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**Folder Title:** Pointe du Hoc Address, Normandy,  
06/06/1984 (Noonan)(White)  
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*Last Updated: 04/30/2024*

(Noonan/BE)

May 24, 1984

1:30 p.m. - RR

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: POINTE DU HOC  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1984

We are here to mark that day in history when the Allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty. For 4 long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions cried out for liberation. Europe was enslaved, and the world waited for its rescue. Here, in Normandy, the rescue began. Here the West stood, and fought against tyranny in a giant undertaking unparalleled in human history.

We stand on a lonely, windswept point on the northern shore of France. As I speak, the air is soft and full of sunlight. But 40 years ago at this moment, the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the boom of cannons. At dawn on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, 225 American Rangers jumped off a British landing craft and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. The Allies had been told that the mightiest of those guns were here, and they would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. [Removing the guns was pivotal to the Normandy Invasion, which itself was pivotal to the reclaiming of Europe and the end of the war.]

The Rangers looked up and saw the enemy soldiers at the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them with machine guns and throwing grenades. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot rope ladders over the face of these cliffs and they

began to pull themselves up. And when one Ranger would fall another would take his place, and when one rope was cut a Ranger would grab another and begin his climb again. They climbed and shot back and held their footing; and in time the enemy pulled back; in time the Rangers held the cliffs; and soon, one by one, the Rangers pulled themselves over the top -- and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs they began to seize back the continent of Europe.

Forty years ago as I speak they were fighting to hold these cliffs. They had radioed back and asked for reinforcements. They were told: There aren't any. But they did not give up. It was not in them to give up. They would not be turned back; they held the cliffs.

Two-hundred twenty-five came here. After a day of fighting only 90 could still bear arms.

I stand here today before the survivors of that battle. These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent; these are the heroes who helped end a war.

Gentlemen, I look at you, <sup>and I think of the words of Stephen Spenders' poem.</sup> and I think I know what you're <sup>right now.</sup> thinking. You're thinking, "But we were just part of a bigger effort, and everyone was brave that day."

Everyone was. The heroism of all the Allies of D-Day was boundless, but there was another quality to it, not only of size but of spirit.

Do you remember Bill Millin of the 51st Scottish Highlanders? Forty years ago today, British troops were pinned down near a bridge outside Caen. They were waiting desperately

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for reinforcements, when suddenly they heard the sound of bagpipes wafting through the air. Some of them thought it was a dream. But they looked up, and there was Bill Millin with his bagpipes, marching at the head of the reinforcements, ignoring the smack of the bullets into the sand around him. Lord Lovat was with him -- Lord Lovat of England, leading his commandos. When he got to the bridge Lord Lovat calmly announced, "Sorry I'm a few minutes late." As if he'd been delayed by bad weather or a traffic jam. When in truth he'd just come from the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.

There was the young Frenchman, Michel de Vallavielle, who had been confined by the Germans in his home. When the Invasion began he defied the enemy patrols, broke the curfew, and ran to the beach to tell the Allied troops where the enemy guns were hidden.

There was Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Vandervoort of the All American 82nd Airborne, who broke his leg when he parachuted on to French soil. So he commandeered a small farm cart and ordered his men to wheel him on to the battlefield.

There was the impossible valor of the Poles, who threw themselves between the enemy and the rest of Europe as the Invasion took hold. And the unsurpassed courage of the Canadians, the only troops who knew exactly what they would face when they hit the beaches. Two years before, their countrymen had been slaughtered at Dieppe. They knew what awaited them here, but they would not be deterred, and once they hit Juno Beach they never looked back.

The men of Normandy were part of a roll call of honor, with

names that spoke of a pride as bright as the colors they bore:

the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, Poland's 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, <sup>the 2nd Ranger Battalion,</sup> the Yeomen of England's armoured divisions, the forces of Free France, the Regiment de Chars de Combat, the

~~Screaming Eagles...~~

~~101st Airborne. These names are written forever on this sand and on this wind, for truly these are men who "in their lives fought for life and left the vivid air signed with their honor."~~

What inspired the men of the armies that met here? What impelled them to put all thought of self-preservation behind, and risk their lives to take these beaches and hold these cliffs?

It was faith and belief; it was loyalty and love. It was faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead -- or the next. It was the deep knowledge (and pray God we have not lost it) that there is a profound moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. They were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so they did not doubt their cause. And they were right not to doubt.

They knew that some things are worth dying for -- that one's country is worth dying for and that democracy is worth dying for, because it is the most deeply honorable form of Government ever devised by man. They loved liberty and they were happy to fight tyranny. And they knew the people of their countries were behind them.

The Americans who fought here that morning knew that word of the Invasion was spreading through the darkness back home. And they knew in their hearts, though they could not know in fact,

that in Georgia they were filling the churches at 4 a.m., and in Kansas they were kneeling on their porches and praying, and in Philadelphia they were ringing the Liberty Bell.

Something else helped the men of D-Day. It was the rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause. And, so, the night before the Invasion, when Colonel Wolverton asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer he told them: Do not bow your heads but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we are about to do. And in another part of England that night General Mathew Ridgeway tossed on his cot and talked to his God and listened for the promise made to Joshua: "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

These are the things that impelled them; these are the things that shaped the unity of the West. And with that unity the West could not be stopped.

When the war was over there were lives to be rebuilt and governments to be returned to the people -- there were nations to be reborn and above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies summoned strength from the faith and belief and loyalty and love of those who fell here. And they rebuilt a new Europe together.

There was first a great reconciliation, not only of those who had been enemies in the war, but also of those nations which had been torn for centuries by rivalries of territory and religion and power. Those rivalries ~~also~~ <sup>were interred</sup> on these beaches.

Inspired by the gallantry of the men who fought the war, the United States created the Marshall Plan to help rebuild our

allies and our former enemies. The Marshall Plan led to the Atlantic Alliance -- a great alliance that functions to this day as a shield for democracy and for prosperity.

In spite of our great efforts and our great successes, not all of what followed the end of the war was happy, or planned. Some of the countries that had been liberated were lost. The great sadness of that fact echoes down to our own time in the streets of ~~Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.~~ <sup>Warsaw, Prague and East Berlin.</sup> The Soviet troops that came to the center of this continent did not leave when peace came. They are there to this day, uninvited, unwanted, and unyielding almost 40 years after the war.

Because of this, Allied forces still stand on this continent. But our armies are here only to protect and defend democracy -- and never to take land that is not ours. The only land we hold is the graveyards where our heroes rest.

We in America have learned the bitter lessons of two world wars: that it is better to be here and ready to preserve and protect the peace, than to take blind shelter in our homes across the sea, rushing to respond only after freedom is threatened. We have learned that isolationism never was and never will be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with expansionist intent.

But we try always to prepare for peace. That is why we maintain our defenses and that is why we have tried to negotiate the control of arms.

In truth there is no reconciliation we would welcome more than a reconciliation with the Soviet Union, so that together we can lessen the chance of conflict, now and forever.

I tell you from my heart that we in the United States do not want war. We want to wipe from the face of the Earth the terrible weapons man now has in his hands. I tell you we are ready to seize that beachhead -- but there must be some sign from the Soviet Union that they are willing to move forward, that they share our desire and love for peace, that they will give up the ways of conquest. There must be a changing there that will allow us to turn our hope into action.

