

Notes for One Day in June

These notes have been included to provide an historical background to parts of the novel. Whilst ever care has been taken to ensure their accuracy, it should be understood this can not be guaranteed.

¹ The Accord and Declaration stated, 'Consultation shall be the method adopted to deal with any questions that may concern our two countries, and we are determined to continue our efforts to remove possible sources of difference and thus to contribute to ensure the peace of Europe.'

² Whilst life in Britain was relatively unchanged, Europe was going through a radical transformation. During the early thirties Hitler manoeuvred for command and engineered his accession to power. Hitler refused to serve as Vice Chancellor under the newly elected Chancellor Papen and then five months later in January 1933 became German Chancellor. By February an 'Emergency Decree' was passed to suspend civil liberties following the mysterious gutting by fire of the Parliament Building, and in March, two days after the first concentration camp opened outside Berlin, 'The Parliament of the German Empire – The Reichstag' approved 'The Enabling Act' giving him dictatorial powers. A law was introduced barring anyone with a Jewish grandparent from civil service employment; his anti-semitic reign of terror had begun. Trade Unions were replaced with the Nazi (National Socialism) directed Labour Front, and the Nazi Party was declared the only political party in Germany. June 30th 1934 was a very important day for the German people, it was the day when Hitler ordered his newly formed SS bodyguards to seize and kill Germans without trial: this was to include dissidents, SR Commanders, as well as Chancellor General von Schleicher who preceded him. The operation was called 'Röhm – Putsch' and became known as 'The Night of the Long Knives'.

With the death of Hindenberg in August of 1934, Hitler was affirmed as '*President*' as well as being '*Chancellor*' and also '*The Supreme Commander of German Armed Forces*'. The First World War had left Germany politically and economically weak, with high unemployment: a country that had lost much of its lands. Many Germans thought that in spite of the obsessive and extreme ways of the Nazis they needed someone such as Hitler to bring about solidarity and a future. With overwhelming support he took the title, "*Der Führer*", "*The Leader*". Domination was now within his grasp, the future of Europe and the history of The World was being written. On 16th March 1935 he denounced the disarmament clauses of the Versailles Treaty of June 28th 1919, the treaty which was intended to clear the way for a peaceful future for Europe and the World. Whilst Britain's military production was insignificant, Hitler accelerated re-armament whilst also introducing conscription. The Nuremberg Laws of September 1935 deprived Jews of all rights of German Citizenship, and on the 28th March Government control was imposed over The German Protestant Church. The following year German troops marched into the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland, which the Versaille Treaty had intended as a buffer zone between Germany and France.. Germany was on the move.

The previous year in 1934 Italy's Mussolini had met Hitler in Venice, he too had grievances after the Treaty of Versailles as he wanted Italy to have influence in the Mediterranean. Britain, however, dominated it with naval bases in Malta, Gibraltar and Cyprus as well as controlling the Suez Canal with France. Mussolini saw Hitler as a partner, but also as a rival with an interest in a union with Austria. By November the relationship had developed positively and Mussolini described the two countries' relationship as the 'axis' around which Europe would revolve. Early in 1938 Hitler forced the Austrian Chancellor to include Nazis in his cabinet or face invasion, and demanded 'self determination' for Germans in Austria as well as in Western Čzechoslovakia. On March 11th 1938, a Nazi had become Austrian Chancellor and on the 12th Germany invaded Hitler's homeland and proclaimed a union between Germany and Austria. The German army was now sitting on the Italian border. On May 3rd Hitler arrived in

Rome with his five hundred strong entourage to be welcomed by Mussolini and King Victor Emmanuel who, on the following day, held a banquet in his honour.

³ During 1939 –

March: Britain and France guarantee Polish independence.

April : Britain and France guarantee Romanian and Greek security.

August: Britain warn Germany they will fulfill their guarantees to those nations.

After Poland refused Stalin's Russian Troops to counter the German threat of invasion; on September 1st Germany marched into Poland. On September 3rd Britain's Ambassador issued an ultimatum at 9am to Germany for their withdrawal from Poland with a two hour deadline. France opted for a later time of 5pm. There was significant disagreement and confusion between not only Britain and France but also between The Commons, The Cabinet and the Prime Minister. This being ignored Britain and its colonies, France, Australia and New Zealand declared war on Germany after the ultimata were ignored. South Africa and Canada declared war on Germany within the week.

⁴ During that winter the Soviet Red Army embarked on 'The Winter War' against their neutral neighbour Finland, believing it would only take a couple of weeks of fighting. But Stalin hadn't reckoned on the battle against the fierce winter with his forces not being prepared for the biting blizzards and temperatures falling to minus 49°C. They made slow progress through the snow covered forests, densely wooded gullies and ice covered lakes. Fuel froze, tanks broke down, weapons seized, shells didn't detonate and the Russians had no white camouflage; whereas the Finns were well equipped and experienced. It took over 1.5 million Russians to overrun 77,000 Finns; the Russians lost more than 1,000 aircraft, 2,300 tanks and armoured cars and a quarter of a million men whereas 25,000 Finns died. Eventually the Russians broke through in the South and on March 5th 1940 the Finns negotiated peace. The 'Winter War' for the Russians was humiliating and a hollow victory; Stalin re-organised and equipped

his army for winter warfare! In 1941 they were well placed for the invasion by the German Army, who ironically made the same mistakes as Russia had two years earlier.

⁵ On June 25th 1940 Londoners heard the first air raid sirens, and 'The Battle of Britain', or more accurately, 'The Battle for Britain' began when the Luftwaffe attacked convoys in the English Channel and the docks in South Wales on July 10th. Over August and September the Luftwaffe shattered the peace of British skies, bombing Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, Liverpool, Manchester and Brighton as well as RAF Command Centres, airfields, aircraft facilities and radar stations. During November and December that same year it targeted Coventry killing 568 civilians and destroyed the Cathedral, as well as hitting Bristol, Sheffield and concluded with a heavy incendiary raid on the City of London. By the end of September 1940, one year after the outbreak of war, the British casualty list was 7,000 dead and 10,500 injured.

In July 1940 the Italians attacked Sudan and in the September, Egypt. On September 27th Italy, Germany and Japan signed a Tripartite Pact of multilateral assistance; a month later Mussolini served an ultimatum to Greece, then on 28th Italian troops invaded but within two weeks faced defeat and were driven back into Albania. The November saw Hungary, România and Slovakia join the Tripartite Pact with Germany. Allied forces landed in Norway in the April in an attempt to stem the German onslaught, but in a matter of days pulled back, driven by the German troops. Amazingly a small force of officers and men of the Norwegian army were able to stall the Germans long enough to allow the President of the Storting (Parliament) and members of the Government to achieve the great feat of securing twenty eight and a half million pounds of gold and foreign securities out of the vaults of the Bank of Norway and across the mountains to safety. Official records and documents were removed by an army of waiting cars as well as orders to the commanders of the armed forces, and instructions to heads of government departments. With Germans at their heels, the King, the Crown Prince and leading officials were transported to safety. The

Germans had attempted by every means to prevent the Government sitting one last time, but they did in secrecy, widening the powers of the Labour Government and granting the King and the Government, even in exile, full powers throughout the period of 'emergency'. These decisions taken on the first day of the invasion greatly hampered the Nazi aggressors, and contributed to Norway's future.

