

REMARKS OF WILLIAM J. CASEY

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WILLIAM J. CASEY: I guess I'm here for the same reason the rest of you history buffs are here. I put this under the category of recreation. I can't talk about secret matters, and this isn't very secret anymore.

In World War II, I guess we all know, secret armies were organized to fight behind enemy lines in a great many countries: France, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Greece, Norway, Italy, Russia, Burman, China, Thailand, Holland, Denmark, to name a round dozen. And there are a lot of good books describing these undertakings, and two excellent books, fairly recently published, surveying the whole range of resistance activity in Europe.

Guerrilla movements in Yugoslavia, Greece and Albania were a major -- and Albania was a major factor in keeping some 40 German, Bulgarian, Italian, Croatian divisions tied up in Southeast Asia -- Southeast Europe far from the arena of decision, where they could have been much more useful and threatening elsewhere. And resistance armies in Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium tied up other German forces and delayed their movement to reinforce the fighting in France.

In these comments this evening, I will confine myself primarily to the French resistance, because I know something about that from firsthand experience and because it did play the largest role in support of American forces.

When Great Britain found itself alone, its ground weapons and much of its army left behind on the Continent, it could only carry on a war of attrition on the economy and the morale of the enemy, the victorious Germans, using the only weapon it had left: the Royal Navy to blockade, the Royal Air Force to bomb, and the people of occupied Europe to sabotage and undermine.

To do this, Churchill created the Special Operation Executive, known as SOE, and issued the memorable order, "Set Europe ablaze." That proved to be easier said than done.

There were many brave men ready to become commandos, many brave Europeans ready to risk their lives to inflict damage on the conqueror and to redeem the national pride and honor. The Europeans, in large, cheered them on, until they discovered what the occupier could and would do in reprisal, like wipe out an entire village, in Norway, in Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere.

That turned the SOE and the resistance groups that sprang up all over Europe largely away from exploits of one-shot sabotage and hit-and-run raids towards long, careful, slow

organizing, training and equipping of special groups and networks of people to get intelligence, spread propaganda, and do quiet and difficult-to-detect sabotage, and developing paramilitary units capable of striking when the time came. A long, slow process, some three to four years of building, building skills, support structures, training capabilities, organization and relationships set in.

There were three separate, loosely-tied-together organizational focal points which guided and supported this process from outside France. There was the SOE, the Free French in London and Algiers, and, during the last two years of the war, the OSS from Washington, London and Algiers.

Inside France, there were five principal strands from which separately-led and frequently rival resistance forces developed. There were indigenous religious groups which sprang up all over France, and gradually consolidated into some half a dozen movements, more or less focused in particular regions of the country. Some in the South, some in the North, some in the East, and so on.

When the Germans attacked Russia in 1941, French Communist and Far Left groups, which had largely supported the occupiers and General Petain's policy of collaboration, suddenly went into resistance and began to form their own units.

And SOE and General de Gaulle's intelligence and action service, known as BCRA, separately, during this period of time, were sending organizers and radio operators all over France to recruit resistance groups, provide them with communications, training and weapons.

Finally, when the occupiers imposed a labor draft, thousands of young men all over France left their homes in the cities, primarily, to hide in the hills and the forests -- this is where the word maquis came from -- and ultimately found themselves -- formed themselves into military units, seeking arms from London directly -- also one of the earlier resistance networks.

These five disparate intertwined elements were the principal actors when the Americans of OSS arrived on the scene in London and Algiers late in '42 and early in '43. Their [unintelligible] senior partners of SOE and the Free French had been in business for some four years and had become proficient and competent in sending organizers and saboteurs into France and keeping them there. They performed sabotage jobs, established organizers and communications, built up caches of weapons, organized resistance bands and networks of resistance bands.

But using these scattered forces in support of large-scale military operation in France was quite a new problem. It had to be worked out with the military planners and commanders, skeptical about the value of resistance forces. It was something of a vicious circle. We had to satisfy ourselves about the reliability of these forces and persuade the arriving American military to provide the plans and the equipment that they would require to have any value at all. And this was quite a process.

Military commanders coming over from the United States were schooled and geared to secure their objectives by the application of overwhelming firepower. And they believed they had it or that it was about to arrive. For the most part, they knew little, and cared less, about French resistance or guerrilla warfare. For the generals at SHAEF, in the supreme command, the French resistance might be as good and as important as the special SOE and SOS claimed it was. On the other hand, it might be a chimera and not materialize in a crunch.

Certainly there were thousands of Frenchmen eager to fight, as many as 150,000, by some estimates. But they had to be organized, armed and directed. Could this still nascent and loosely-knit resistance movement become a cohesive striking force sufficiently under our command and control to make a military contribution to the invasion? To answer that question in the affirmative required something of an act of faith.