We will pray ~~on~~ forever that some day that changing will come. But for now -- and particularly today -- it is good and fitting for us to renew our commitment to each other, to our freedom, and to the alliance that protects it.

We are bound still by what bound us 40 years ago, bound by the same loyalties, traditions and beliefs. We are bound by reality: The strength of America's allies is still vital to the future of the United States. And the American security guarantee is still essential to the continued freedom of Europe's democracies. The Allies of 40 years ago are allies still. Your destiny is our destiny, and your hopes are our hopes.

Here, in this place where the West stood together, let us make a vow to our dead. Let us show them ~~by~~ our actions that we understand what they died for; let ~~us say to them through our~~ <sup>our actions say to them</sup> ~~actions~~ the words for which Mathew Ridgeway listened: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals for which they lived and died.

Thank you all very much.



(Noonan/BE)

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Because of this, Allied forces still stand on this continent. But our armies are here only to protect and defend democracy -- and never to take land that is not ours. The only land we hold is the graveyards where our heroes rest.

We in America have learned the bitter lessons of two world wars: that it is better to be here and ready to preserve and protect the peace, than to take blind shelter in our homes across the sea, rushing to respond only after freedom is threatened. We have learned that isolationism never was and never will be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with expansionist intent.

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12:00 p.m.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1984

We are here to mark that day in history when the Allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty. For 4 long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions cried out for liberation. Europe was enslaved, and the world waited for its rescue. Here, in Normandy, the rescue began. Here the West stood, and fought against tyranny in a giant undertaking unparalleled in human history.

X  
We stand on a lonely, windswept point on the northern shore of France. As I speak, the air is soft and full of sunlight. But 40 years ago at this moment, the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the boom of cannons. At dawn on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, <sup>225</sup>~~200~~ American Rangers jumped off a British landing craft and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. The Allies had been told that the mightiest of those guns were here, and they would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. Removing the guns was pivotal to the Normandy Invasion, which itself was pivotal to the reclaiming of Europe and the end of the war.

The Rangers looked up and saw the enemy soldiers at the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them with machine guns and throwing grenades. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot rope ladders over the face of these cliffs and they

for reinforcements, when suddenly they heard the sound of bagpipes wafting through the air. Some of them thought it was a dream. But they looked up, and there was Bill Millin with his ~~X~~ bagpipes, marching at the head of the reinforcements, ignoring the smack of the bullets into the sand around him. Lord Lovat was with him -- Lord Lovat of England, leading his commandos. When he got to the bridge Lord Lovat calmly announced, "Sorry I'm a few minutes late." As if he'd been delayed by bad weather or a traffic jam. When in truth he'd just come from the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.

There was the young Frenchman, Michel de Vallavielle, who had been confined by the Germans in his home. When the Invasion began he defied the enemy patrols, broke the curfew, and ran to the beach to tell the Allied troops where the enemy guns were hidden.

~~X~~ There was Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Vandervoort of the ~~(Screaming Eagles)~~ <sup>All American 82nd Airborne</sup> ~~X~~ who broke his leg when he parachuted on to French soil. So he commandeered a small farm cart and ordered his men to wheel him on to the battlefield.

There was the impossible valor of the Poles, who threw themselves between the enemy and the rest of Europe as the Invasion took hold. And the unsurpassed courage of the Canadians, the only troops who knew exactly what they would face when they hit the beaches. Two years before, their countrymen had been slaughtered at Dieppe. They knew what awaited them here, but they would not be deterred, and once they hit Juno Beach they never looked back.

The men of Normandy were part of a roll call of honor, with



names that spoke of a pride as bright as the colors they bore: the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, Poland's 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Yeomen of England's armoured divisions, the forces of Free France, the Regiment de Chars de Combat, the <sup>101st</sup> ~~82nd~~ Airborne. These names are written forever on this sand and on this wind, for truly these are men who "in their lives fought for life . . . and left the vivid air signed with their honor."

What inspired the men of the armies that met here? What impelled them to put all thought of self-preservation behind, and risk their lives to take these beaches and hold these cliffs?

It was faith and belief; it was loyalty and love. It was faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead -- or the next. It was the deep knowledge (and pray God we have not lost it) that there is a profound moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. They were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so they did not doubt their cause. And they were right not to doubt.

They knew that some things are worth dying for -- that one's country is worth dying for and that democracy is worth dying for, because it is the most deeply honorable form of Government ever devised by man. They loved liberty and they were happy to fight tyranny. And they knew the people of their countries were behind them.

The Americans who fought here that morning knew that word of the Invasion was spreading through the darkness back home. And they knew in their hearts, though they could not know in fact,

that in Georgia they were filling the churches at 4 a.m., and in Kansas they were kneeling on their porches and praying, and in Philadelphia they were ringing the Liberty Bell.

Something else helped the men of D-Day. It was the rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause. And, so, the night before the Invasion, when Colonel Wolverton asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer he told them: Do not bow your heads but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we are about to do. And in another part of England that night General Mathew Ridgeway tossed on his cot and talked to his God and listened for the promise made to Joshua: "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

These are the things that impelled them; these are the things that shaped the unity of the West. And with that unity the West could not be stopped.

When the war was over there were lives to be rebuilt and governments to be returned to the people -- there were nations to be reborn and above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies summoned strength from the faith and belief and loyalty and love of those who fell here. And they rebuilt a new Europe together.

There was first a great reconciliation, not only of those who had been enemies in the war, but also of those nations which had been torn for centuries by rivalries of territory and religion and power. Those rivalries died<sup>d</sup> on these beaches.

Inspired by the gallantry of the men who fought the war, the United States created the Marshall Plan to help rebuild our

(Noonan/BE)  
May 23, 1984  
5:00 p.m.

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~~We stand on a lonely windswept point on the northern shore of France. As we stand here today, the air is soft and full of~~ <sup>As I speak, the air is soft and full of</sup> sunlight, ~~and if we pause and listen we will hear the snap of the flags and the click of cameras and the gentle murmur of people come to visit a place of great sanctity and meaning.~~

~~But 40 years ago today 40 years ago as I speak~~ <sup>at this moment</sup> the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the boom of cannons. ~~At~~ <sup>At</sup> dawn on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, 200 American Rangers jumped off a British landing craft and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. The Allies had been told that ~~here were concentrated the mightiest of those guns, which would be~~ <sup>the mightiest of those guns were here, and they would be</sup> trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. Removing the guns was pivotal to the Normandy Invasion, which itself was pivotal to the reclaiming of Europe <sup>and</sup> the end of the war.

The Rangers looked up and ~~saw the big casements~~ and they ~~the~~ saw enemy soldiers at the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them ~~and throwing grenades, and filling the air with machine gun fire.~~ <sup>with machine guns</sup> And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot ~~their~~ rope ladders ~~into~~ <sup>over</sup> the face of these cliffs and they ~~pulled~~ <sup>began to</sup> themselves up. And when one Ranger would fall another would take his place, and when one rope was cut ~~and a Ranger would hurtle to the bottom, he would find~~ <sup>grab</sup> another rope and begin his climb again. They climbed and shot back and held their footing; and in time the enemy ~~guns were quieted,~~ <sup>pulled back;</sup> in time the Rangers held the cliffs; ~~and soon,~~ <sup>and soon,</sup> ~~in time the enemy pulled back and~~ one by one, the Rangers pulled themselves over the top -- and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs they ~~seized~~ <sup>began to seize</sup> back the continent of Europe.