The Dutch Queen and Government fled to London in May 1940 followed by King Haakon and the Norwegian Government in June, The Czechoslovakian Government-in-exile followed in July and the Belgium Government-in-exile from Paris in October. Goering at the end of June ordered an aerial blockade of Britain just as Germany was occupying The Channel Islands and The USSR had occupied Lithuania and annexed it along with Estonia and Latvia in late July. Following the defeat in Norway, Neville Chamberlain's term in office was at an end; Churchill, already directing the war effort was asked by King George VI to form a Government on 10th May as the German Panzers were ploughing through Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

⁶ The motto over the entrance gate read, "Arbeit macht frei" – "Work makes you free". Inmates in 28 of the camps worked for the Germans making armaments, in foundaries and metal works, near coal mines; in chemical plants and light industry, construction, forestry and farming. The first prisoners arrived in May and June, and from spring 1942 trains began to deliver prisoners from all over Nazi occupied Europe, sometimes as many as 12,000 a day. Upon arrival Jews were divided into those judged to be able to work and the others that weren't; which included children, women with children, the elderly and those not fully fit: all in all about three quarters were told to undress, to take a shower and were gassed. Those that weren't killed in the gas chamber died of starvation, forced labour, lack of care, medical experiments or were executed. In the four years before Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz around one million Jews, 150,000 Poles, 23,000 gypsies, 15,000 Soviet Prisoners of War and tens of thousands of others were killed there.

⁷ Three days after Himmler ordered Auschwitz to be built, in 1940 the Nazis established their first closed and guarded ghetto in the city of Litzmannstadt in Poland. Initially it was populated with nearly a third of the city's Jewish population – 200,000, and the Jews were deported from the city for 'resettlement = extermination' others were shipped in. More concentration and death camps arose around the city for other nationalities. The Łódź ghetto, providing a valuable contribution to German production, was the last major ghetto to be destroyed in August 1944, with only 900 people surviving.

⁸ Operation 'Dynamo' was effected on May 26th 1940, to evacuate 338,226 men. This contingent included 118,000 French soldiers who thought the retreat was to re-group not evacuate. As the flotilla headed across the Channel, Stuka dive bombers screamed overhead, bombarding and firing on the ships. By June 4th the evacuation was halted with thirty one ships sunk and eleven damaged of the 800 vessels and the loss of all guns, tanks, ammunition and stores: leaving 68,111 men killed, wounded or lost on the Dunkirk beaches.

⁹ Then followed on June 15th the commencement of Operation 'Ariel', the evacuation of British and French troops from Cherbourg, Brest and St.-Nazaire. The first raids of the RAF were in May on the Albert Canal and the Ruhr, followed by Berlin 25th/26th August in spite of Goering's assurances to Hitler it would never happen again. After which they raided the armament works of Krupps in Essen, Skoda in Czechoslovakia and the city centre of Mannheim with 134 planes in their first night raid.

¹⁰ During their occupation the Nazis also destroyed The Great Synagogue of Łódź and the massive Ezras Israel Synagogue. In January 1945 nearly all of the German population of Litzmannstadt fled in fear of The Red Army, who were on their way.

¹¹ Two months before, King George VI had broadcast to the nation his warning;

“Let no one be mistaken. It is no more territorial conquest that our enemies are seeing. It is the overthrow, complete and final of this Empire and of everything for which it stands; and after that the conquest of the world. And if their will prevails they will bring to its accomplishment all the hatred and cruelty which they have already displayed.”

Many would find aspects of Hitler’s speech before The Reichstag on July 19th, 1940, contrary to his actions. He stated that the conditions imposed at Versailles were intolerable and humiliatingly discriminate, depriving the German Nation of all its rights. He continued that in spite of all his determined and honest efforts, friendship with England, which he believed would have been a blessing for both people, had not been achieved.

¹² Several years earlier, across the Channel, hundreds of families helped children prepare to give up their much cherished lives, families and childhoods in a bid to escape the Nazi regime. It was December 1938 and thousands of Jewish children from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland fled to Great Britain as part of the rescue plan with the ‘Kinder Transport’ programme. They were promised they were some of the lucky few, able to come to the British shores where they could travel on buses and the subway, go back to school and guaranteed to be adopted into a family, with their parents and guardians soon to follow. And so they came – seven, eight, nine, ten year olds, each with a suitcase, hand baggage, ten Deutchmarks and their identity number, hanging round their necks. They made their way to the stations and from there travelled by train, often at night, suffering needless terrifying treatment by Reich officials, to the ports from where they made their rough crossing to England, on their way to freedom.

Little did anyone know that war would shatter many of these hopes and promises, and within one and a half years folk would travel from the same railway stations, except this time the trains would head for Hitler’s slaughter houses.

¹³ The Communique; transcribed in part from an American War correspondent in Paris, read:

Sunday June 9th 1940

The night was frightening, the evening was sultry and an uneasy air totally pervaded. The pounding of bombs and rattle of anti-aircraft guns could be heard way off, but with the heaviness of the night it was difficult to tell how far off and if they were closing. Search lights wheeled this way and that across the sky seeking out the enemy planes, as brilliant flashes from shells and guns pierced the black night. Those Parisians that had packed tried to sleep, whilst others were still preparing for their flight from the city.

Monday June 10th

Dawn on Monday, the Paris streets were crammed with people fleeing the city ahead of the Germans. Every vehicle that could move was moving, and for those that had none, they walked, pushing prams, bicycles and carts fully loaded with as many possessions as they could salvage. Progress was so very slow, just a walking pace, some helping others, their families wrestling with bags and cases of all sizes, holding or leading children; old couples struggled in the throng. Their exodus on the roads and lanes out of Paris would prove easy prey for German pilots: it was a nightmare. That day the government also fled Paris.

Tuesday June 11th

The city was quite silent but the evacuation continued as Parisians fled south to the country. It was very doubtful how many would make it. Trains were packed and overloaded,

the roads about Paris impassable and jammed with thousands of people, escaping an unknown fate as French troops converged, heading north in an attempt to reach the battlefields. It was said that during the evacuation there were over twelve million people on the roads in Northern France; on the road to who knows where?!

Wednesday June 12th

Late in the afternoon the petroleum and gasoline reserves in the suburban refineries about Paris were set on fire by the retreating French troops. Paris was ringed with monumental fires and columns of black oily smoke climbing high into the summer sky.

Friday June 14th

On the summer's morning of the 14th, the Germans almost strolled into Paris, a city of peace and quiet, that was nearly empty and those that were there watched in disbelief and amazement. Paris was a city that had, within a few days, undergone a complete transformation. Few of us were there to witness the German's overthrow of France and occupation of the French capital.

French men and women weep on this day as the German army marched into Paris. Up until the day before Parisians were saying that the 'Boches' at the door of the capital was 'impossible'. It rained black rain as tankers of fuel surrounding Paris were on fire. At 8am on the 'Boulevard Haussmann' they paraded; smart, alert and looking straight ahead, ignoring all. They paraded day after day, night after night around the city, bands playing, jackboots ringing on the old cobblestones.

Paris had been abandoned, the Germans were now in

occupation of the city. There was a nonchalance with which those that marched carried themselves; no soldiers were assigned to guard the route of their advance. The soldiers and their horses looked fresh having rested during the night before on the edge of the city. The French people that were about watched their advance in silence as German horses trampled on French pride; it was clear that for these Germans it was their first steps into this beautiful city.

Trucks took men to the Rond-Point about the centre of the Champs Elysées, hauled down the four big French flags which encircled the Rond, and tore down French posters. Swastikas were hung on the Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe; military headquarters were established at the Hôtel Crillon, next to the American Embassy, and massive Nazi flags hung on the front of the new SS Headquarters. A large ceremonial review took place in La Place de la Concorde, while German planes roared over the city.

Confusion was widespread amongst the French forces, and instead of attempting to stop the invasion, a general order to withdraw had been given. Columns of French soldiers, some 20,000 troops threw away their weapons and marched towards the German lines with their officers at their head.