OSS officers, SOE officers on Grosevenor Street and Baker Street in London who had worked with General Passey (?), who commanded de Gaulle's resistance and intelligence forces and who had dealt with the men coming and going, to and fro, in and out of France, were willing to make that act of faith. But selling the idea to our generals and our planners wasn't easy. And their distrust showed up dramatically in the paucity of arms and equipment that they are willing to spare and drop to the maquis and other French resistance groups.

Arms deliveries to those areas of France where the invasion was planned had a lower priority at the end of 1943 than the airlift to Yugoslav and Italian partisans.

Strangely, the Germans held the resistance in much higher regard than our own generals did. Of course, they had reason to, having lived cheek-to-jowl with this resistance for four years, watching it grow from a few disgruntled groups to a swelling national movement.

As early as October of 1943, Field Marshal von Rundstedt wrote a perceptive analysis of the resistance potential. He said, "The aims of the resistance movement and of the British

organization working with them is to set the stage for action against the rear of the German army, to coincide with the Allied landings. Their most urgent task will be to attack our lines of communication with maximum force. Such is the danger inside the country, and it may have a very unfortunate effect on the course of the battle. We could undoubtedly combat the resistance movement effectively, but this will deplete our available forces, and thus strengthen the position of British and American troops."

We couldn't have explained it better ourselves.

We had only to look at the map of resistance forces in France pinned in our situation room on the fourth floor of Grosvenor Street to see the potential that Field Marshal von Rundstedt discerned. Strong resistance forces threatened, they were near and around virtually all the major communication lines linking German troops in France with the Reich and with each other. The resistance had built up strongholds in the mountains of the Hauts Savoy near the Swiss and Italian borders, and from there could hack at lines -- at links between Germany and the French Mediterranean coast. The troops defending the Bay of Biscay, on the other side, were vulnerable to attacks on their lines to units stationed along the Channel coast. And Germany Army Group B had its First Army Headquarters in Bordeaux, and the other group defending the South of France were headquartered in Marseilles. And charged with defending the area between these two coastal cities, these army groups were caught in a pincer between the resistance forces in the North in the Massif Central in the heart of France and to the South in the Pyrenees. They also had the potential for squeezing the Toulouse-Carcassonne Gap, which was the main communication line between the West and the Southeast.

Dijon, Lyon, Grenoble, Avignon, Limoges were studded with resistance outposts. Clermont-Ferrand was a resistance center for the whole heart of France, the Massif Central. The Rhone River, the major German traffic artery in Southeastern France, was thus threatened from two sides.

And finally, the resistance in the Massif Central and in the Norvan (?) over in Burgundy could harass any troops moving from the South and East to beef up the defenders on the invasion coast at Normandy. That was a rail line from the South over to the East-West lines that would link up the German border and Paris and Normandy and Brittany.

And while underground activities were more complicated in the heavily-populated and thickly-policed Northern cities and the surrounding of the city, the resistance there was a force which the Germans also had to reckon with.

So we could see great possibilities on these maps. And there no end of plans to exploit them.

While how much support to give resistance forces and just how to use them was widely and intensely debated, time was running out and it was necessary to get on with organizing the radios in place, supplying them with weapons and ammunition, and shaping up command and control arrangements if any plan was to be implemented at all. And this required a huge organizational effort. There had been -- it's true there had been communications channels and early networks of resistance cells established. But to make them equal to the tasks that were being envisaged for them, it was necessary to build them up, to equip them, and, above all, to figure how to direct them and achieve a communications between the Allied forces which were about to go into France and these scattered units of different sizes and efficiency located in these strategic areas of France.

The debate about whether to support the resistance was kind of slowly resolved in the affirmative. And although Churchill's forceful action taken in February of 1944 to, with a stroke of the pen, increase the number of planes and the amount of supplies made available to achieve this buildup gave France first priority, the debate on how to use this force continued.

French generals in London and Algiers kept pushing something they called Plan Vidal, named after a general, the commander of the secret army, a nom de guerre. This plan called for the seizure of large areas in the heart of France that had the physical geography to help their defense. Once seized, these outposts would give the Allies sort of ports of entries for -- to which airborne troops and supplies could be brought. And this would build up a force of French and Allied soldiers, who would then strike at the enemy's rear.

Well, the military, and I guess most of us, thought this plan was too bold and too risky. And despite the formal SHAEF rejection of this plan in February, the notion lingered on and the French never really gave it up. And later on, resistance groups in the Alpine areas and in the Massif Central actually tried to put this into operation, with fairly disastrous results.

Other people concerned with this and thinking about what to do and how to use this force argued forcefully that resistance units should be scattered around in redoubts of resistance in those parts of France geographically most suited for large-scale military operation. This was kind of a wider dispersion than the Plan Vidal I've just commented on. The idea as that in these redoubts, maquis could be organized and trained and gotten ready for sabotage and guerrilla operations behind enemy lines.