Forty years ago as I speak they were fighting to hold these cliffs. They had radioed back and asked for reinforcements, ~~and~~ they were told: There aren't any. But they did not give up. It was not in them to give up. They would not be turned back; they held the cliffs.

~~Two~~ <sup>225</sup> hundred came here. After ~~1~~ <sup>a</sup> day of fighting only 90 could still bear arms.

I stand here today before ~~62~~ <sup>the</sup> survivors of that battle. These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent; these are the heroes who helped end a war.

Gentlemen, I look at you, and I think I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, "But we were just part of a bigger effort, ~~and~~ and everyone was brave that day." <sup>P</sup> Everyone was. The

all  
heroism of the Allies of D-Day was boundless, but there was another quality to it, not only of size but of spirit.

Do you remember Bill Millin of the 51st Scottish Highlanders?

~~There was Bill Millin of Scotland. The day of the Invasion,~~  
Forty years ago today  
British troops were pinned down near a bridge outside Caen. They

were ~~crouched against the cold gray ground~~ waiting desperately

for reinforcements, when suddenly they heard the sound of

bagpipes wafting through the air, ~~amorphous as a dream.~~ Some of them thought it was a dream. Some of

~~them thought it was. But the sound of those bagpipes came closer~~

~~and louder, and they looked up, to see~~ Bill Millin ~~of the~~ and there was with his bagpipes

51st Scottish Highlanders marching at the head of the

reinforcements, ignoring the smack of the bullets into the sand

around him. Lord Lovat was with him -- Lord Lovat of England,

~~leading~~ ~~marching along with his commandos, equally unconcerned at the~~

~~enemy fire.~~ When he got to the bridge Lord Lovat calmly

announced, "Sorry I'm a few minutes late." As if he'd been

delayed by bad weather or a traffic jam. When in truth he'd been

~~just come from~~ ~~delayed by~~ the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.

There was the young Frenchman, Michel de Vallavielle, who had been confined by the Germans in his home, ~~near Utah Beach.~~

When the Invasion began he defied the enemy patrols, broke the curfew, and ran ~~from his house~~ to the beach to tell the Allied troops where the enemy guns were hidden.

There was ~~the doggedness of~~ Lieutenant-Colonel Benjamin Vandervoort of the ~~All American~~ Screaming Eagles, who broke his leg when he parachuted on to French soil. So he commandeered a small farm cart and ordered his men to wheel him on to the battlefield.

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~~The men of Normandy~~  
~~All of these men~~ were part of a roll call of honor, with names that ~~spoke~~ <sup>spoke</sup> of a pride as bright as the colors they ~~were:~~ <sup>bore:</sup> the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, ~~the Manitoba Grenadiers~~, Poland's 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Yeomen of England's armoured divisions, the forces of Free France, the Regiment de Chars de Combat, the ~~101st~~ <sup>82nd</sup> Airborne. These names are written forever on this sand and on this wind, for truly these are men who "in their lives fought for life . . . and left the vivid air signed with their honor."

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and so they did not doubt their cause. And they were right not to doubt.

They knew that some things are worth dying for -- that one's country is worth dying for and that democracy is worth dying for, because it is the most deeply honorable form of Government ever devised by man. They loved liberty and they were happy to fight ~~against~~ tyranny. And they knew the people of their countries were behind them, ~~and supporting them.~~

The Americans who fought here <sup>that morning</sup> ~~the morning of the Invasion~~ <sup>the invasion</sup> knew that word of ~~what was happening~~ was spreading through the darkness back home. And they knew in their hearts, though they could not know in fact, that <sup>in Georgia</sup> they were filling the churches ~~in~~ <sup>in Kansas</sup> Georgia at 4 a.m., and they were kneeling on their porches and praying, ~~in Kansas~~ and in Philadelphia they were ringing the Liberty Bell.

~~Something else~~ ~~And there was another element that~~ helped the men of D-Day. It was the rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause. And, so, the night before the Invasion, when Colonel Wolverton asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer he told them: Do not bow your heads, but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we are about to do. And in another part of England that night General Mathew Ridgeway tossed on his cot and talked to his God and listened for the promise made to Joshua: "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

These are the things that impelled them; these are the things that <sup>shaped</sup> ~~informed~~ the unity of the West. And with that unity the West could not be stopped.

When the war was over there were lives to be rebuilt and governments to be returned to the people -- there were nations to be reborn and above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies summoned strength from the faith and belief and loyalty and love of those who fell here. And they rebuilt a new Europe together.

There was a <sup>first</sup> great reconciliation, not only of those who ~~had been enemies in~~ fought on ~~opposite sides in~~ the war, but <sup>also</sup> of those nations which had been torn for centuries by rivalries of territory and religion and power. ~~Finally, with the end of World War II, the rivalries which had bedeviled Western Europe for centuries were interred.~~ <sup>Those rivalries died on these beaches.</sup>

Inspired by the <sup>gallantry</sup> ~~virtues~~ of the men who fought the war, the United States created the Marshall Plan <sup>to help</sup> ~~by which we helped~~ rebuild our allies and our former enemies. The Marshall Plan led to the Atlantic Alliance -- a great alliance that functions <sup>to this day</sup> as a shield for democracy and for prosperity.

In spite of our great efforts and our great successes, not all of what followed the end of the war was happy, or planned. Some of the countries that had been liberated were lost. The great sadness of that fact echoes down to our own time in the streets of Poland, <sup>and</sup> Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The Soviet troops that came to the center of this continent <sup>did</sup> ~~would~~ not leave when peace came. They are there to this day, uninvited, unwanted, <sup>and</sup> ~~but still~~ unyielding almost 40 years after the war, ~~ended.~~

Because of this, Allied forces still stand on this continent. But our armies are here only to protect and defend



democracy -- and never to take land that is not ours. The only land we hold is the graveyards where our heroes rest.

We in America have learned the bitter lessons of two world wars: that it is better to be here and ready to preserve and protect the peace, than to take blind shelter in our homes across the sea, rushing ~~only~~ <sup>only</sup> to respond after freedom is threatened. We have learned, ~~in spite of our long and enduring desire for peace,~~ that isolationism never was and never ~~can~~ <sup>will</sup> be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with expansionist intent.

But we try always to prepare for peace. That is why we maintain our defenses and that is why we have tried to negotiate the control of arms.

In truth there is no reconciliation we would welcome more than a reconciliation with the Soviet Union, so that together we can lessen the chance of conflict, now and forever.

I tell you from my heart that we in the United States do not want war. We want to wipe from the face of the Earth the terrible weapons man now has in his hands. I tell you we are ready to seize that beachhead -- but there must be some sign from the Soviet Union that they are willing to move forward, that they share our desire and love for peace, that they will give up the ways of conquest. There must be a changing there that will allow us to turn our hope into action.