Saturday June 15th

Close by the American Embassy, trucks drove through La Place de la Concorde with the first French prisoners on board; the crowds wept and shouted, some chasing after the trucks, whilst the German troops stood by.

Sunday June 16th

A continual flow of army vehicles carrying German troops, guns, equipment and supplies was now moving through the centre of Paris en route for the battle lines in the South. Gaily painted sight-seeing buses, commandeered and brought from Holland, Belgium and Northern France were ferrying infantry to the front, looking completely incongruous, almost as if tourists on a summer's day excursion.

The following week the whole of the city and its suburbs became occupied with Germans, and all the shops were emptied. The streets in the Jewish Quarter appeared almost deserted, the few Jews remaining, garbed in dark, drab clothes scurried alongside the tall buildings, disappearing and then re-emerging from the long shadows. 'Green Ladies', German army women in uniform, blondes in white blouses, ties and forage caps, stood around in squares, shops and on the boulevards. The subdued general atmosphere would give way to loud voices, laughter from the crowded café terraces where officers would sit and drink.

Friday June 21st

Germany's invasion culminated in a railroad car in a little clearing in the Compiègne Forest, north of Paris. The railroad car had been preserved as a French memorial, for here twenty two years earlier, Germany had capitulated and the armistice ending World War 1 was signed. Now it was France's turn, and Hitler insisted the same location be used, even the same table, in humiliation of France.

The terms of the surrender called for all hostilities to cease on June 25th. France was to be sliced into pieces; the Pétain Government was to move south to Vichy, with the southern part of France remaining under their control. Paris, Northern France and the Atlantic coastline fell to

German occupation, whilst Italy got an area along their border. Hitler left the wagon with the German High Command leaving the eighty-four year old Marshall Pétain, looking solemn, grave and full of revenge; Hitler had been instrumental in bringing about this great reversal of fate. "This was a grave hour for France."

Sunday June 23rd

The plane carrying Hitler and his entourage landed at Le Bourget Aéroport, Bonneuil-en-France, 7 miles north-north east of Paris, in the early morning at about five-thirty. Three Mercedes Sedans awaited Hitler, who sat in the first car beside the chauffeur, Arno Breker and Albert Speer behind him, the rear was occupied by Giessler and the adjutants. The convoy drove out passed the Naked Angel statue honouring Lindbergh's historic solo transatlantic crossing of 1927, and through the country and suburbs directly to the Opéra de Paris Garnier, which grandly stood at the opposite end to the Louvre, on the Avenue de l'Opéra, north of La Seine. The five-storey Opera House was claimed to be Hitler's favourite building, having once studied architecture, he wanted to see it on his tour of Paris. Colonel Speidel, assigned by the German Occupation Authority waited at the entrance to welcome the group.

Designed by Charles Garnier for Napoleon III, opening in 1875, it has a sumptuous exterior style spanning from Classical to Baroque, with a multitude of columns, friezes and impressive sculptures and capped by a vast copper-green roofed cupola: underneath the building is a small lake. In touring the building Hitler had taken the lead, and it was reported that he had meticulously studied plans beforehand, remarking, 'You see how well I know my way.' They

entered up the Grand Staircase, to the Grand Foyer with mosaic ceiling and elegantly gilded pasterre; everywhere was ablaze with lights as if a gala night.

From there the group drove along Boulevard Des Capucines to Place de la Madeleine, down Rue Royale and Place de la Concorde, along the Avenue Des Champs Elysees to Arc de Triomphe. Then on they traveled south to Trocadéro and Palais de Chaillot; they crossed La Seine, over Pont d'Léna to the Eiffel Tower where Hitler ordered another stop.

This tower of criss-cross pig-iron girders reaching 1,063 feet into the sky and weighing over 10,000 tonnes inspired him, as it stood between avenues of magnificent aristocratic town houses. Strolling out, the party surveyed with pride its triumph, and Hitler with Albert Speer the architect and the sculptor Arno Breker, posed for the cameras. Noteably Hitler then changed his smart military overcoat for a light coloured coat before resuming his tour east to Les Invalides, and here Hitler stood for a long time at Napoleon's Tomb in the crypt of the Dome Church. He wanted to see the tomb and said on leaving, "That was the greatest and finest moment of my life." Journeying still further east past the Luxembourg Gardens and onto the Panthéon, whose scale impressed him, with its massive iron framed shell covered dome. Crossing north over La Seine, passing Notre Dame to Musée Carnavalet, onto Place des Vosges then west along the Rue de Rivoli and at Hôtel de Ville, they followed the north bank to the Louvre. From here they headed out of the city to the church of Sacré Coeur here he stood and was recognized by many church goers who chose to ignore him. The party then drove

quickly back to Le Bourget, Hitler's three hour tour of Paris was over, the only time he was to see it.

That evening it is reported that Hitler said he had often considered whether to destroy Paris and with that remark he ordered full scale rebuilding of the buildings of Berlin. He also ordered the destruction of two World War 1 monuments in Paris, reminders of the past German defeat. One was to General Charles Margin, a French war hero, and the other to Edith Cavell, the British nurse who was executed by a German firing squad.

Tuesday June 25th

In a peasant's cottage, in a small village in Northern France commandeered by the Germans, Hitler and his entourage awaited the formal end of hostilities: they sat silently listening to a distant thunderstorm. A bugler signaled the end of fighting.

'Peace had come to France, but at what cost.'

The Communique Ends . . .

¹⁴Winston Churchill refused to recognize Pétain's government and on June 28th acknowledged de Gaulle as the leader of the 'Free French'. On July 4th, a court martial held in Toulouse sentenced de Gaulle in his absence, to four years in prison. The SOE (Special Operations Executive) was created on July 22nd in London to aid European Resistance. On August 2nd, a second court martial sentenced de Gaulle to death.

¹⁵ "But has the last word been said? Must we abandon all hope? Is our defeat final and irremediable? To these questions I answer, No! Speaking in full knowledge of the facts, I ask you to believe me when I say that the cause of

France is not lost. The very factors that brought about our defeat may one day lead us to victory. This war is not limited to our unfortunate country. The outcome and struggle has not been decided by the Battle of France. This is a world war. The destiny of the world is at stake.”

General Charles de Gaulle

¹⁶ Restaurants in Paris were allowed to open four nights out of every seven; more than 200 cinemas were still operating throughout Paris, their electricity supplied by teams of cyclists operating pedal-powered generators. The Moulin Rouge, The Moulin de la Galette, Shéhérazade and a dozen other venues still produced live floorshows. An estimated 100,000 occasional prostitutes were working in the city, five to six times more than before the war, and it is believed at least 200,000 extra children were born!

¹⁷ Britain, before the war, was importing 55 million tons of food: during the war this dropped by two-thirds.

¹⁸ The rescuing ship HMS Hurricane arriving on the scene miscounted the Benares lifeboats and as a result over fifty souls, of which six were children, spent a further eight days afloat in The Atlantic before rescue finally came. They were eventually spotted by a Sunderland flying out of Oban which was to rendezvous with the convoy. On their return flight they sighted a lifeboat with sails and a boy scout signalling in semaphore, ‘City of Benares.’ But it was too choppy to land so they dropped supplies and raised the alarm.

¹⁹ President Roosevelt addressed his people and the world on December 29th 1940.

“Some of our people like to believe that wars in Europe and in Asia are of no concern to us. But it is a matter of most vital concern to us that European and Asiatic war-makers should not gain control of the oceans which lead to this

hemisphere. We know now that a nation can have peace with the Nazis only at a price of total surrender.”