For the professionals, Colonel Passey in London, Jacques Soustelle in Algiers, who ran the Free French resistance activity, these central garrisons and redoubt concepts were hopelessly romantic. They counseled more sophisticated concepts of guerrilla war. Hit-and-run tactics should be coordinated into an overall plan of action to support a military sweep across France. Such a sweep would be necessary to liberate France, they believed; but it should be carried out in such a way as to limit reprisals and conserve strength for future action, not to create any large targets, moving fluid and coordinated forces.

Interestingly enough, de Gaulle himself advanced a fourth, even broader concept, which actually, in the playing, came closest to the reality. All the disparate resistance elements inside France, in his concept, would simply fuse into an army of shadows to form a single French army. And in an aimless, as though -- it reminds me of Adam Smith's mystical hand. It just seemed to develop by the initiative of the local commanders, with a broad guidance and communication control from army headquarters, from the Central Command in London, which I'll describe in a moment. And the attraction, the real guiding force were the emergence of targets, targets of opportunity, things that arose to be done as the hostilities advanced.

Perhaps the most ambitious, and finally the most rewarding, of all this operational planning was something called the Plan Vert, because it was typed on green paper. It was the railroad plan, featuring maps and drawings prepared by draftsmen in and out of France, listing some 800 missions against the French railways, all spelled out in detail. And the centerpiece was a series of simultaneous rail cuts designed to prevent designated German units from moving toward the front lines. And these rail disruptions were to be maintained while the cross-Channel Allied buildup went forward.

That was really the central focal point which animated all this activity at the -- when the signal was given, when the landing was to occur.

In a backup plan for sabotaging the rails, the French Ministry of Roads and Bridges in the Vichy government, still functioning, you'll remember, developed something called Plan Tortoise, designed to delay moving up German reinforcements on the roads by cutting highways and blowing up bridges. The specific focus of this plan being the German armor.

And then the French Post and Telegraph Service provided London with a study of underground telephone and telegraph lines the Germans used. And plans were included for making cuts that would interrupt these communications between front lines and headquarters in the rear. And this was particularly important

because cutting these lines, these telephone lines, cable and overhead, would force the Germans to take to the air, communicate military communications between headquarters by radio, where we had the ability to pick up and read their messages in England.

So this was really the kind of basic, fundamental plan that played the primary role in guiding the early activities of the resistance during the hostilities.

And then, while that was going on, communication and command arrangements with the resistance moved to the front and center of concern. The ability to use these forces depended on achieving some kind of command and control capability.

Resistance leaders operating behind the lines and officers commanding invading troops would have to be able to communicate quickly and surely if the operations were to mesh at all. Radio contact alone could not accomplish this. We needed men in Allied uniforms to advise the resistance on Allied needs, and specialists attached to the invading armies who understood the resistance and its capabilities to advise Allied commanders on a day-to-day basis on what the French forces on the other side of the line could deliver. And we had some 90 tough, confident, hell-for-leather volunteers, American officers, French officers and British officers, being trained for that task, recruited from airborne and infantry training camps in the States, and by the French and British from similar sources. A very mixed lot: lawyers, journalists, teachers, West Pointers, bankers, and so on.

With about the same number of British and Frenchmen, they were toughened up in Scotland, given parachute training, and instructed in the general art of guerrilla warfare. They were encouraged to marry themselves into three-man teams, selecting the partners on whom their life might depend.

This concept of putting men in uniform behind the battle lines was a novel one, and probably one of the most effective of the war, the behind-the-lines war. They were to go in teams of three, one French officer, a British or American officer, and a radio operator. One was appointed the leader, another as deputy, and the third being the radio operator.

Sending them in uniform had a double purpose. Showing the flag would boost the hopes and morale of the resistance forces as the word went around France that the Allies had arrived in uniform. In addition, the uniform offered some protection against reprisals if captured. Hitler, the Gestapo, and the Vichy Militia paid little heed to these niceties of war, in terms of the Geneva Convention. Indeed, Hitler had issued orders to shoot anyone caught behind the lines, in uniform or

not. But the German soldiers, the German armies, I guess, adopted an attitude of enlightened self-interest. As long as they adhered to the rudiments of the Geneva Convention, chances were the Allies would too, they figured. Thus the uniform did offer some protection to volunteers, inexperienced in clandestine work and speaking, at best, a barely passable French that would give them away as quickly as their uniforms.

Hopefully, however, these jedbirds (?) would reach the shelter of the resistance group they were to advise safely and be protected there.

All in all, some 300 volunteers were organized into 93 teams, which were all dispatched into France either before -- or a few of them before, most of them after D-Day.