We will pray on forever that some day that changing will come. But for now -- and particularly today -- it is good and fitting for us to renew our commitment to each other, to our freedom, and to the alliance that protects it.

We are bound still by what bound us 40 years ago, bound by the same loyalties, <sup>and</sup> traditions and beliefs. We are bound by reality: The strength ~~and freedom~~ of America's allies is still vital to the future of the United States. And the American security guarantee <sup>is still essential</sup> ~~remains indispensable~~ to the continued freedom ~~and independence~~ of Europe's democracies. <sup>The allies of 40 years ago</sup> ~~We know, as we did~~ <sup>are allies still.</sup> ~~40 years ago,~~ that your destiny is our destiny, and your hopes are our hopes.

<sup>Here</sup> ~~Together,~~ in this place where the West stood together, let us make a vow to our dead. Let us show them by our actions, that we understand what they died for; let us say to them, through our actions the words for which Mathew Ridgeway listened: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals for which they lived and died.

Thank you all very much.

(Noonan/BE)  
May 23, 1984  
5:00 p.m.

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As we stand here today, the air is soft and full of sunlight, and if we pause and listen we will hear the snap of the flags and the click of cameras and the gentle murmur of people come to visit a place of great sanctity and meaning.

But 40 years ago today -- 40 years ago as I speak -- the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the boom of cannons. Before dawn on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, 200 American Rangers jumped off a British landing craft and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. The Allies had been told that here were concentrated the mightiest of those guns, which would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. Removing the guns was pivotal to the Normandy Invasion, which itself was pivotal to the reclaiming of Europe, the end of the war.

The Rangers looked up and saw the big casements -- and they saw enemy soldiers at the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them and throwing grenades and filling the air with machine gun fire. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot their rope ladders into the face of these cliffs and they pulled themselves up. And when one Ranger would fall another would take his place, and when one rope was cut and a Ranger would hurtle to the bottom, he would find another rope and begin his climb again. They climbed and shot back and held their footing; and in time the enemy guns were quieted, in time the Rangers held the cliffs, in time the enemy pulled back and one by one the Rangers pulled themselves over the top -- and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs they seized back the continent of Europe.

Forty years ago as I speak they were fighting to hold these cliffs. They had radioed back and asked for reinforcements and they were told: There aren't any. But they did not give up. It was not in them to give up. They would not be turned back; they held the cliffs.

Two hundred came here. After 2 days of fighting only 90 could still bear arms.

I stand here today before 62 survivors of that battle. These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent; these are the heroes who helped end a war.

Gentlemen, I look at you, and I think I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, "But we were just part of a bigger effort . . . and everyone was brave that day. Everyone was. The

heroism of the Allies of D-Day was boundless, but there was another quality to it, not only of size but of spirit.

There was Bill Millin of Scotland. The day of the Invasion, British troops were pinned down near a bridge outside Caen. They were crouched against the cold gray ground waiting desperately for reinforcements, when suddenly they heard the sound of bagpipes wafting through the air, amorphous as a dream. Some of them thought it was. But the sound of those bagpipes came closer and louder, and they looked up to see Bill Millin of the 51st Scottish Highlanders marching at the head of the reinforcements, ignoring the smack of the bullets into the sand around him. Lord Lovat was with him -- Lord Lovat of England, marching along with his commandos, equally unconcerned at the enemy fire. When he got to the bridge Lord Lovat calmly announced, "Sorry I'm a few minutes late." As if he'd been delayed by bad weather or a traffic jam. When in truth he'd been delayed by the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.

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Together, in this place where the West stood together, let us make a vow to our dead. Let us show them by our actions that we understand what they died for; let us say to them through our actions the words for which Mathew Ridgeway listened: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals for which they lived and died.

Thank you all very much.

*file*

4118

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

May 24, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR BEN ELLIOTT

FROM: ROBERT M. KIMMITT *Bob*  
SUBJECT: Pointe du Hoc Presidential Remarks

Attached at Tab A is your May 24 draft Presidential speech for Pointe du Hoc with our suggested modifications.

Attachment

Tab A - Speech with recommended changes

cc: Richard Darman

(Noonan/BE)  
May 24, 1984  
1:30 p.m.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1984

We are here to mark that day in history when the Allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty. For 4 long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions <sup>Sought</sup> [cried out for] liberation. Europe was enslaved, and the world waited for its rescue. Here, in Normandy, the <sup>1. began</sup> [rescue] began. Here the West stood, and fought against tyranny in a giant undertaking unparalleled in human history.

We stand on a lonely, windswept point on the northern shore of France. As I speak, the air is soft and full of sunlight. But 40 years ago at this moment, the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the boom of cannons. At dawn on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, 225 American Rangers jumped off a British landing craft and <sup>AGS Anker</sup> [ran to] the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. The Allies had been told that the mightiest of those guns were here, and they would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. [Removing the guns was pivotal to the Normandy Invasion, which itself was pivotal to the reclaiming of Europe and the end of the war.]

The Rangers looked up and saw the enemy soldiers at the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them with machine guns and throwing grenades. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot rope ladders over the face of these cliffs and they

Guns were not there

began to pull themselves up. And when one Ranger would fall another would take his place, and when one rope was cut a Ranger would grab another and begin his climb again. They climbed and shot back and held their footing; and in time the enemy pulled back; in time the Rangers held the cliffs; and soon, one by one, the Rangers pulled themselves over the top -- and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs they began ~~to seize back~~ to seize back the <sup>the</sup> continent of Europe. } o/k

Forty years ago as I speak they were fighting to hold these cliffs. They had radioed back and asked for reinforcements. They were told: There aren't any. But they did not give up. It was not in them to give up. They would not be turned back; they held the cliffs.

Two-hundred twenty-five came here. After a day of fighting only 90 could still bear arms.

I stand here today before the survivors of that battle. These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent; these are the heroes who helped end a war.

Gentlemen, I look at you, and I think I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, "But we were just part of a bigger effort, and everyone was brave that day."

Everyone was. The heroism of all the Allies of D-Day was boundless, but there was another quality to it, not only of size but of spirit.

Do you remember Bill Millin of the 51st Scottish Highlanders? Forty years ago today, British troops were pinned down near a bridge outside Caen. They were waiting desperately

for reinforcements, when suddenly they heard the sound of bagpipes wafting through the air. Some of them thought it was a dream. But they looked up, and there was Bill Millin with his bagpipes, marching at the head of the reinforcements, ignoring the smack of the bullets into the sand around him. Lord Lovat was with him -- Lord Lovat of England, leading his commandos. When he got to the bridge Lord Lovat calmly announced, "Sorry I'm a few minutes late." As if he'd been delayed by bad weather or a traffic jam. When in truth he'd just come from the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.

There was the young Frenchman, Michel de Vallavielle, who had been confined by the Germans in his home. When the Invasion began he defied the enemy patrols, broke the curfew, and ran to the beach to tell the Allied troops where the enemy guns were hidden.

There was Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Vandervoort of the All American 82nd Airborne, who broke his leg when he parachuted on to French soil. So he commandeered a small farm cart and ordered his men to wheel him on to the battlefield.