²⁰ These searchlights, illuminated by the ignition of two carbon rods, mounted in the centre of rhodium plated parabolic mirrors had an output of 800,000,000 candlepower, illuminating to an altitude of 12,000 feet. They would be used in conjunction with other lights to triangulate aircraft altitudes to determine the fuse settings of anti aircraft shells.

²¹ Until effective radio direction finding equipment had been developed, attacking bombers could not be detected early enough to scramble fighters to prevent them reaching their targets. Even though the damage caused by bombers was well over rated, stopping them before they loosed their loads was better than after. Such detection systems were now a priority for the Allies but the Germans had not understood what a powerful weapon this equipment would prove, and after initial attacks, they ignored them; risking their future victory. By 1939 Britain had erected twenty one 300 foot masts along the south and east coasts, forming the ‘Chain Home’ defence network. Their range was 120 miles, identifying the direction, height and size of the Luftwaffe raids. Information was fed to HQ at Bentley Priory, Stanmore, where it was assessed and if an imminent raid was likely, information was passed to Fighter Command Ops. Room: providing on average a 20 minutes warning. Over time interpretation of the data improved with practice, mobile ground to air antennae were developed by the Telecommunications Research Establishment, and these supplemented the permanent aerials providing a degree of flexibility: ‘Binders’, two airmen using pedal power turned the large antennae. As passing aircraft distorted radio reception, the time it took for the radio signal to ‘echo’ back to the station allowed the distance to be gauged. Germany and Britain had adopted two totally different approaches and systems. In an attempt to confuse our tracking systems Goerings ordered his aircraft to fly up and down the Channel, then suddenly turn towards England without warning: this reeked havoc on the RAF. In 1935, an

obscure scientist called Watson-Watt at the Radio Research Establishment had been asked to see if he could devise a 'radio wave death ray'. Although at that time death rays were well beyond current technology, it did serve as a convenient cover for the development of what was to be known as radar.

²² By the end of the bombing of Hull nearly eighty-seven thousand houses were damaged, and between a hundred and fifty and a hundred and seventy thousand people were made homeless.

²³ Born in Brooklyn, New York to an English mother and Irish father, William Joyce (or as he was later to be known Lord Haw-Haw) moved with his family to Ireland, then to England. Whilst at the University of London he developed an interest in fascism and joined the British Union of Fascists, under the intellectually arrogant orator Sir Oswald Mosely. Surrounded by black shirted bodyguards, Mosely's meetings became increasingly violent and anti-semitic. Joyce soon became the Union's Director of Propaganda and the Deputy Leader. Before war was declared Joyce and his wife fled to Germany where he was recruited to work on their English radio service, and 'Germany Calling' was born, transmitting from a network of German controlled studios across Europe. Of all those that broadcast to Britain, Joyce was the most well known to the British People! Archive documents reveal that in December 1939 nine million people were listening to Joyce, according to the BBC. (Joyce's last broadcast was on the 30th April 1945 during the Battle of Berlin; he signed off with a final defiant, "Heil Hitler, and farewell.")

Joyce was captured and tried at The Old Bailey on three counts of high treason. Unrepentantly he went to his death, executed on 3rd January 1946 at Wandsworth Prison, aged 39.

²⁴ Rather bizarrely on May 12th, 1941, news broke that '*Hess had landed*' two days earlier; the news having been delayed for this to be first acknowledged by German radio. Rudolf Hess, the deputy Führer of the German Reich and third in

the Nazi hierarchy, according to the reports had, after intensive flying instruction, flown from Bavaria dressed as a Luftwaffe pilot. The Messerschmitt 110 he had flown had been equipped with additional fuel tanks to extend his flying range. Crossing the British coast at Farne Island, off Northumberland, amazingly he seemed to avoid being intercepted or shot down: it's believed he was heading for Scotland. Observers tracked the plane and after a staggering 900 mile flight it crashed near Eaglesham, Glasgow. Just before crashing a man calling himself Albert Horn had parachuted from the aircraft, and being spotted by a local ploughman David McLean, was promptly taken prisoner and held in the farmhouse at Floors Farm until being taken by the Home Guard. The whole area became swamped with Army trucks, soldiers and policemen; and public movement restrictions were implemented. Hauptmann (Captain) Albert Horn was a name Herr Hess had used before. He was, it was reported, on a solo peace mission to secure a peaceful settlement between the Germans and the Allies: it was said intending to meet with the so called 'Peace Group' in England; allegedly headed by the King himself. With a broken ankle after his one and only parachute jump, he was taken to amongst other locations – No. 3 Battalion Home Guard HQ, Giffnock Scout Hall and finally to a hospital in Glasgow. Hess insisted on seeing the Duke of Hamilton whom he had met before, through whom he passed a message onto Churchill, but Churchill refused to see Hess. Hitler claimed Hess was a 'deranged idealist' and ordered him to be shot should he ever return, Stalin meanwhile saw it as an anti-Soviet plot.

Hess was held a prisoner of war in a number of locations, and on 17th May Churchill had him held in the Queen's House at the Tower of London. He was then transported to Camp Z (Mytchett Place, Aldershot) which had made special arrangements for his arrival with heavy security: here he attempted suicide. Rumours abounded that a Polish group was planning to break into Camp Z and kidnap Hess in revenge for Nazi atrocities. It was also alleged that three German would be killers arrived by parachutes near Luton Hoo! at the end of May. After being captured and interrogated it was revealed that, with the help from agents already in Britain, they expected to find Hess at the Combined Services Detailed

Interrogation Centre (CSDIC) nearby at the Trent Park Estate, Cockfosters. He was then moved to Maindiff Court Military Hospital, set amidst the seven mountains surrounding Abergavenny in Wales, where he remained until the Nuremberg Trials. It is alleged that Hess was of the view that only if a top-ranking Nazi flew to Scotland personally, would the British take the mission seriously. If a meeting had been arranged elsewhere they may think they were travelling into a Nazi trap.

Rudolf Hess, suffering from a 'pacifist delusion', is quoted as having said, "I do not think I could have arrived at my final choice unless I had continually kept before my eyes the vision of an endless line of children's coffins with weeping mothers' behind them, both English and German, and another line of coffins of mothers with mourning children" - June 10th, 1941
(Hess was tried for war crimes at Nuremberg and spent the rest of his life in Berlin's Spandau Prison, where he died.)

²⁵ It seemed from all accounts that Sir Hugh Trenchard presented to Winston Churchill in September 1919 a report on reshaping and reforming the Royal Air Force. It offered only two alternatives for the future – quite simply the RAF be used as a means of conveyancing, captained by chauffeurs for the two other services; or it becomes an Air Service which will encourage and develop airmanship? Churchill gave approval to Trenchard's vision and presented it to the Cabinet. The idea of 'sky-borne chauffeurs' was disapproved of and an air service for the future won out. Trenchard hastened to preserve the unique spirit he had witnessed in the service and formed 'foundations' to train and develop specific skills; amongst them the forming of a school of Navigation.

²⁶ At 3.30am on 22nd June 1941, after a crucial delay of five weeks whilst Der Führer was pre-occupied with invading Yugoslavia and Greece, Germany's focus shifted to its eastern front, its second front, and Russia. Hitler unleashed, in a final act of madness, 3 million soldiers, 148 Divisions; 3,350 tanks; 2,000 aircraft and 7,100 artillery pieces from the Fatherland and its Allies Finland, Hungary,

Romania, Italy and Spain. The Generals would advance their forces along a 2,000 mile front crashing into Russia, against the Red Army which had more tanks and aircraft than the rest of all the world's armies and air forces put together. The conquest and occupation of the USSR could now come to fruition, as increasingly it looked as if The New Order would rule Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. Within one month of the start of war Germany had doubled its territory. Their partnership with Russia had irrevocably come to an end; Stalin, just as much a murderer as Hitler, having killed or intentionally starved as many as 10 million of his people, was taken totally by surprise and responded to Churchill's promise – 'Any man or state who fights Nazism will have our aid' - and signed a mutual assistance treaty with Great Britain, and launched an Eastern Offensive. The USA came in, offering a similar 'Lend-Lease' agreement that Britain enjoyed, to the Russians.

