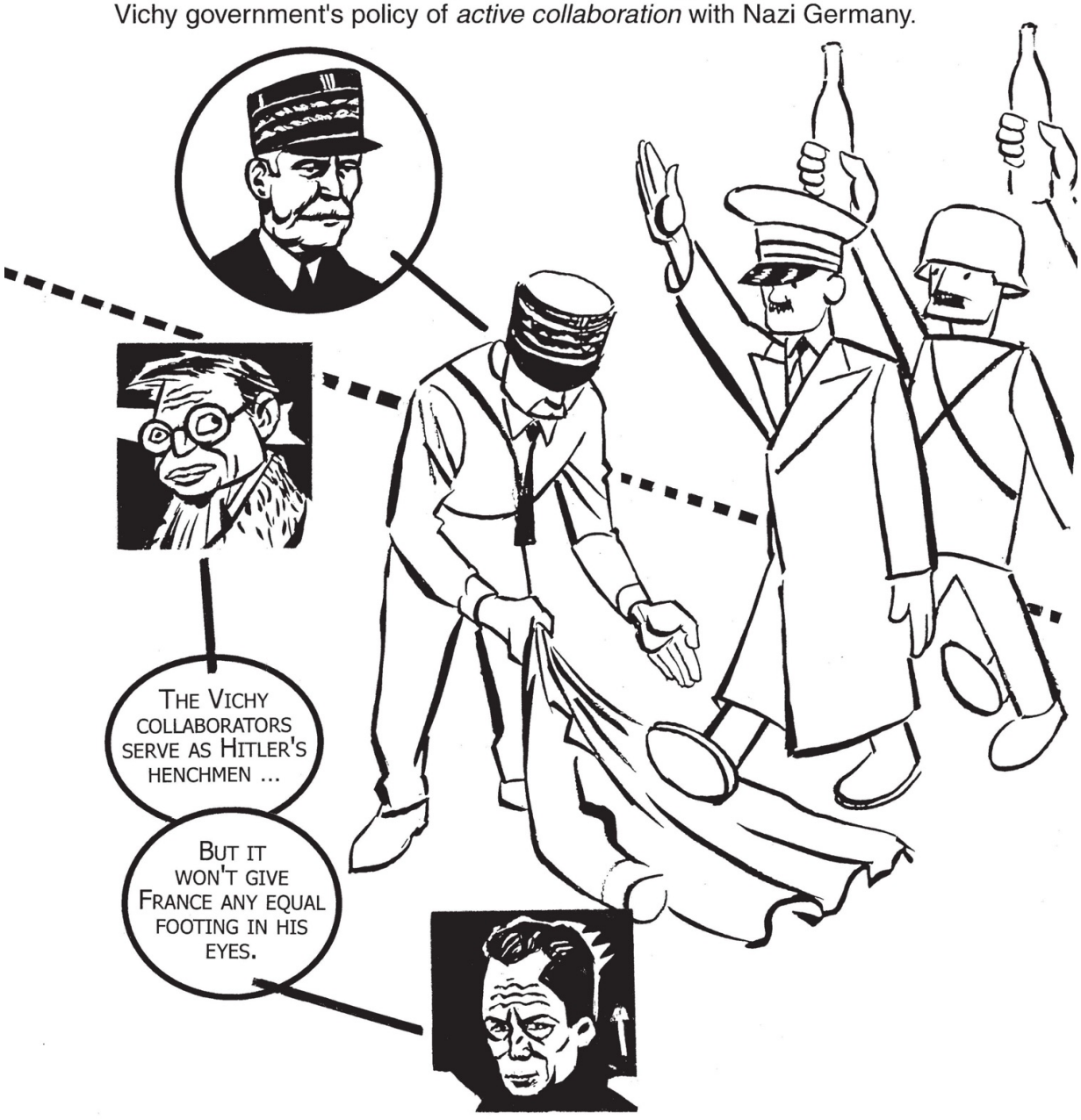
Vichy water into blood

France surrendered to the German invasion after only six weeks' fighting. Without allies – Britain unprepared for war, America neutral, and Hitler now master of Europe – there was no option. On 21 June 1940, **Marshal Philippe Pétain** (1856-1951) signed an armistice which divided France into two zones – one controlled by the Germans, the other "non-occupied", governed from the spa town of Vichy, famous for its curative waters. Political compromise is one thing, quite another was the Vichy government's policy of *active collaboration* with Nazi Germany.



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