There was the <sup>fantastic</sup> impossible valor of the Poles, who threw themselves between the enemy and the rest of Europe as the Invasion took hold. And the unsurpassed courage of the Canadians, the only troops who knew exactly what they would face when they hit the beaches. [Two years before, their countrymen had been slaughtered at Dieppe.] They knew what awaited them here, but they would not be deterred, and once they hit Juno Beach they never looked back.

Too Sensitive

The men of Normandy were part of a roll call of honor, with

*The 82nd Airborne*

*The 2nd Ranger Battalion*

names that spoke of a pride as bright as the colors they bore: the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, Poland's 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Yeomen of England's armoured divisions, the forces of Free France, the Regiment de Chars de Combat, the 101st Airborne. These names are written forever on this sand and on this wind, for truly these are men who "in their lives fought for life . . . and left the vivid air signed with their honor."

What inspired the men of the armies that met here? What impelled them to put all thought of self-preservation behind, and risk their lives to take these beaches and hold these cliffs?

*These men were inspired by*

~~It was~~ faith and belief; it was loyalty and love. It was faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead -- or the next. It was the deep knowledge (and pray God we have not lost it) that there is a profound moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. They were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so they did not doubt their cause. And they were right not to doubt.

They knew that some things are worth dying for -- that one's country is worth dying for and that democracy is worth dying for, because it is the most deeply honorable form of Government ever devised by man. They loved liberty and they were happy to fight tyranny. And they knew the people of their countries were <sup>supporting</sup> [behind] them.

The Americans who fought here that morning knew that word of the Invasion was spreading through the darkness back home. And they knew in their hearts, though they could not know in fact,

that in Georgia they were filling the churches at 4 a.m., and in Kansas they were kneeling on their porches and praying, and in Philadelphia they were ringing the Liberty Bell.

Something else helped the men of D-Day. It was the rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause. And, so, the night before the Invasion, when Colonel Wolverton asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer he told them: Do not bow your heads but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we are about to do. And in another part of England that night General Mathew Ridgeway tossed on his cot and talked to his God and listened for the promise made to Joshua: "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

These are the things that impelled them; these are the things that shaped the unity of the West. And with that unity the <sup>Allies</sup> West could not be stopped.

When the war was over there were lives to be rebuilt and governments to be returned to the people -- there were nations to be reborn and above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies summoned strength from the faith and belief and loyalty and love of those who fell here. And they rebuilt a new Europe together.

There was first a great reconciliation, not only of those who had been enemies in the war, but also of those nations which had been torn for centuries by rivalries of territory and religion and power. Those rivalries <sup>were mended</sup> [died] on these beaches.

Inspired by the gallantry of the men who fought the war, the United States created the Marshall Plan to help rebuild our



allies and our former enemies. The Marshall Plan led to the Atlantic Alliance -- a great alliance that functions to this day as a shield for democracy and for prosperity.

In spite of our great efforts and our great successes, not all of what followed the end of the war was happy, or planned. Some of the countries that had been liberated were lost. The great sadness of that fact echoes down to our own time in the streets of <sup>Warsaw, Prague, and East Berlin,</sup> Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The Soviet troops that came to the center of this continent did not leave when peace came. They are there to this day, uninvited, unwanted, and unyielding almost 40 years after the war.

Because of this, Allied forces still stand on this continent. But our armies are here only to protect and defend democracy -- and never to take land that is not ours. The only land we hold is the graveyards where our heroes rest.

<sup>D-Day marked the beginning of an enduring American commitment to European security.</sup>  
We in America have learned the bitter lessons of two world wars: that it is better to be here and ready to preserve and protect the peace, than to take blind shelter in our homes across the sea, rushing to respond only after freedom is threatened. We have learned that isolationism never was and never will be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with expansionist intent.

But we try always to prepare for peace. That is why we maintain our defenses and that is why we have ~~tried to~~ negotiate the control of arms. <sup>striven so hard to reduce the level of armaments and to reduce the probability that some accidental war could break out.</sup>

In truth there is no reconciliation we would welcome more than a reconciliation with the Soviet Union, so that together we can lessen the chance of conflict, now and forever.

IN sent

see next page

6A  
age ~~9A~~

Insert: (on page <sup>6</sup>9)

It is fitting here to remember also the great sacrifices made by the Russian people during World War II. Their terrible loss of 20 million lives testifies to all the world the necessity of avoiding another war.

I tell you from my heart that we in the United States do not want war. We want to wipe from the face of the Earth the terrible weapons man now has in his hands. [I tell you] ~~we~~ are ready to seize that beachhead -- but there must be some sign from the Soviet Union that <sup>it is</sup> [they are] willing to move forward, that <sup>it</sup> [they] share our desire <sup>and love</sup> for peace, that <sup>it</sup> [they] will give up the ways of conquest <sup>and intimidation</sup>. <sup>A change would</sup> There must be a changing there that will allow us to turn our hope into action.

We [will] pray <sup>on</sup> forever that some day that changing will come. But for now -- and particularly today -- it is good and fitting for us to renew our commitment to each other, to our freedom, and to the alliance that protects it.

We are bound still by what bound us 40 years ago, bound by the same loyalties, traditions and beliefs. We are bound by reality: The strength of America's allies is still vital to the future of the United States. And the American security guarantee is still essential to the continued freedom of Europe's democracies. The Allies of 40 years ago are allies still. Your destiny is our destiny, and your hopes are our hopes.

Here, in this place where the West stood together, let us make a vow to our dead. Let us show them by our actions that we understand what they died for; let us say to them through our actions the words for which Mathew Ridgeway listened: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals for which they lived and died.

Thank you all very much.

(Noonan/BE)  
May 21, 1984  
3:30 p.m. SS

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: POINTE DU HOC  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1984

We are here to mark that day in history when the Allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty. For 4 long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions cried out for liberation from the conquerors. Europe was enslaved, and the world waited for its rescue. Here the rescue began. Here the West stood, and fought against tyranny in a giant undertaking unparalleled in human history.

The Allied effort was the result of enormous cooperation, enormous coordination, and enormous courage. The men of this Invasion fought on the land, on the sea, and in the air. And they fought on these cliffs.

As we stand here today, the air is soft and full of sunlight, and if we pause and listen we will hear the snap of the flags and the click of cameras and the gentle murmur of people come to visit a place of great sanctity and meaning.

But 40 years ago today -- 40 years ago as I speak -- the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the boom of cannons. Before dawn on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, 200 American Rangers jumped off the British landing craft, stormed onto the beach, and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission that day was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. For here were concentrated the mightiest of those guns,

which would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. Removing the guns was pivotal to the Normandy Invasion, which itself was pivotal to the reclaiming of Europe, the end of the war, and the end of the long night of totalitarian conquest.

The Rangers looked up and saw the big guns -- and they saw the enemy soldiers at the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them and throwing grenades and filling the air with machine gun fire. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot their rope ladders into the face of these cliffs and they pulled themselves up. And when one Ranger would fall another would take his place, and when one rope was cut and a Ranger would hurtle to the bottom, he would find another rope and begin his climb again. They climbed and shot back and held their footing; and in time the enemy guns were quieted, in time the Rangers held the cliffs, in time the enemy pulled back and one by one the Rangers pulled themselves over the top -- and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs they seized back the continent of Europe.