Now, halfway between these jedbirds, these little command and control teams, we'll call them, think of them as, and the regular invasion troops were what we called OSS operational groups and British SAS detachments. These units were larger, more heavily equipped. Their job was more clandestine -- or rather, it was less clandestine and more operational. Armed with automatic rifles, machine guns, bazookas, and explosive charges, they were sent in to strengthen particular maquis units fighting the Germans and to block or divert enemy forces. Our OGs were made up of 15 French-speaking men, and we had 14 of these groups ready by D-Day.

The British had some 2000 soldiers in their SAS detachments, and they were operated in somewhat larger units, though their aim and purpose was essentially similar.

A further link in this chain of command and control were officers and enlisted men trained in the capabilities of the resistance forces, assigned as staff detachments to the invading armies. These were to be the advisers to the staff, usually attached to the G3 and working with the G3 in the army and other units, to advise them on how they could mesh the resistance elements, where they were, what their strength was, and how they might be used to support and back up and pave the way for assignments given to regular military forces.

These too, these staff units had radio links directly to OSS and SOE stations in England. There six of these, in all, that served the European resistance -- as the European resistance central nervous system. And these special units were in direct contact with resistance forces through the London stations, to whom the jedbirds and the other units that had been established over this preparatory course of three and four years had radio communications.

It worked this way: The special force would radio London asking for particulars about a resistance unit operating in their sector. They relay instructions on what the area commander wanted the resistance units to do, and receive messages from the French underground forces about their position, activity, and capabilities.

It was somewhat clumsy in concept and primitive in execution, but this network did function with a precision we had no reason to expect.

So, the headquarters organizations were wrapped together. First SOE and OSS were merged into something called Special Force Headquarters. And then, some weeks later, this Special Force Headquarters was put together in an organization called EMFFI (?), which were the French initials for General Staff, French Forces of the Interior, blending the French and the British, Anglo-Saxon elements under General Koenig (?), a French general, in overall command of all resistance activities and forces inside and outside of France. And by this steady process of mergers and melding, something like General de Gaulle's concept of armies, units and small forces in the shadows all around France, about melding into a French interior army, did emerge.

As the invasion approached, the organizational confusion was gradually being overcome, or at least everybody learned to live with it.

Those inside France disposed to follow de Gaulle would take Koenig's orders, while those distrustful of outside direction would gravitate to the Communist-led Frank Tirers (?), French workers. This was the strongest resistance force not integrated, which remained independent and didn't integrate with the French Force of the Interior.

Apart from this split, with its postwar political overtones, there was a drawing together of the internal resistance, as the SOE organizers tended to follow their followers, in effect, into full support of de Gaulle. And virtually all the networks inside France, as well as those organized under the direction of SOE and Free French from London and Algiers, became part of this what we call the French Force of the Interior.

During this sort of countdown period to the landings, precise acts of sabotage were carried out all over France. The resistance hit factories turning out war material, bridges, canals, railways, ammunition dumps, and communication lines. Supplies dropped from the skies included much more sophisticated weapons: bazookas, mortars, anti-tank mines, incendiaries and

grenades. Hundreds of tons, in all.

And the long debate on how far to trust the underground, how much to use the FFI was really resolved as much by the course of events as by any conscious decision in London. They were to be part of the battle flow, but with strict Allied controls. FFI troops would attack specific targets or German units, depending on the judgments of the Allied military commander on the scene.

As army headquarters were established on the Continent, the control tended to shift from London to those headquarters, in keeping with their interests and the resistance units directly in their line of advance.

The concept back in London was that guerrilla warfare was to be leashed until it could be coordinated with the military offensive. [Unintelligible] were trained to act at precise times in specific places to help an approaching Allied force. Anything more, if you didn't delay the action until an Allied military force was nearby and had a chance of getting there reasonably quickly, it was agreed in London in the advanced planning, this would expose resistance groups to German retaliation, and the French units would be chewed up one-by-one before they could make their most effective contribution, which we felt would be in direct support of approaching Allied forces.

And right up till the end of May, Americans, British and French had accepted as dogma that resistance forces should lay low until specifically ordered in action. But like so much dogma, in the hectic weeks that were the countdown to D-Day, it would be subject to sudden and unexpected change. In those last weeks before the landings, the wireless reports received in London in increasing profusion created a growing sense of control over large areas of France. Our agents would find themselves surrounded by a large group of people as they landed. We'd be dropping these fellows in by moonlight. They'd be landing with fires burning, with autos on hand to drive them to villages and smaller towns under maquis control. And it was quite an open thing in those closing weeks before the landings.

Supply depots and hospitals for resistance fighters were functioning. And in large parts of France, German forces kept to the large roads and the big towns because they found the secondary roads too dangerous. And by sticking to them, it was possible to drive long distances through rural France with impunity, by sticking to the secondary roads.

Our planes were parachuting almost a hundred tons of arms and ammunition a week, ten times what we had been doing only two months earlier. The RAF was dropping even more. And still more came from Algiers.