However the realities of the cruel and harsh winter of '41 and the increasing difficulties with their supply lines, had all but escaped the Führer as with the advancement of his forces deep into Russia's heartland, Directive 21 – Case 'Barbarossa' gave way to Operation 'Typhoon', The Battle for Moscow. He had underestimated the resolve and resilience of his adversary, whom, in his grandiose scheme he believed would collapse as France had done. Russians were reduced to eating what they could get – sheep gut jelly, their pets, rodents, glue boiled off wallpaper and even patties made from human meat. With re-enforcements from far eastern Siberia, the Red Army, in temperatures of minus 40°C began to slowly but decisively over the ensuing months push the Germans, who were within 19 miles of Moscow, back the 1,200 miles they had advanced and out of Soviet territory.

Hitler's General, Ewald Von Kleist, 1st Panzergruppe (Tank Group) pointed out: 'The German army in fighting Russia is like an elephant attacking a host of ants. The elephant will kill thousands, perhaps even millions, but in the end their numbers will overcome him, and he will be eaten to the bone.' Even Josef Goebbels, the Nazi chief of propaganda affirmed, 'Germany has never had luck in a two front war. It won't be able to stand this one in the long run either.' But

Hitler saw himself, and Germany, as invincible. However, fighting a war on two fronts proved the gravest of mistakes, as Hitler advocated in his writing in 'Mein Kampf', his 'Struggle'; combining autobiography and ideology. This land battle would decide the outcome of the Second World War, but at a cost of more than twenty million Russians.

Roosevelt had committed the US to support Britain by supplying ships, planes, tanks and guns: fifty WW1 destroyers were provided in exchange for 99 year leases on bases in Newfoundland and the Caribbean. In the Autumn news broke of several incidents involving US warships in the northern reaches of the Atlantic. On 4th September USS Greer, a twenty three year old destroyer enroute for Iceland with mail and passengers was signaled by a British plane that a German sub had crash-dived only ten miles ahead. The plane, low on fuel dropped its four depth charges close to where the sub had dived, before returning to base. As Greer continued to track the U-boat, laying depth charges, and evading two torpedoes, she became the first American ship to attack the Kriegsmarine. An argument over 'who attacked whom first' followed, the U-boat claiming they believed the initial attack came from the Greer. Roosevelt announced a 'shoot on sight' order in the waters essential to America's defence. US planes and vessels would no longer await Germany's deadly blow first.

During mid watch on 17th October the destroyer USS Kearney, whilst escorting a convoy in the North Atlantic, was struck on its starboard side by a torpedo fired from a Blohm and Voss U-boat, U-568. Kearney, for two days steamed on to Iceland where it put ashore its injured and eleven dead. On 'Navy Day', October 27th, Roosevelt addressed his nation:

"We have wished to avoid shooting. But the shooting has started. And history has recorded who fired the first shot. In the long run, however, all that will matter is who fired the last shot. America has been attacked. The USS Kearney is not just a navy ship, she belongs to every man, woman and child in this nation."

In 1941 the USS Reuben James, a post First World War, four funnelled destroyer, joined the convoy escorting force between Newfoundland and Iceland. Whilst escorting a convoy, eastbound off Iceland, she had positioned herself

between a known 'wolf-pack' and that of an ammunition ship in the convoy. At the command of U-boat Kapitänleutnant Erich Topp, a torpedo was released, striking her forward, and as her magazine exploded the entire bow was blown off, sinking her immediately. The aft section floated for a brief time before going down with the loss of 115 men. The Reuben James became the first US Navy ship sunk in hostile action in the war.

²⁷ The Halifax, a product of Handley Page's, Cricklewood Drawing Office, was designed in the thirties, first flew in October 1939, just days after war was declared. It boasted a singular toughness and strength to survive; with a bomb capacity, speed and range that put this multi-rôle bomber in a class of its own: 'The Ideal Bomber'. The London Aircraft Production Group (L.A.P.G) had been responsible for the building of this Halifax. The complete rear fuselage came from Chrysler Motors, whilst the forward fuselage from Duplex Bodies and Motors; the inner wing sections and tail units were by Express Motor and Body Works, and outer wing sections by Park Royal Coachworks, with the construction of many parts and the final assembly falling to the London Passenger Transport Board. Testing took place at the Ministry of Defence owned site, known as the De Havilland factory, Leavesdon near Abbots Landley an amazing affair of co-operation.

Our Halifax had incorporated several modifications over and above the earlier marks. A Boulton Paul type C dorsal turret, similar to that of the Lockheed Hudson replaced the waist guns that were mounted either side of the fuselage. This was equipped with twin 303 Browning machine guns, where as the tail turret boasted four guns. A Vickers 'K' machine gun of the same calibre, on a flexible mount for manual operation, was installed in the one piece Perspex nose turret. The Rolls Royce Merlin X engines were replaced with 1390hp Merlin XX engines, larger oil coolers and increased fuel tanks; all in the name of performance. At over 71 foot long and weighing in at a maximum of twenty-eight tons for take-off, this was a truly massive bird. It would cruise at 240mph with a maximum speed of 284mph at thirteen and a half thousand feet; and climb to about twenty-two

thousand feet at a rate of seven hundred and fifty feet per minute and boasted a combat range of around 1.860 miles.

²⁸ Cryptographers were trained in nearby Bedford, and successful trainees/sprogs were selected to work at Bletchley Park – ‘Ultra’ or with SOE. Here also the BBC were evacuated from London, broadcasting the nations entertainment as well as encoded war messages - ‘London Calling’ from as it put it, “somewhere in England”.

The Royal Airship Works were based at RAF Cardington, developing and manufacturing Barrage Balloons to help protect British towns and cities from bombers. As the war progressed they were to also develop inflatable tanks and guns to be scattered about the countryside in a bid to confuse the enemy. Churchill tanks manufactured by Vauxhall Motors in Luton were stored inside the gigantic brick-work kilns south west of Bedford at Stewartby.

Maryland at Woburn was the centre of Allied propaganda print; producing ‘black’ fake German documents to be airdropped onto the enemy. Newspapers and leaflets, explaining how Hitler had prophesied that ‘final victory’ would come to the German people in 1941, were air dropped to the German people who were still at war in 1942, as well as booklets of how temporary paralysis can be produced in an arm to encourage malingering among enemy service personnel and foreign workers. Postcards showing Hitler dancing were produced to help destroy the Hitler myth and bring der Führer down to the level of an ordinary party leader. They even produced a stamp showing Himmler which was distributed to help bolster the suggestion that the Reichsführer was preparing to replace Hitler.

South of the village of Woburn, near Milton Bryan was Paris House; a grand timber framed house, built in 1878 and moved to a site within Woburn Park. In the event of an invasion, this was to be used as a safe house for the King and Queen. The Czechoslovakian Radio Station was based at Hockcliffe, just outside Leighton Buzzard. Here it received and transmitted information to the Czechoslovakian Government who were now in exile in Buckinghamshire.