Forty years ago as I speak they were fighting to hold these cliffs. They had radioed back and asked for reinforcements and they were told: There aren't any. But they did not give up. It was not in them to give up. They would not be turned back; they held the cliffs.

Words are hollow next to such deeds, and the valor of these men is impossible to describe. But we know that 200 came here, and by the end of two days of fighting only 90 could still bear arms.

We have here today some of the survivors of the battle of Point du Hoc, some of the Rangers who took these cliffs. I think

I know what they are thinking as they hear themselves praised. They are thinking: "Oh, I was just part of what happened, just a part of a bigger thing . . . and everyone was brave that day."

Everyone was. The heroism of the men of D-Day was boundless, but there was another quality to it, not only of size but of spirit. There was a style that reflected the special honor of each country.

Do you remember Bill Millin of Scotland? The day of the Invasion, British troops were pinned down near a bridge outside Caen. They were trying to hold their position under enemy fire, and they were crouched against the cold gray ground waiting desperately for reinforcements. Suddenly, they heard the sound of bagpipes wafting through the air, amorphous as a dream. Some of them thought it was. But the sound of those bagpipes came closer and louder, and they looked up to see Bill Millin of the 51st Scottish Highlanders marching at the head of the reinforcements, ignoring the smack of the bullets into the sand around him. Lord Lovat was with him -- Lord Lovat of England, marching along with his commandos, and equally unconcerned at the enemy fire. When he got to the bridge Lord Lovat calmly announced, "Sorry I'm a few minutes late." As if he'd been delayed by bad weather or a traffic jam. When in truth he'd been delayed by the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.

There was the young Frenchman, Michel de Vallavielle, who had been confined by the Germans in his home near Utah Beach. When the Invasion began he defied the enemy patrols, broke the curfew, and ran from his house to the beach to tell the Allied

troops where the German guns were hidden. He did not know it was D-Day -- he had no reason to think the invaders would be successful -- but like so many Frenchmen he had to help, and he did; and later that day he was shot when a paratrooper mistook him for one of the enemy, and it took him a year in Allied hospitals to recover.

There was the doggedness of Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Vandervoort of the All America Screaming Eagles, who broke his leg when he parachuted on to French soil. So he commandeered a small farm cart and ordered his men to wheel him on to the battlefield. There was the grace of General Theodore Roosevelt Jr., who walked with his men on Omaha Beach, and took the same risks as they. His calmness under fire rallied the troops. He died and was buried during the push for Paris. To this day, his men say he epitomized the phrase "an officer and a gentleman."

There was the impossible valor of the Poles, who threw themselves between the enemy and the rest of Europe as the Invasion took hold. And the unsurpassed courage of the Canadians, the only troops who knew exactly what they would face when they hit the beaches. The year before, their countrymen had been slaughtered at Dieppe. They knew what awaited them here, but they would not be deterred, and they hit Juno Beach and held it and would not let go.

There was the honor of the German soldiers. By the summer of 1944, some of them had lost faith in their rulers; but they kept faith with their people and they kept the faith of the corps. Many fought as great men fight, and, in the military

tradition that honors gallantry for itself alone, some of them were buried with the Allied dead.

All of these men were part of a rollcall of honor, with names that speak of a pride as bright as the colors they wore: the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, the Manitoba Grenadiers, Poland's 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Yeomen of England's armoured divisions, the forces of Free France, the Regiment de Chars de Combat, the 101st Airborne. These names are written forever on this sand and on this wind, for truly these are men who "in their lives fought for life . . . and left the vivid air signed with their honor."

What inspired the men of the armies that met here? What impelled them to put all thought of self-preservation behind, and put themselves in harm's way not for their own sake but for others? What was it that made them overcome fear and become champions of liberty?

It was faith and belief; it was loyalty and love. It was faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead -- or the next. It was the deep knowledge (and pray God we have not lost it) that there is a profound, moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. They were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so they did not doubt their cause. And they were right not to doubt.

They knew that some things are worth dying for -- that one's country is worth dying for and that democracy is worth dying for, because it is the most deeply honorable form of Government ever



devised by man. They loved liberty and they were happy to fight against tyranny. And they knew the people of their countries were behind them and supporting them.

The British soldiers knew this when they pushed off from England on the night of June 5th. The Invasion was still a secret and there were to be no big goodbyes for the townspeople who saw them off. But as the soldiers departed they could see the people crying as they said farewell. The American soldiers knew in their hearts, though they could not know in fact, that when word of the Invasion spread throughout America, people filled the churches at 4 a.m., and families dressed in their nightclothes knelt and prayed on their porches; and in Philadelphia they did what they do to mark the most momentous occasions of our national life: They rang the Liberty Bell. Bells rang out all across America that night.

And there was another element that helped the men of D-Day. It was the rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause. And, so, the night before the Invasion, when Colonel Wolverton asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer he told them: Do not bow your heads but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we are about to do. And in another part of England General Mathew Ridgeway that same night lay on his cot and talked to his God and listened for the words spoken to Joshua: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

These are the things that impelled them; these are the things that informed the unity of the West. And with that unity the West could not be stopped.

Within a few weeks of the Invasion the forces of Free France swept into Paris, and the people of that great city filled the streets with roar after roar of "Vive la France, Vive la division LeClerc." Paris was free again; soon France would be free again, and Europe would be free.

When the war was over the nations that emerged from the ashes were faced with the challenge of making a new beginning. There were lives to be rebuilt and communities to be reconstructed. There were governments to be returned to the people and nations to be reborn. Above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies who fought in the Normandy Invasion drew new strength from the faith and belief and loyalty and love of those who fell here. And they rebuilt a new Europe together.

Their first accomplishment was a great reconciliation, not only of those who fought on opposite sides in the war . . . but of those nations which had been torn for centuries by rivalries of territory and religion and power. Finally, with the end of World War II, the rivalries which had bedeviled Western Europe for centuries were interred.

After that great and historic accomplishment, the Allies together rebuilt the rubble of Europe. This effort required the same cooperation, coordination, and courage that the Normandy Invasion required. Inspired by the virtues of the men who fought the war, the United States created the Marshall Plan -- by which we helped rebuild our allies and our former enemies. The Marshall Plan led to the Atlantic Alliance -- a great alliance that functions as a shield for democracy and for prosperity, a

great alliance that acknowledges that Europe's destiny is America's destiny.

In spite of our great efforts and our great successes, not all of what followed the end of the war was happy, or planned. The destruction of the war left Europe weakened in the face of Soviet communism. Some of the countries that had been liberated were lost. The great sadness of that fact echoes down to our own time and can be seen in the streets of Poland and Czechoslovakia and Hungary. We saw threatening Soviet action in Berlin -- and we realized that the Soviet troops that occupied the center of this continent would not leave after the end of the war that called them here. They are there to this day, uninvited, unwanted, but still unyielding almost 40 years after the war ended.

Because of this, Allied forces still stand on this continent. But our armies are here only to protect and defend democracy -- and never to take land that is not ours. The only land we hold is the graveyards like these where our heroes rest.