Through radio set -- anybody who had a radio set in contact with London or Algiers had a great source of power in dealing with the resistance factions and their leaders, all of whom were looking for weapons and food and clothing and other supplies. And the fellow we'd given a radio set there to who could call down one of those planes and get a drop had a lot to say about what those resistance elements did.

So, locally, it was the fellow who had the radio set and who could call down the planes and supplies who had a lot to say about immediate command and control behind the lines. A single radio set could provide a center of communications for groups of hundreds, and even thousands, of resistance fighters extending over hundreds of miles of winding roads.

As our leaders would come in, find that fellow with the radio set, and request arms and propose to accept missions of destruction, interdiction or preservation. The radio would give organizers sent into France the clout to insist that resistance leaders avoid pitched battles, split their forces into small units to hit and run, so the German forces which were in rather large groups, to protect themselves, scoured the countryside and reinforcing the bridgehead and later on retreating, would be ambushed and harried, yet find nothing to fight when they turned to fight.

The French were very jealous of their authority and control. But the saving grace was that General Koenig was a very sensible man who had done a lot of fighting alongside the Allies. And in spite of a certain amount of acrimony and apparent total confusion, things would work out better than we had any right to expect. Any looseness and laxity in responding to requests would be noticed in the field, but this would be more than made up by the zeal and the initiative and the ingenuity of resistance unleashed.

Against this kind of an edgy, uncertain background...

[Cassette turned]

...policy for the use of French resistance upside-down. We were told that instead of signaling the resistance to rise unit-by-unit and join the fighting on a gradual as-needed basis, all the action signals to resistance groups in every corner of France would be sent out simultaneously. A complete switch. A year's worth of careful planning and analysis were to be thrown out the window. And the conclusions about not exposing the FFI to Nazi resistance until Allied forces were close enough to help were, almost overnight, abandoned.

The first reaction to this new order was one of gloom and foreboding. [Unintelligible] plan that could touch off a

national uprising. The Germans would have little trouble drowning this revolt in a bloodbath, with grave long-term political consequences, we thought.

And finally, and perhaps most important, our troops moving across France would be deprived of military support from the FFI if it were wiped out in those first weeks.

Colonel Bruce went to argue this out with General Bedell Smith, Ike's chief of staff. No avail. The decision was firm. Eisenhower wanted all the help he could get when he needed it the most, at the time of the landing.

There were suggestions that the French really favored a general call-out, primarily for political reasons. Others thought -- rightly, as it turned out -- that too many Frenchmen were too eager to smash the hated occupier to keep them down. Resistance would inevitably flash spontaneously almost everywhere, and a policy of closely coordinated control was futile. This was one line of argument.

Still others argued that the greatest contribution the resistance could make was to stretch German forces in France as a whole to the utmost. A sudden surge of resistance nationwide, they said, was the best way to achieve that goal.

And a final argument, and one that seemed to have carried the most weight, contended that only a general uprising could keep the Germans confused about the site of the actual landing, and thus safeguard the deception plan, in which a great deal of store was placed.

It cannot be stressed too much how much hopes of a successful invasion had been hung on that deception plan and how much it permeated the thinking at the Eisenhower level.

The issue in this argumentation about whether to stick to the original plan or to call them all out at once was really never in doubt. Eisenhower had made up his mind. The grand deception had to be protected. Our control over the French resistance was not that sure. We needed help on the beaches first. The future would have to be sacrificed to the present.

And so on June 1st, the first set of some 300 messages went out over the BBC alerting resistance all over France that the landings were to come that week and that they were to prepare for action. And the action messages on the night of June 5th triggered the rail, the wire cuts, the road and bridge destruction that had been targeted all over France. Some 950 cuts in French rail lines were made on June 5th and 6th. Some 600 locomotives were destroyed in ten weeks during June, July

and August of 1944. Trains and convoys carrying German troops and supplies to the bridgehead were delayed for days and weeks. Troops arrived at the front on bicycles and horse-drawn carts. German headquarters, with their telephone lines cut, had to communicate with radios, which our code-breakers read, with dramatic consequences.

Our greatest debt to them is for the delays of weeks or more which they imposed on one panzer division moving north from Toulouse, two from Poland, and two from the Russian front, as they crossed France to reinforce the Normandy beachhead. Instead of days, it took weeks to cover this territory. And we'll never know how many Allied soldiers owe their lives to these Frenchmen who interrupted the road and slowed down the road and rail traffic.

Meanwhile, in the mountainous part of France, even before D-day, large numbers of maquis, confident that the Allied landing would not be delayed much longer, were mobilizing to attack German occupying forces and garrisons. This went back to the plan sponsored by officers of the French army to create some kind of a redoubt within France as a base to which Allied troops could be sent by parachute and glider to join the attacking French forces who went in.