Bletchley Park, known as Station X was the country's main decryption establishment, processing the raw signals from the Y-Stations. The Meteorological Office was located in Dunstable, working closely with Bletchley Park. Its buildings were camouflaged to look like part of the Downs, with one building disguised as a haystack. On the Downs was an experimental radar station, where 20 miles of 'chicken wire' aerial was erected 400 feet above sea level. On Dunstable High Street was located The Old Sugar Loaf pub; here Allies, defectors and prisoners of war were taken before they were secretly transported elsewhere in the country. At the northern end of the High Street was Waterlows Print Works, where forged documents for secret agents were produced.

In Luton, a largely industrial and manufacturing town many factories had their roofs disguised with streets laid out on them or trees planted and their buildings camouflaged with netting made by women at Luton Town Football Club ground. Chicksands near Shefford, was an RAF Y-Station, intercepting the German Air Force strategic wireless network; the ears of Bletchley Park. The whole area was a hub of secret activity.

²⁹ Over the three years of activity it is reported that more than 1,000 agents were flown, 400 men and 38 women into France alone; and 29,000 containers and packages dropped to over 5,500 points throughout Europe. The containers that our aircraft would drop were prepared and packed in St Neots at Gaynes Hall.

³⁰ One of the main critics of SOEs in supporting the Resistance effort, was Air Chief Marshall Harris, who claimed their work was next to useless and refused to assist with aircraft, believing greater damage could be done from the air. Bomber Command lost in one night more men than SOE lost in the entire war. It was argued in SOE's defence that the strategically well placed sabotage and attacks did more to damage production and undermine German resolve than the massive carpet bombing which tended to stiffen their will, at a far greater cost both financially and importantly, in loss of French life. SOEs' view was that, had

more aircraft been made available to ferry the backlog of agents and supplies, real and lasting damage could have been inflicted on the enemy, probably with less unnecessary waste and maybe shortening of the war. General Eisenhower said, "Give me one SOE agent, he is worth fifteen divisions."

³¹ The Abwehr was divided into three sections: Section 1 was responsible for obtaining secret information about the enemy; Section 2 was responsible for operations in enemy territory; Section 3 responsible for counter-sabotage and security.

³² Each of the nineteen countries with resistance activity had a section within SOE assigned to it: France had no less than six. F' Section was under British control, while RF (République Française) Section was linked to De Gaulle's Free French government in exile; most native French agents served in RF. The operations were to find resistance groups willing to work in preparation for the Allied invasion. Other specialist establishments existed to support SOE: weapons, radio and devices research was carried out at The Firs near Aylesbury and Station IX, The Frythe, a one time hotel outside Welwyn Garden City. Here they developed the 'Wel' range of devices – the Welrod, a five round repeating firearm with silencer; the Welbike, a portable bicycle; the Welman, a one man submarine; the Welmine, an anti-shipping mine: their catalogue of devices and gadgets went on. Station XV, The Thatched Barn, Barnet was involved with camouflage; equipping agents with worn foreign clothing, as well as equipment and documents, and even an inexhaustive range of exploding shit; donkeys', horses', cows' and camels.

As well as dropping secret agents and valuable supplies for the resistance work, Tempsford also dropped pigeons, with a pencil and rice paper attached to the bird. The hope was that citizens in occupied countries could send out news and information that would be helpful to the Allies.

Initial training for agents took place at Guildford in Surrey, where as the tougher, more advanced para-military course took place in Arisaig House on the

rugged west coast of Scotland, south of Mallaig. Nearby in the Highlands were six or seven other training establishments and a 'cooler' used mainly to store agents who were required to be kept incommunicado until they could safely return to service. Parachute training was taught at Ringway, Manchester Airport; and 'Finishing School' was at Beaulieu in the New Forest. Over 400 agents were sent into France alone by F' Section, of which 39 were women. Some were civilians, but the FANYs (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry) provided SOE with an ideal recruitment pool. Being a voluntary organization and outside of Military Rules, their women could go into combat. Each agent had to have false documents, a cover name, a field name and a well learnt cover story. For the issuing of records and papers, occupied towns were used which had been bombed and their records destroyed. At Tempsford in the building known as Gibraltar Barn, agents would be searched for British coins, cigarettes, labels and bus tickets. Here they were also fully kitted out with their parachutes and jumping gear; a thick camouflaged canvas garment called 'The Striptease', with twin front zips which facilitated hasty undressing. Their grab was complete with a rubber helmet to protect their heads. Then there were the pills: Benzedrine, to combat tiredness; some purification pills to sterilize water for drinking, and of course their 'L' (lethal) pills of cyanide.

³³ Navigational aids were still in their infancy and not accurate enough to ensure effective target location. Many of the early missions flown by Bomber Command either failed to find their targets altogether, or were leaflet drops when it didn't really matter. And so it became a priority to develop technical navigation aids to facilitate more accurate bombing. In June '42 the development of H2S, the first airborne ground mapping navigational systems suffered a severe set back when a Halifax V9977 carrying the experimental magnetron powered set crashed, killing all on board. Five of the passengers were senior scientists involved in the system, a huge blow to the programme. It would be a full six months before these sets would start to be fitted but then in the February of '43 a further set back was suffered when a Stirling Pathfinder aircraft carrying an H2S set was

shot down over the Netherlands. The set was damaged but repairable and Telefunken was able to reassemble it, allowing German engineers to develop their own Naxos radar detector, this enabled the Luftwaffe night fighters to home in on the transmissions of the British bomber's H2S sets.

³⁴ In time the engineers would redesign the triangular shaped tail fins which would offer a greater surface area and also solve the control deficiencies, helping to dampen the yaw. The fin stall would lead to rudder over balance and loss of control. Over the forthcoming months modifications would be undertaken to improve the Halifax's performance. As a result, a smooth front fairing known as the 'Z' fairing, or the 'Tempsford Fairing', was fitted; the dorsal, mid upper turret was removed and even by removing one layer of rough finish black paint the speed was increased by 5 mph.

³⁵ In the June of 1940, the Secret Intelligence Services (SIS), Section D, had arranged for a Walrus amphibian to pick up Brigadier Général Charles de Gaulle's family and a trunk of important state documents from France, should the evacuation by British destroyer fail. It never actually happened: the crew, ill prepared and lacking experience of night time flying of such a plane, took off from Mount Batten, Plymouth and during the hundred-mile flight to Carantec Bay, near Roscoff, in Northern Brittany, they lost their way and were killed in a crash landing. The following month, Churchill approved the plan to form SOE which took over Section D and its subversive and sabotage activities. Special Duties Squadron No. 138 was established on 25th August 1941, and on the 12th of that October, the first of two Halifaxes, which were just entering service, was allocated to the squadron; indicative of the importance placed upon 138's role.

³⁶ In the early days of resistance, groups fought as rivals against each other to secure supplies. On 26th January 1943 the '*Movements Unis de Résistance*', a union of the main French Resistance Groups was formed, recognizing de Gaulle as their leader, in an attempt to facilitate them working successfully together; steering of the groups, improving their effective impact and, to a large degree,

reducing their previously parochial nature. Their military wing was called 'Armée Secrète'. In May 1943 Jean Moulin formed the '*Couseil National de la Résistance (CNR)*' and co-ordinated with the Free French Forces.

³⁷ CT6 officially stood for 'Clothing and Textiles 6', part of the Ministry of Supplies. The department was merely a pretence, a 'cover' to shield the development and supply of gadgets and equipment for MI6, MI9 and SOE: for agents working behind enemy lines. Essentially Charles Fraser-Smith was CT6; he had previously worked as an agricultural missionary and established orphanages in Morocco. He is widely credited as being the inspiration of Ian Flemings James Bond quartermaster – 'Q'.