We in America have learned the bitter lessons of two world wars: that it is better to be here and ready to preserve and protect the peace, than to take blind shelter in our homes across the sea, rushing only to respond after freedom is threatened. We have learned, in spite of our long and enduring desire for peace, that isolationism never was and never can be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with expansionist intent. We have learned that isolationism does not avert war. It assures it.

We live in difficult times. It would be a wonderful thing if today, 40 years after the Normandy Invasion, we could say that tyranny was forever defeated on these shores. But history did not grant us the right to make that claim. There are those who say that the West is the great destabilizing force in the world today, that America is the reason we have not achieved peace, that America is the warmonger and America is the problem.

I tell you truly that this is not so. It never was and it never will be. All that we do to build our defenses and to negotiate the control of arms is part of our effort to be prepared for peace.

In truth there is no reconciliation we would welcome more than a reconciliation with the Soviet Union, so that together we can lessen the chance of conflict, now and forever.

I tell you from my heart that we in the United States do not want war. We want to wipe from the face of the Earth the terrible weapons man now has in his hands. I tell you we are ready to seize that beachhead -- but there must be some sign from the Soviet Union that they are willing to move forward, that they share our desire and love for peace, that they will give up the ways of conquest. There must be a changing there that will allow us to turn our hope into action.

We will pray on forever that some day that changing will come. But for now -- and particularly today -- it is good and fitting for us to renew our commitment to each other, to our freedom, and to the alliance that protects it.

We are bound still by what bound us 40 years ago, bound by the same loyalties and traditions and beliefs. We are bound by

reality: The strength and freedom of America's allies is still vital to the future of the United States. And the American security guarantee remains indispensable to the continued freedom and independence of Europe's democracies. We know, as we did 40 years ago, that our future is your future, and our hopes are your hopes.

Together, on this day 40 years after the Allies seized back a continent to liberty, let us make a vow to our dead. Let us show them by our actions that we understand what they died for and we honor those ideals no less than they. Let us say to them through our actions the words for which Mathew Ridgeway listened: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor and borne by their memory, let us continue together to represent the ideals for which they lived and died.

Thank you all very much.

## WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 5/21/84 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 5:00 p.m. tomorrow 5/22

SUBJECT: ADDRESS: POINTE DU HOC  
(5/21 - 3:30 draft)

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McFARLANE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEESE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	McMANUS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAKER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MURPHY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEAVER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OGLESBY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STOCKMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SPEAKES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FELDSTEIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SVAHN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FIELDING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	VERSTANDIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FULLER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WHITTLESEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HERRINGTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELLIOTT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HICKEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	TUTWILER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			WIRTHLIN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			HENKEL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

**RESPONSE:**

TO: Ben Elliott  
 Please see p. 2. Suggest we double-check facts w/ Army. As I recall, the Pte du Hoc guns were not in place at top of the cliffs -- they had instead been moved. They never fired on the invasion forces -- only small arms fire came from the cliffs.  
 cc: RGD  
 Jim Cicconi  
 5/23

Richard G. Darman  
 Assistant to the President  
 Ext. 2702




EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 22, 1984

1984 MAY 22 AM 10:36

MEMORANDUM FOR: BEN ELLIOTT  
FROM: AL KEEL   
SUBJECT: Address: Pointe Du Koc

We have reviewed the draft and have no comment.

cc: Dick Darman  
Dave Gerson

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 22, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR BEN ELLIOTT  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT  
AND DIRECTOR OF SPEECHWRITING

FROM: RICHARD A. HAUSER *RH*  
DEPUTY COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Draft Presidential Address at Pointe du Hoc

Our office has reviewed the above-referenced draft address and has no legal or other substantive objection to it.

cc: Richard G. Darman



Received SS  
1984 MAY 21 PM 5:32

(Noonan/BE)  
May 21, 1984  
3:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: POINTE DU HOC  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1984

We are here to mark that day in history when the Allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty. For 4 long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions cried out for liberation from the conquerors. Europe was enslaved, and the world waited for its rescue. Here the rescue began. Here the West stood, and fought against tyranny in a giant undertaking unparalleled in human history.

The Allied effort was the result of enormous cooperation, enormous coordination, and enormous courage. The men of this Invasion fought on the land, on the sea, and in the air. And they fought on these cliffs.

As we stand here today, the air is soft and full of sunlight, and if we pause and listen we will hear the snap of the flags and the click of cameras and the gentle murmur of people come to visit a place of great sanctity and meaning.

But 40 years ago today -- 40 years ago as I speak -- the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the boom of cannons. Before dawn on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, 200 American Rangers jumped off the British landing craft, stormed onto the beach, and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission that day was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. For here were concentrated the mightiest of those guns,

which would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. Removing the guns was pivotal to the Normandy Invasion, which itself was pivotal to the reclaiming of Europe, the end of the war, and the end of the long night of totalitarian conquest.

The Rangers looked up and saw the big guns -- and they saw the enemy soldiers at the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them and throwing grenades and filling the air with machine gun fire. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot their rope ladders into the face of these cliffs and they pulled themselves up. And when one Ranger would fall another would take his place, and when one rope was cut and a Ranger would hurtle to the bottom, he would find another rope and begin his climb again. They climbed and shot back and held their footing; and in time the enemy guns were quieted, in time the Rangers held the cliffs, in time the enemy pulled back and one by one the Rangers pulled themselves over the top -- and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs they seized back the continent of Europe.

Forty years ago as I speak they were fighting to hold these cliffs. They had radioed back and asked for reinforcements and they were told: There aren't any. But they did not give up. It was not in them to give up. They would not be turned back; they held the cliffs.

Words are hollow next to such deeds, and the valor of these men is impossible to describe. But we know that 200 came here, and by the end of two days of fighting only 90 could still bear arms.

We have here today some of the survivors of the battle of Point du Hoc, some of the Rangers who took these cliffs. I think

I know what they are thinking as they hear themselves praised. They are thinking: "Oh, I was just part of what happened, just a part of a bigger thing . . . and everyone was brave that day."

Everyone was. The heroism of the men of D-Day was boundless, but there was another quality to it, not only of size but of spirit. There was a style that reflected the special honor of each country.

Do you remember Bill Millin of Scotland? The day of the Invasion, British troops were pinned down near a bridge outside Caen. They were trying to hold their position under enemy fire, and they were crouched against the cold gray ground waiting desperately for reinforcements. Suddenly, they heard the sound of bagpipes wafting through the air, amorphous as a dream. Some of them thought it was. But the sound of those bagpipes came closer and louder, and they looked up to see Bill Millin of the 51st Scottish Highlanders marching at the head of the reinforcements, ignoring the smack of the bullets into the sand around him. Lord Lovat was with him -- Lord Lovat of England, marching along with his commandos, and equally unconcerned at the enemy fire. When he got to the bridge Lord Lovat calmly announced, "Sorry I'm a few minutes late." As if he'd been delayed by bad weather or a traffic jam. When in truth he'd been delayed by the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.

There was the young Frenchman, Michel de Vallavielle, who had been confined by the Germans in his home near Utah Beach. When the Invasion began he defied the enemy patrols, broke the curfew, and ran from his house to the beach to tell the Allied

troops where the German guns were hidden. He did not know it was D-Day -- he had no reason to think the invaders would be successful -- but like so many Frenchmen he had to help, and he did; and later that day he was shot when a paratrooper mistook him for one of the enemy, and it took him a year in Allied hospitals to recover.