While this concept was never given the slightest encouragement in London, it did persist, and pitched battles occurred in the Vikal (?), at Lamouche (?) in the Massif Central, at St. Michel in Brittany, at the Plateau of Gruyere (?) in Eastern France near the Swiss border. These were an unfortunate and unnecessary waste of life and resources.

Only the hit-and-run operations and the protection of the flanks of these armies, this type of guerrilla actions, really paid off.

Normandy, jammed with troops coast-to-coast, was no place for an irregular force to fight. That had been foreseen, and the emphasis in this phase was on activating resistance forces 50 to 150 miles behind the front to slow down reinforcements, tie down garrisons, and harass German units from the rear. The first concentration, for this reasons, of the jedbirds was in Brittany and on both sides of the Loire.

As early as June 20, a message which looked even beyond this, a message addressed to General Eisenhower and passed down, gave a new shot in the arm to the supply of resistance forces. I'll read that message. It read, "The maquis has started open guerrilla warfare and is in temporary control of certain areas of Southern France. The Germans are reacting strongly with fully-armed troops. Every effort must be made t

o  
 supply the maquis at once with rifles, gren (?) guns, Piet (?) guns, mortars, and bazookas with ammunition, and whatever else is needed to prevent the collapse of the movement and to extend it.

"What is being done about this? Have you any difficulty in getting men to repack containers with the right sort of weapons? Could General Wilson help from North Africa?

"Pray, tell me if I can help you to accelerate action."

This little message was initialed "WSC," which stands for Winston Spencer Churchill. And those initials had a special magic. They got immediate action. A message went back from Eisenhower's chief of staff, Bedell Smith, and General Bull (?), his G3, to say, "We'll do anything we can to prevent the maquis in Southeastern France from being destroyed in detail by the German armed forces. A daylight sortie of 300 American bombers, escorted by fighters, will try to drop arms and other necessities to the Eastern maquis tomorrow, 22nd June."

Now, at that time, the operations map, the layout of where the resistance forces was showed six areas of [unintelligible resistance activity. They stretched across France from Brittany to the West, through the Haut-Vienne, Creuse and Correze provinces, really the Massif Central in the very center of France, through the Burgundy, south of the Dijon to the French Alps, and down to the hills beyond the Riviera. This was a belt of resistance forces, quite heavy concentrations, staged out, from Brittany, across France, across the east of the Rhone, and then down to the Riviera.

Some 13,000 -- 33,000 maquis had been mobilized in areas behind Brittany, only about half of them armed.

On June 25th, 180 B-17s took off to drop supplies to these target areas. Dubbed Operation Zebra, it was the first daylight mission, a precursor of many more to come. The arms drops had always been done at night, moonlight. But in the short June nights, we couldn't afford the cover of darkness, and had to risk flying during the day. This was done with large B-17s with fighter escort. And there were a whole series of these flights, one of them involving 340 planes carrying supplies, escorted by over 500 fighter planes. It took off from nine airfields on Bastille Day, July 14th in 1944, and dropped arms to the main resistance groups throughout this belt I've just tried to describe to you without the benefit of a map.

This buildup of supplies and the lift it gave resistance fighters paid off heavily during August and September, when resistance groups south of the Loire protected Patton's flank as he raced across France, ignoring his flank, leave the Air Force

and the resistance forces to cover it and to protect it from large German forces which were retreating and coming up from the South.

Then, east of the Rhone, these resistance forces, along the Route Napoleon, protected the flanks of General Patch's Seventh Army, as it marched up -- as it raced up from the Riviera landing fields -- landing beaches, where they'd arrived on August 15th, and got up as far as Grenoble in about nine days, compared to the 75 days that the operational plan had allocated to reach that far into France.

So there were two tremendous sweeps which -- where the resistance forces played a critical and valuable operational role in paving the way, guiding these forces and protecting their flanks.

Now, as Patton went across France, British and American armies broke out of Normandy and raced to the Belgian border. The port of Antwerp was the great prize there. And when Belgium was liberated in September, the Belgian secret army had prevented the Germans from carrying out orders to destroy that port. The port was handed over to the British armies intact.

One of the great foul-ups of command in World War II was a failure to cross the Albert Canal to seal off the German Fifteenth Army in its retreat from the Channel coast. And the result of this was that substantial elements of that army survived to defeat Montgomery's thrust to cross the Rhine at Arnhem in September. And then we had to sit until November to clear the approaches to Antwerp, with heavy losses, so that supplies could be brought in to the front up the shortest and fastest route.

The war would have lasted a great deal longer, still, if we had not been able to use the Antwerp port facilities in the late fall of 1944.

Compared to World War I, the Allied sweep through France was an enormous success in conserving blood and treasure. This was largely the result of a lot of ingenuity and resourcefulness and using a few hundred British, American and French officers to support and direct local resistance fighters and to fake a phantom army which kept 15 German divisions, which might have pushed us back into the Channel, sitting less than a hundred miles away, waiting for an attack which was never intended.