³⁸ The journey over the Pyrenees into Spain and on to British held Gibraltar or neutral Portugal, was preferred by many over the possibility of taking a boat across the Channel. After November 1942, when the Germans occupied the Southern Zone, this route became much harder and if captured, evaders were sent to concentration camps. It was not easy to explain oneself to the Spanish authorities, who, although neutral, were governed by fascists. Many of those evading the Germans ended up in internment camps waiting for French consulate officials to secure their release.

³⁹ 'S-phone': a completely portable transmitter / receiver station designed to be strapped on the operator's chest, with its batteries worn on a waist belt. A dipole aerial projected vertically from the set, a headset and close contact microphone was used.

⁴⁰ Many agents learnt their skills of railway sabotage at the training centres in Arisaig, on Scotland's west coast, by attacking the Mallaig train. The arbiters of whether the attack had been successful were the train drivers, who would give them a thumbs up.

⁴¹ Combined official British and American sources indicate there were roughly 2,500 evading British flyers and about 1,000 escaping POWs (as well as 3,000 American flyers and several hundred POWs) who found their way home through Spain. It has been estimated that for every escapee who was safely returned to England, a line operative lost their life.

⁴² SOE maintained a large number of arms, ammunition and explosives on Gibraltar, and had formulated contingency plans to destroy communications and infrastructure in Spain had Germany carried out its intention to occupy the country.

⁴³ Coast Watching Flotilla – 77 allied agents and 635 escaping POWs were embarked on small boats to and from Gibraltar.

⁴⁴ On July 3rd, 1940, a Royal Navy task force attacked the French fleet that was lying off the coast of French Algeria, North Africa. The engagement known as the Battle of Mers-el-Kébir destroyed much of the French fleet, killing 1,297 and wounding about 350. Although Britain and France were not at war, France had signed an armistice with Germany. Churchill, fearful that the French ships would fall into German hands, presented an ultimatum which stated that if the French navy did not surrender its ships to Britain, or neutralize them in some way, Britain would blow them out of the water.

Communication of the submitted entire British options was not conveyed to the French Navy Minister Admiral Darlan, and consequently negotiations broke down and British ships opened fire against its former Ally. In retaliation French bomber raids were made on Gibraltar in the July and September. On November 27th, 1942, the Germans attempted to capture the French fleet based at Toulon as part of *Case Anton*, the military occupation of Vichy France, by Germany. All ships of military value were scuttled by the French before the German troops arrived.

⁴⁵ Pétain, during World War 2, received German forces without any resistance, acquiesced to Nazi Germany, and provided Axis forces (enemy forces) with large supplies of manufactured goods and foodstuffs. He also ordered Vichy troops in France to fight against Allied forces. He was convicted of treason and given a death sentence, which was commuted by Charles de Gaulle to life imprisonment in exile on the Isle of Yeu, off the coast of Vendée. He died six years later in July 1951 at the age of 96.

⁴⁶ Whilst the Germans relied on horses to support the winter supply lines to their troops, the Soviets, more effectively, used American trucks. Siberian armament factories produced 2,000 Russian tanks a month. In some places along their 350 mile front, Russia used over 400 guns for every mile. Although the Soviets managed to open a narrow land corridor to their besieged city of Leningrad on January 18th, 1943; during that year 20,000 people continued to die from cold, starvation and disease every month. Nearly a million Russian civilians had died by the end of the siege in January 1944.

⁴⁷ 'Plan Jael' (reference the Old Testament heroine who killed an enemy commander by deception) or 'Bodyguard', which it subsequently became when security was compromised, came from Churchill's view that in wartime truth is so precious it should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies.

'Ironsides' was part of the deception plan stretching from Trondheim in Norway (Fortitude North) right around the European coast to Greece and to Romania and Turkey, making it hard for the Germans to be certain of the exact location of any attacks. In the early hours of 6th June several hundred British 'gingerbread men' – 'Ruperts', made of hessian stuffed with straw were parachuted in some distance away from the Normandy beaches. As the dummies landed firecrackers simulated gunfire.

⁴⁸ Meyrick Clifton-James, a 41 year old lieutenant of the Royal Army Corps, embarked upon the first stage of a 1,000 mile journey to Gibraltar and Algiers.

Clifton-James studied General Montgomery's mannerisms, rehearsing his voice, then went on the road as Monty for all the world to see.

⁴⁹ On 8th May, 1942, René Duchez, an insignificant French house painter, arrived at the offices of the Organisation Todt at Caen in Normandy which was building Hitler's Atlantic Wall. Duchez was able to smuggle out a top secret chart, over two yards long, of the Normandy coastline which turned out to accurately show the Atlantic Wall's major fortifications. The stolen map proved invaluable to the Allied planners in London, helping them prepare for the Normandy landings. Seventeen million cubic yards of concrete and one and a half million tons of iron were used to build the network of bunkers, pill boxes, observation towers and machine gun nests. Anti-tank ditches were dug inland, steel girders were fixed at low water to impale incoming landing craft, half a million beach obstacles were deployed and around six and a half million mines were laid.

The German guns in the vicinity of the Pas de Calais were bigger and more formidable; the British coastal towns of Dover, Deal and Ramsgate knew to their cost the range and power of the fourteen guns. The bulk of the German army remained on the Russian front where the Red Army was poised to launch five operations, each of which was larger than 'Overlord'.

In the weeks following the D-Day landings the Germans discovered top secret documents in an abandoned landing craft and a transporter glider, but, convinced they were part of another 'Operation Mincemeat' deception, ignored the truly secret papers.

⁵⁰ Some 1270 aircraft and 850 gliders (Horsa, Hamilcar and Waco) took 17,000 British and American airborne troops to Normandy. The first Halifax glider towing sortie was 'Operation Freshman' on 19th-20th November, 1942, when two Horsas carried 15 troops on the failed attack on the German heavy water plant in south Norway.

⁵¹ The invading armada involved: 138 battleships, cruisers and destroyers, 279 escorts, 287 minesweepers, 4 line layers, 2 submarines, 495 motor boats, 310 landing ships, 3,817 land craft and barges; another 410 landing craft for ferrying: 423 ships, 1,260 merchant ships and tugs employed in the construction of the Mulberry Harbours and laying of the PLUTO (Petroleum Line Under The Ocean) pipeline, to pump fuel under the Channel and provide telephone communications which was operational by the end of July.

⁵² The Mulberry Harbours were designed to deal with 12,000 tons of stores and 2,500 vehicles a day as well as Atlantic storms and tides. Mulberry 'A' was crippled and 'B' damaged following the bad weather of 18th June, 1944.

⁵³ Field Marshal Karl Rundolf Gerd von Rundstedt, Commander-in-Chief of the German army in the West, believed the Allies would need four consecutive days of good weather, and was convinced the assault would take place in the Pas de Calais area, where the Channel is at its narrowest. Von Rundstedt secret communication regarding the bad weather was decrypted at Bletchley Park, where more than six thousand people were employed. German Intelligence reinforced this view reporting a major concentration of Allied troops in the South-East of England. So the bulk of new fortifications and troops were concentrated there. The Germans had an impossible task defending such a long coastline. Hitler's 'Atlantic Wall' of armed fortifications stretched from the North Cape to the Bay of Biscay. Rommel's beleaguered and depleted 7th Army were unable to contain the Allied beachhead and by the end of the month nearly one million men had landed on the Normandy shores.

⁵⁴ If the invasion was imminent the BBC would broadcast 'the hour battle will come', signifying there would be a landing within 15 days: this was broadcast on 1st June. The next day came the message, 'the long sobs of autumn' signalling D-Day was imminent. On June 5th, at 9.15pm the

Resistance received the message that the invasion was set for the following day – ‘wound my heart with a monotonous languor’. General Eisenhower, along with Montgomery, claimed the Resistance’s activity had shortened the war by up to nine months.

