

June 26, 1944

Invasion of Europe

Citation:

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Summary:

Stalin and Harriman discuss the success of the Normandy Invasion and the forthcoming Russian Offensive into Western Europe.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan
Transcript - English

LOC

TOP SECRET

Conversation.

June 26, 1944

Present: The American Ambassador, Mr. Harriman
Mr. Edward Page, Second Secretary of
Embassy

Marshal I. V. Stalin
Mr. V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar
for Foreign Affairs
Mr. Pavlov, Soviet interpreter

Subject: Invasion of Europe

As I was about to leave, Marshal Stalin with great enthusiasm again expressed his admiration of the manner in which the invasion of Normandy had taken place. He said that the crossing of the Channel was an "unheard of achievement" in the history of warfare. He was especially impressed at the vast numbers of men and equipment which had been thrown into France. He said that the moving of over 650,000 effectives in the first few days of the invasion was an unbelievable accomplishment and that the world had never seen an individual operation of such magnitude. We discussed certain details of the invasion and Stalin showed an intimate knowledge of what had transpired. I emphasized on several occasions the fact that the invasion was a combined effort.

Marshal Stalin asked me whether I recalled the conversations at Tehran. When I said that it would be impossible to forget them, he said that he now had fulfilled his promise that the Russian offensive would start shortly after the invasion of Europe, and indicated that some people had some doubts about what he would do. I said that I could speak from my own knowledge on returning from my recent trip to England and the United States that General Eisenhower in England and in Washington the President, General Marshall, Admiral King and General Arnold had had no doubt whatsoever that the Russian offensive would be launched and that they had not even considered it necessary to inquire as to the location or scale of the operation. Stalin again said that doubts had existed in certain quarters. I also said that every one of our soldiers was deeply gratified at the news of the opening of the Soviet offensive. Stalin replied that every Russian soldier in his heart had been greatly bucked up by the news of the invasion of France.

I informed the Marshal that I had received some of the invasion motion pictures and that although they were without sound I thought they might be of interest to him. The Marshal stated with real enthusiasm that he would like

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to see them. I added that I also had another film of landings on a Pacific island, that although this film was quite different in objective, since it was prepared for public release in the United States, I thought he might also enjoy seeing it since the pictures of the fighting include only those actually photographed on the field of battle. Stalin stated that he would also like to see this film very much.

EP:nn

~~Copy to General Deane.~~

3 copies to Ambassador.

GENERAL DEANE
TOP SECRET

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[REDACTED] Marshal I. V. Stalin

[REDACTED] Mr. V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs

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