When it was all over, General Eisenhower said, "In no previous war, and in no other theater during this war, have resistance forces been so closely harnessed to the main military effort. I consider that the disruption of enemy rail and

communications, the harassing of German roadworks, and the continual and increasing strain placed on the German war economy and internal services throughout occupied Europe by the organized forces of the resistance played a very considerable part in our complete and final victory."

Since then, in Vietnam we forgot all that and took over a losing war from the locals, who were ready to fight for their homeland and might have won if intelligently supported and directed and if the external support provided the invaders had been effectively restricted.

And today, just to take this down to the present for a few minutes, we seek weak and friendly countries all over the world threatened by insurgent forces supplied and directed in much the same way and in much the same source as the victors in Vietnam were supplied and directed.

In the aftermath of Vietnam, the Soviet Union soon began to test whether the United States would resist foreign-provoked and -supported instability and insurgency elsewhere in the Third World. This turned out to be an easy, high-benefit -- low-cost, high-benefit operation, which enabled Moscow to deny involvement, to label these conflicts as internal, and to work self-righteously against outside interference. We've seen Soviet and proxy successes in the mid-to-late '70s in Angola, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Nicaragua, and elsewhere. And over the past several years, they've supported, directly or indirectly, radical regimes or insurgency in more than a dozen countries in every part of the Third World.

The United States and its friends have great difficulty in countering these insurgencies. It's much easier and much less expensive to support an insurgency than it is to resist one. It takes relatively few people and little support to disrupt the internal peace and the economic stability of a small country.

Recently I had cartographers prepare a map to show the Soviet presence and its various degrees of influence around the world. They colored in red on a map of the world those nations under a significant degree of Soviet influence. In 1982, close to 50 nations were in red. Ten years ago, on the same basis, only 25 nations would have been colored in red. In the ten years between 1972 and 1982, four nations have extricated themselves from the Soviet grasp -- Egypt, Somalia, Guinea, and Sudan. And some 25 nations have fallen under a significantly increased degree of Soviet influence or are facing an insurgency supported by the Soviets or their proxies.

So, we have in the world today hostilities in which outside forces support locals in fighting government armies.

They exist on both sides. I'd say there were 11 insurgencies going on in the world today where we see Cuban, Libyan, South Yemen, Soviet, Vietnamese proxies supporting insurgents with arms and leadership and training. In Afghanistan we see Afghan rebels getting outside weapons and guidance, Pakistan and others supporting -- giving the Soviet -- a hundred thousand Soviet troops a very hard time.

And the small and the weak countries in which insurgents can be fostered and developed to overthrow developed don't need and can't handle expensive and sophisticated weapons, for which virtually all of them clamor. What they need is light arms to defend themselves against externally-trained and -supported guerrillas, good intelligence, good police methods, good communications, training in small arms and small-unit actions, and the mobility to keep up with the hit-and-run tactics of the guerrilla forces.

Today, with a relatively few skilled officers and a tiny fraction of our military budget, we can, and in sometimes have been able to, introduce an element of stability into the Third World by helping small countries to develop these kind of skills that the French and other resistance forces in Europe had and used to fight the Germans so effectively.

I have about 20-odd minutes to take whatever questions and whatever elaboration you'd like me to afford to my remarks.

Are there any questions? Yes, in the back.

MAN: [Inaudible]

CASEY: Well, the French Communists' espionage and action organizations were in communication with Moscow, through Switzerland. I don't know to what degree they got marching orders. I think that they largely operated on their own. I think they were basically fighting the Germans.

But there were two features about this that I [unintelligible]. Waiting for the landings to come, the Gaullist forces, the Free French in London were very anxious to keep it cool, not to attack German headquarters, to assassinate German generals in the streets of Paris, or anywhere else. And those were the orders and that was the policy.

On the other hand, the leftist, Communist-led groups were very active in assassinating German officers and attacking headquarters and attacking office buildings in the cities. And they made it very clear that they didn't mind the reprisals. They thought the reprisals were a pretty good thing because it attracted more recruits, it inflamed the passions of the French,

and it won some kudos for this element of the resistance that was really fighting, while the other people were quietly waiting to fight at the right time.

So there was a conflict in policy. And I think that's pretty much -- I would attribute to the internal playing for position and the basic instincts of the different forces, though there was a conscious effort from London and Paris to keep the resistance forces that were under their control quiet, playing it quietly.

And the second thing is that -- and I can't prove this at this point in any great depth. But there was a strong perception, certainly among the British and among the French, Free French -- we Americans didn't care much. We just wanted to get the war over with and save as many lives as we could. We didn't think about those nuances. But the British and the French felt very keenly that the French forces were primarily interested in positioning themselves for a postwar struggle.