⁵⁵ The chaos faced in France badly affected operations out of Tempsford, and the ever changing problems presented by the German forces resulted in many cancelled flights. With Tangmere too close to the fighting, Lysander pilots started using Winkleigh, in Devon, midway twixt the two moors, with 161 Squadron moving down from Tempsford in July 1944, to use Winkleigh as a forward base for operations into western Europe.

⁵⁶ Vergeltung (Retaliation) missiles – V1 & V2 ‘doodlebug’ & ‘buzz bomb’. Hitler, always receptive to new technology, was excited by the idea of ‘flying bombs’. Exaggerated claims of their impact and Goering’s declared support, finally sealed the development programmes continuing fate and terror to the people of London. More than 2,500 anti-aircraft gun emplacements were moved from the city to the open countryside of the North Downs, but when unwittingly they fired on RAF fliers, they were moved again to the coast to intercept the flying bombs earlier, using intelligence from the Home Chain Network. Some fighters were stripped of paint to increase their speed so they could fly alongside the V-bomb and nudge it, or fly in front throwing it off course.

⁵⁷ V-1 flying bombs: travelled at speeds up to 400mph, to a height of 3,000ft carrying one ton of explosives, to a range of about 130 miles. Some V-1s were air launched from Heinkel He 111s.

⁵⁸ V-2 rocket: travelled at speeds up to 3,600 mph, to 6 miles high carrying 2,200lbs of high explosives, consuming nearly 4 tons of alcohol and 5 tons of liquid oxygen each minute, to a range of about 200 miles. At the end of

its flight the 46 foot supersonic rocket would turn to an angle of 45° and fall to earth. The first experimental firing of a V-2 took place on June 13th, 1942, and almost killed Albert Speer, the German minister for armaments and the armament chiefs of all three armed forces when it went out of control.

On August 17th, 1943, a flight of 571 heavy bombers undertook a bombing raid with 1,500 tons of bombs on a remote island off the Baltic coast, where Hitler had based his secret weapons project. The raid, described as the greatest air battle of the war, cost the RAF forty bombers, but the development and launching of these weapons was undoubtedly hindered at Peenemünde. Prisoners from the labour camp Mittelbau-Dora were provided to work for the Mittelwerk V-2 rocket factory in the Kohnstein, situated near Nordhausen in Germany. Sixty thousand prisoners from twenty-one nations passed through the camp; thirty-six thousand inmates died.

⁵⁹ In June, 1944, the FFI were estimated to be 100,000 in strength and, in the October, had reached 400,000. By January, 1945, the French ministry of the interior had received 123,000 letters from people demanding to be incorporated as bona fide members of the Resistance.

⁶⁰ - de Gaulles words to his people on 24th August, 1944.

“Paris liberated

Liberated by our own hand

Liberated by our own people

with the aid of the French army

of fighting France

of the one and only France

of France the true

of France the eternal.”

⁶¹ An American radio correspondent described the scene when Leclerc's advance party reached the Porte d'Italie alongside Kellermann Parc:
'From where I am speaking to you I can hear the explosions of shells and the splatter of machine-guns: Boche machine-guns, machine-guns of the regular army, and the machine-guns of the FFI.'

A British correspondent reported that:

'Shooting continues in the streets of Paris, while Allied troops, arriving in greater numbers, fight side by side with the FFI and the people of Paris. French and Allied flags are appearing at all windows and everyone is singing the Marseillaise.'

An Australian correspondent summarized the 2nd Division's progress for British listeners:

'From the Porte d'Italie to the Ile de la Cité, Leclerc's units have had a delirious welcome. Men, women and children literally rushed the tanks shouting with joy – joy which for four years and two months had been suppressed'.

⁶² Cholitiz was retained as a guest of the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre (CSDIC) at Trent Park, Cockfosters, North London. Here, in the impressive manor house, captured German generals and staff officers were reasonably treated and allowed to roam the extensive grounds; their private conversations monitored, recorded and transcribed by British Intelligence to aid the Allied war effort and used as evidence at the Nuremburg trials.

⁶³ At 1500 hours de Gaulle arrived at the Arc de Triomphe, placed a floral Cross of Lorraine on the grave, then proceeded to walk down the Champs Elysées which was now packed with more than two million people. At the Place de la Concorde he took a short car ride to Notre-Dame where he celebrated with a Mass and Service of Thanksgiving. On 29th August US troops of the 28th Division before rejoicing crowds, marched down the Champs Elysées where Nazis had

paraded four years earlier singing 'We are marching on England'. Amongst the dead were up to 15,000 French people, killed in a wave of bloody terror – 'The Purge', as reprisal for their collaboration with the Germans. Women who had associated with Nazis were in peril of public humiliation by having their heads shaved, if not worse; undoubtedly for some life under the Nazis was without hardship and suffering, while some patriots, who had so convincingly wormed their way into the Germans' confidence, were wrongfully executed as collaborators.

⁶⁴ Goebbels, Hitler's aide, reflected optimistically in his diaries, dated 6th March, 1945 – 'There is considerable hope for us here. Our U-boats must get to work hard; above all it may be anticipated that as the new type gets into action, far greater results should be achieved than with our old U-boats'. Two months later he witnessed the collapse of Germany.

⁶⁵ Albert Speer, head of war production, wrote to Hitler opening with the words, 'The war is lost'. But still Hitler refused to listen. "I shall strike and not capitulate," shouted Hitler whose ravings had now reached insane proportions, screaming with frenzy one minute and the next collapsing into a chair, exhausted, consumed with self pity and looking like an old man.

Günther von Kluge, Commander-in-Chief West wrote to Hitler, "I do not know whether Model (his replacement) can restore the position . . . but if not, and if your new weapons, V-bombs, in which such burning faith is placed, do not bring success then, mein Führer, take the decision to end the war." Then he swallowed potassium cyanide and committed suicide (19th August, 1944).

The official German News Agency on October 15th 1944, announced that, 'General Field Marshall Rommel has died as a result of severe injuries to his head which he received as Commander-in-Chief of an army group in the west, in a motor car accident. Hitler has ordered a state funeral . . .' Rommel's faith in Germany's ability to win the war was weakening as was his estimation of Hitler:

such defeatist attitude was enough to warrant Hitler's wrath. Rommel swallowed potassium cyanide and committed suicide (15th October, 1944).

⁶⁶ President Roosevelt, in December 1942 authorised the Manhattan Project, the first steps to bringing about the Atomic Bomb. On July 16th, 1945, an eleven foot bomb, known as 'Fat Man', weighing one hundred and ten thousand pounds was successfully detonated in the desert at Alamogordo, New Mexico. The desert, at the point of explosion, was turned into glass and a cloud forty-one thousand foot high rose into the sky. 'Fat Man' would be dropped from a B-29 Superfortress, named 'Enola Gay' after its pilot Colonel Paul Tibbets's mother.

On the clear sunny morning of August 6th, at 8.15am, flying at 32,000 feet, the Enola Gay released the bomb. It took just 53 seconds to hit the ground and explode, within 2 minutes the boiling cloud had risen higher than the bomber.

⁶⁷ Nuremberg – the tribunal sentenced twelve of the twenty-one accused to death, including Bormann, who was not present. Hermann Goering evaded the hanging of 16th October, 1946, by taking potassium cyanide in his cell shortly before.

⁶⁸ The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht decided that members of the French resistance movement were to be treated as guerillas. Troops were ordered to immediately return fire and, if innocent persons were hit, this was regrettable but the fault of the terrorists. Areas where incidents took place should be sealed off, civilians taken as prisoners, and houses from where shots were fired, burnt.

Field Marshal Hugo Sperrle. 3rd February, and 8th June, 1944.