There was the doggedness of Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Vandervoort of the All America Screaming Eagles, who broke his leg when he parachuted on to French soil. So he commandeered a small farm cart and ordered his men to wheel him on to the battlefield. There was the grace of General Theodore Roosevelt Jr., who walked with his men on Omaha Beach, and took the same risks as they. His calmness under fire rallied the troops. He died and was buried during the push for Paris. To this day, his men say he epitomized the phrase "an officer and a gentleman."

There was the impossible valor of the Poles, who threw themselves between the enemy and the rest of Europe as the Invasion took hold. And the unsurpassed courage of the Canadians, the only troops who knew exactly what they would face when they hit the beaches. The year before, their countrymen had been slaughtered at Dieppe. They knew what awaited them here, but they would not be deterred, and they hit Juno Beach and held it and would not let go.

There was the honor of the German soldiers. By the summer of 1944, some of them had lost faith in their rulers; but they kept faith with their people and they kept the faith of the corps. Many fought as great men fight, and, in the military

tradition that honors gallantry for itself alone, some of them were buried with the Allied dead.

All of these men were part of a rollcall of honor, with names that speak of a pride as bright as the colors they wore: the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, the Manitoba Grenadiers, Poland's 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Yeomen of England's armoured divisions, the forces of Free France, the Regiment de Chars de Combat, the 101st Airborne. These names are written forever on this sand and on this wind, for truly these are men who "in their lives fought for life . . . and left the vivid air signed with their honor."

What inspired the men of the armies that met here? What impelled them to put all thought of self-preservation behind, and put themselves in harm's way not for their own sake but for others? What was it that made them overcome fear and become champions of liberty?

It was faith and belief; it was loyalty and love. It was faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead -- or the next. It was the deep knowledge (and pray God we have not lost it) that there is a profound, moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. They were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so they did not doubt their cause. And they were right not to doubt.

They knew that some things are worth dying for -- that one's country is worth dying for and that democracy is worth dying for, because it is the most deeply honorable form of Government ever

devised by man. They loved liberty and they were happy to fight against tyranny. And they knew the people of their countries were behind them and supporting them.

The British soldiers knew this when they pushed off from England on the night of June 5th. The Invasion was still a secret and there were to be no big goodbyes for the townspeople who saw them off. But as the soldiers departed they could see the people crying as they said farewell. The American soldiers knew in their hearts, though they could not know in fact, that when word of the Invasion spread throughout America, people filled the churches at 4 a.m., and families dressed in their nightclothes knelt and prayed on their porches; and in Philadelphia they did what they do to mark the most momentous occasions of our national life: They rang the Liberty Bell. Bells rang out all across America that night.

And there was another element that helped the men of D-Day. It was the rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause. And, so, the night before the Invasion, when Colonel Wolverton asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer he told them: Do not bow your heads but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we are about to do. And in another part of England General Mathew Ridgeway that same night lay on his cot and talked to his God and listened for the words spoken to Joshua: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

These are the things that impelled them; these are the things that informed the unity of the West. And with that unity the West could not be stopped.

Within a few weeks of the Invasion the forces of Free France swept into Paris, and the people of that great city filled the streets with roar after roar of "Vive la France, Vive la division LeClerc." Paris was free again; soon France would be free again, and Europe would be free.

When the war was over the nations that emerged from the ashes were faced with the challenge of making a new beginning. There were lives to be rebuilt and communities to be reconstructed. There were governments to be returned to the people and nations to be reborn. Above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies who fought in the Normandy Invasion drew new strength from the faith and belief and loyalty and love of those who fell here. And they rebuilt a new Europe together.

Their first accomplishment was a great reconciliation, not only of those who fought on opposite sides in the war . . . but of those nations which had been torn for centuries by rivalries of territory and religion and power. Finally, with the end of World War II, the rivalries which had bedeviled Western Europe for centuries were interred.

After that great and historic accomplishment, the Allies together rebuilt the rubble of Europe. This effort required the same cooperation, coordination, and courage that the Normandy Invasion required. Inspired by the virtues of the men who fought the war, the United States created the Marshall Plan -- by which we helped rebuild our allies and our former enemies. The Marshall Plan led to the Atlantic Alliance -- a great alliance that functions as a shield for democracy and for prosperity, a

great alliance that acknowledges that Europe's destiny is America's destiny.

In spite of our great efforts and our great successes, not all of what followed the end of the war was happy, or planned. The destruction of the war left Europe weakened in the face of Soviet communism. Some of the countries that had been liberated were lost. The great sadness of that fact echoes down to our own time and can be seen in the streets of Poland and Czechoslovakia and Hungary. We saw threatening Soviet action in Berlin -- and we realized that the Soviet troops that occupied the center of this continent would not leave after the end of the war that called them here. They are there to this day, uninvited, unwanted, but still unyielding almost 40 years after the war ended.

Because of this, Allied forces still stand on this continent. But our armies are here only to protect and defend democracy -- and never to take land that is not ours. The only land we hold is the graveyards like these where our heroes rest.

We in America have learned the bitter lessons of two world wars: that it is better to be here and ready to preserve and protect the peace, than to take blind shelter in our homes across the sea, rushing only to respond after freedom is threatened. We have learned, in spite of our long and enduring desire for peace, that isolationism never was and never can be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with expansionist intent. We have learned that isolationism does not avert war. It assures it.



We live in difficult times. It would be a wonderful thing if today, 40 years after the Normandy Invasion, we could say that tyranny was forever defeated on these shores. But history did not grant us the right to make that claim. There are those who say that the West is the great destabilizing force in the world today, that America is the reason we have not achieved peace, that America is the warmonger and America is the problem.

I tell you truly that this is not so. It never was and it never will be. All that we do to build our defenses and to negotiate the control of arms is part of our effort to be prepared for peace.

In truth there is no reconciliation we would welcome more than a reconciliation with the Soviet Union, so that together we can lessen the chance of conflict, now and forever.

I tell you from my heart that we in the United States do not want war. We want to wipe from the face of the Earth the terrible weapons man now has in his hands. I tell you we are ready to seize that beachhead -- but there must be some sign from the Soviet Union that they are willing to move forward, that they share our desire and love for peace, that they will give up the ways of conquest. There must be a changing there that will allow us to turn our hope into action.

We will pray on forever that some day that changing will come. But for now -- and particularly today -- it is good and fitting for us to renew our commitment to each other, to our freedom, and to the alliance that protects it.

We are bound still by what bound us 40 years ago, bound by the same loyalties and traditions and beliefs. We are bound by

reality: .The strength and freedom of America's allies is still vital to the future of the United States. And the American security guarantee remains indispensable to the continued freedom and independence of Europe's democracies. We know, as we did 40 years ago, that our future is your future, and our hopes are your hopes.

Together, on this day 40 years after the Allies seized back a continent to liberty, let us make a vow to our dead. Let us show them by our actions that we understand what they died for and we honor those ideals no less than they. Let us say to them through our actions the words for which Mathew Ridgeway listened: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor and borne by their memory, let us continue together to represent the ideals for which they lived and died.

Thank you all very much.