And de Gaulle, indeed, in the last couple of months, he tried to hold down the supply of arms because he felt a very high proportion of them would fall into the hands of the Communists, who would use them to fight him or seize control after the hostilities. And indeed, as -- we hoped to avoid Paris and the armies had hoped to circle Paris. And it was the Communist elements in Paris that forced an internal conflict that finally forced Eisenhower to send the forces in there to pacify the populace there.

So there was a difference between the two forces in their policies and their attitudes. The degree to which that was directed from Moscow, I would be inclined to minimize.

Any more? Walter?

MAN: Did you have any help, struggle, or assistance out of the national -- the Internal National Council, the Bideault's group or [unintelligible] before that? Did they give any help to you in London in giving [unintelligible] leadership within France?

CASEY: Well, they were very important. Actually, they were given that charter by the Gaullists, by General Passey, under de Gaulle. And they were at least as important as the groups that were organized by the SOE. And that was done. That was their assignment. They were in there and they were to develop supply plans.

In the drawing together of the FFI, which I described [unintelligible] detail, the regional military delegates -- there

were 36 of them of whom Chablan-Delmas and Bideault were prominent. And they did give leadership. And these local village leaders would look to them and take their guidance. And that kind of almost joined together in -- I described it as by some invisible hand. Well, these were at least two fingers of the invisible hand.

Back there.

MAN: In retrospect, how close do you think we might have come to a failure at D-Day or a much more stretched-out time in France. You mentioned how important it was to take Antwerp. We look back and we know what did happen. But how close do you think at times we might have fell on [unintelligible]?

CASEY: Well, I would say that, in my view, we could have been pushed back into the Channel in those first few weeks if Hitler hadn't been spooked into keeping that Fifteenth Army on the other side of the Seine. I think that would have been enough.

And then there were, you know, five panzer divisions that were delayed two weeks, two to three weeks in getting down to the bridgehead. That could have turned the tide. Who knows? I think that was one of the closest-run things.

Then the other thing. I think that if we had grabbed Antwerp and if we had -- if Eisenhower had made the decision to back either Montgomery or Patton, we could have -- might have gotten into Germany and brought the war to an end before the Germans had a chance to regroup, reorganize, and do an enormous recruiting job through September and October, picking up these 14-, 15-, 16-year-old kids, old men, and everything else, and forming hastily-thrown-together units to man the Siegfried Line. In August the Siegfried Line was unmanned and the field was wide open, or September.

If we had grabbed Antwerp properly, cleared the banks of the waterway going into Antwerp, you would have had a lot of additional supplies in there quickly, and you could have -- everybody thought the war was going to be over by December in September, October. October, it began to look tough.

And those were the two things where I think it could have made a difference.

Protecting Patton's flank, protecting Patch's flanks saved some times, saved some lives, but not of a war-winning or delaying value.

Yes, Professor.

MAN: ...ask my favorite question. Do you have any particular army commanders, American commanders who stand out in your memory as being particularly receptive to the advice of the resistance units they would overrun and then would come up and tell them what was ahead of him, or commanders that were particularly resistant to advice?

CASEY: Well, I think we got more attention from Patton and Patch than from anybody else. They seemed to have a better feel for the value of the resistance.

And I think the primary -- they understood the intelligence value they were getting much better than they understood the resistance, the guerrilla-warfare fighting. I guess Patton understand that too. Patch went so fast, he didn't have much time to [unintelligible].

And I'll tell you, when they got into Germany, they really appreciated it when they missed it, when they finally were going into unfriendly territory where the natives weren't of any help or were hostile, they weren't getting the kind of on-the-ground intelligence. They missed that very -- that send a good loud message about how valuable the other thing had been.

Yes.

WOMAN: You've answered a question I've had for a long time, and that is whether the story was true that the BBC did alert the French underground to the time of D-Day. [Unintelligible]. Isn't it puzzling that the Germans were actually, apparently, surprised by the timing of the invasion?

CASEY: Well, it takes time to react. These messages went out at the end of the day on the 5th. The landings were occurring at midnight. Well, no. It was two or three o'clock in the morning, and on.

It's a historical fact, however, that the Germans had gotten some of the messages. And there were two armies, one -- German armies -- one defending what we'll call Normandy, the other defending what we'll call the Channel coast, which is the Pas de Calais and to the north of the Seine. And the message was that [unintelligible]. This message meant action. And the message was heard on the Channel coast, where we didn't attack. But it was ignored. It was heard and it was brought to Rundstedt's headquarters, and the fellow who was on duty paid no attention to it, and it was just one of those kind of foul-ups.

And they were just -- didn't expect it. They didn't expect the weather would permit it. Rommel had gone back home. All of the generals were out to lunch when it hit.

MAN: If there are no further questions, then...

CASEY: I get out five minutes early.

[Asides]

[Applause]