

Dr. René Quenouille

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René Quenouille was born on 6 December 1884 in Sarlat-la-Canéda in France. After studying medicine, he opened a radiologist's practice in Villeneuve-Saint-Georges near Paris in 1925. Quenouille was a member of the Communist Party. In 1935, he became deputy mayor of Villeneuve-Saint-Georges. As a local politician, Quenouille was particularly concerned with reforming the municipal health services.

After the German occupation of France, René Quenouille and his wife Yvonne joined the Patriam Recuperare resistance group, whose members helped Allied paratroopers escape to unoccupied southern France. On 3 March 1943, René and Yvonne Quenouille and two of their daughters were arrested by the Gestapo. The women were soon released again, but René Quenouille was taken to the Fresnes prison near Paris and was initially sentenced to death. However, on 16 October 1943, the SS deported him to the Mauthausen concentration camp in Upper Austria, where he had to work as a prisoner doctor. Former prisoners later remembered that he helped French and Soviet prisoners in particular. On 17 July 1944, he was transferred to the Neuengamme concentration camp, where he was in charge of the radiology department at the sickbay. When the 20 children arrived at Neuengamme, Quenouille was charged with their medical care.

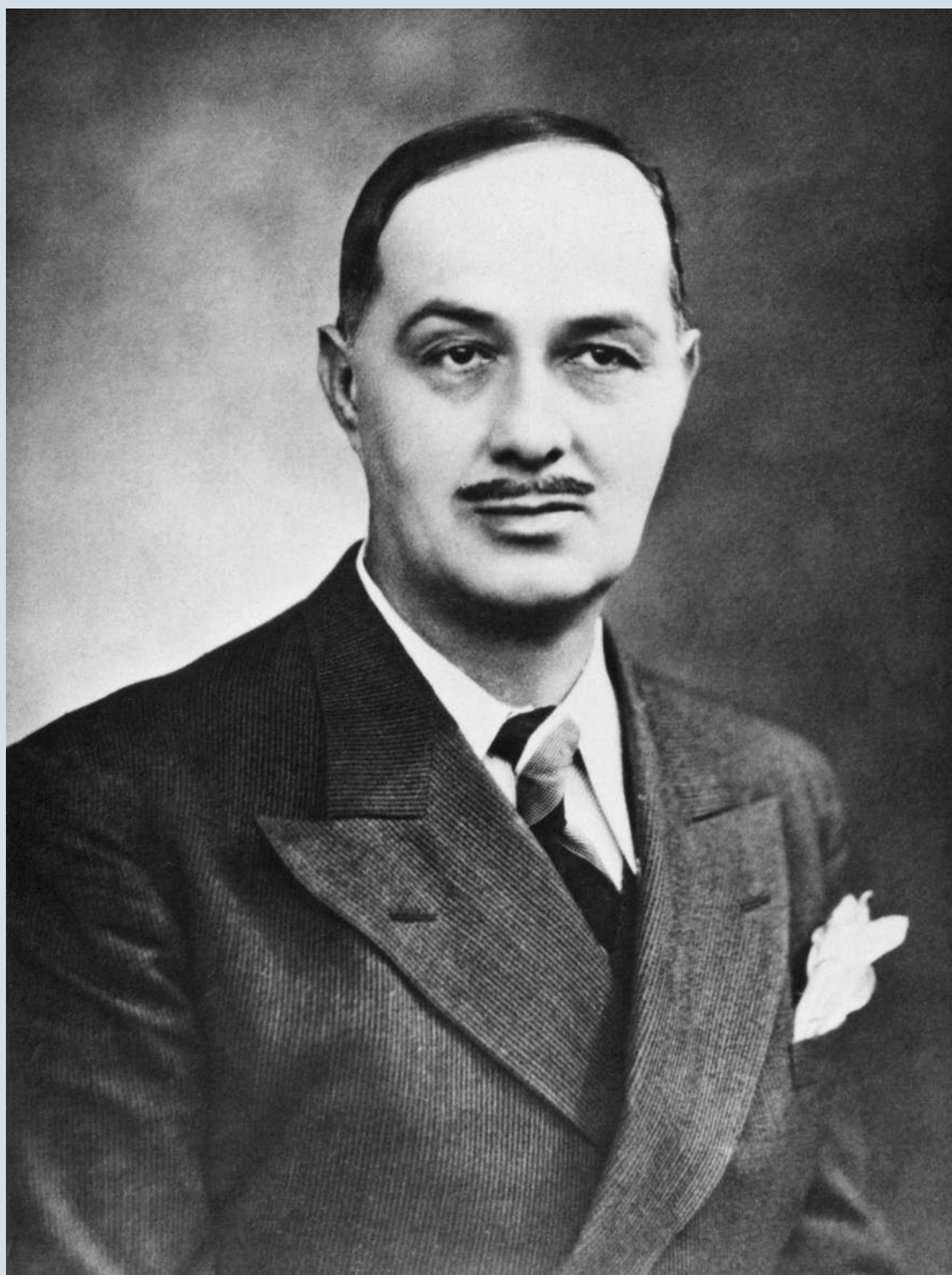
In 1980, a day-care centre was named after him in Villeneuve-Saint-Georges.

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René Quenouille, undated.

In late 1944, René Quenouille showed the French Neuengamme prisoner Pierre Veyssière around the “Heißmeyer special department” despite a strict ban on communication. Veyssière later reported Quenouille had said to him then: “The only thing I wanted in bringing you here was to make sure you see the children so that one day you can testify to their existence and to the reality of the experiments. If I don’t come back, there has to be somebody who knows about these things and is able to testify when the moment has come.”

Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial, 1995-1166



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René and Yvonne Quenouille, undated.

*Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial,
1995-1003*



