těsnopisné zprávy o schůzích Národního shromáždění československého, svazek IV, 132. schůze*), Praha: PSPČR, 1920, p. 3957.

- *What title does the deputy František Udržal use to describe Pellé in connection with “our armed forces and the proposal of the government bill”?*

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<sup>3</sup> It was founded in Hranice, where it de facto continued the activity of the Imperial-Royal Military Academy.

<sup>4</sup> František Udržal was until the end of the Great War a deputy of the Austrian Imperial Council and later of the Czechoslovak Parliament. Between 1921 and 1925, he served as Minister of Defense and from 1929–1932 as the Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia.

- What does Udržal tell us about Pellé's relationship towards Czechoslovakia? What are Pellé's feelings?

DOC 17: A Thank You Letter from the Participants of the First Course of Higher Officers Addressed to General Pellé

*vzbudila Vaše věra slova v nitru našem nejen nezměrnou důvěru, nýbrž sesílila i naši opravdovou lásku k Vám, k Vaším milým soudruhům a k velkému národu francouzskému.*

*Řádně přijmouti, pane generále, za svůj povznášející projev naše upřímné a srdečné díky a pevné ujištění, že budeme ve smyslu Vašich směrnic úsilovně pracovat pro čest a blaho naší máti Francie a její vděčné dcery Čecho-Slavie.*

*V Praze, dne 15. května 1919.*

...your kind words awakened within us immense confidence, but also strengthened our true love for you, for your beloved comrades and the great French nation.

For your uplifting discourse, Mr. General, please kindly accept our sincere and heartfelt thanks and a firm assurance that we will work hard according to your directives for the honor and welfare of our mother France and her grateful daughters Czechia-Slavia.

In Prague on May 15, 1919

Source: A Letter to Pellé from the Participants of the First Officers' Course, VHÚ, AM, PP.

- Pellé was evidently able to fill his soldiers with enthusiasm. Notice how the Czechoslovak officers express their loyalty to their General and how they describe France and their native country (!). Quote from the document.

Soon after his arrival in Prague, the old bachelor Pellé fell for Jarmila Braunerová (born 1889), the niece of Czech painter Zdenka Braunerová. Pellé – known for his sense of culture and art – frequented the circles around artists such as Mucha, Kupka, Švabinský, Mařatka, etc. The young Jára also belonged to these circles, where she charmed the company with her singing and her grace. By 1920 the relationship was a serious one. Pellé's wedding with Jára Braunerová took place in Prague in the spring of 1921, when Pellé had already been exempt from the service in Czechoslovakia and served as a negotiator in Turkey. A few months later their daughter Maryška was born.

DOC 18: Jarmila Braunerová around 1920



Source: Young Jarmila Braunerová, VHÚ, AM, PP.

You will help me with your charm and all the qualities you possess. As the lady of the house and as a woman you will make the French residence pleasant and admired.

Source: SANDIFORD-PELLE, I. Op. cit., p. 157.

- *Based on the photograph and on the text in DOC 17, describe how did Pellé imagine the role of his future wife, Jára.*

DOC 19: The Wedding of Maurice Pellé and Jára Braunerová



Source: The Wedding of Maurice Pellé a Jára Braunerová, VHÚ, AM, PP.

- *From the text in the box find out when and where the wedding took place. How old were the groom and the bride?*
- *Do you know any other couple with a similar age difference? Do you know any mixed (international) married couple? What can be the advantages and disadvantages of such marriages? Discuss with your classmates.*

*In December of 1920, the French government summoned Pellé to Paris, where he was told that by the end of the year and in agreement with the Czechoslovak government, he should resign from his position of the Chief of General Staff. It seems that in the eyes of the French government our General proved to be perhaps too fond of the Czechoslovak environment, and therefore needed a change. Moreover, he would face a difficult task as the French negotiator in Turkey (1921-1923), with whom a peace treaty had not been achieved yet. It did not occur until 1923 in Lausanne, Switzerland, where Pellé was one of the signatories.*

*DOC 20: A Farewell Celebration Organized by E. Beneš at the Occasion of Pellé's Departure from Czechoslovakia, December 30, 1920*

When [Beneš] spoke about the relations between France and Czechoslovakia, he aptly pointed out that the partnership must be based on friendship and consensus of opinion, which Pellé personified. The Minister of National Defense, General Husák, stated effectively: "The task of soldiers is to conquer... You conquered something that is very rare in a General's career. You conquered the soul of a nation".

Source: Srov. BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 199.

- *Recall what was Eduard Beneš's position in the Czechoslovak government in the 1920's.*
- *Based on DOC 19, how did Beneš describe Pellé's role in the French-Czechoslovak relations?*
- *According to General Husák, Pellé succeeded in conquering something very "precious". What was it? How do you interpret this symbolism? (Compare with the texts you read previously.)*

*DOC 21: Pellé's Last Salutation to the Czechoslovak Soldiers Proclaimed in Czech before His Departure for Paris, January 1, 1921.*

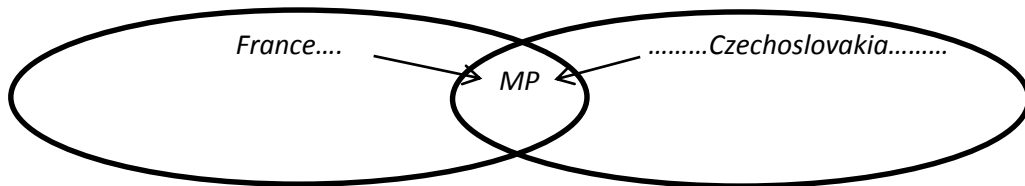
It was an honor for me to be your General... Your homeland became my second homeland... Long Live the Czechoslovak Republic! Long Live President Masaryk! Salute, brothers!

Source: Srov. BŘACH, R. Op. cit., p. 199.

- What expression does Pellé use to describe his feelings towards Czechoslovakia? What does that tell us?

## VI. Summary

- Based on the diagrams (see below) explain what two **countries** influenced Maurice Pellé. In each diagram write the names of at least two historical **figures** under whose command Pellé served. Explain why is Pellé symbolized by the intersection of the diagrams.



In each column of the table below list at least three attributes and two places of operation or – more specifically – battlefields that represent General Pellé (some of these attributes might be used in both columns).

Soldier	Diplomat

- Think about and write down why was Pellé the best candidate for the head of the French mission in Czechoslovakia (hint: a professional, linguistic, moral point of view).
- Based on the knowledge you have gained about General Pellé, write a short essay proving the truthfulness of his words: “Your homeland has become my second homeland... Long Live the Czechoslovak Republic!”

### Maurice Pellé (Douai 1863 – Toulon 1924)

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