

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS IT WENT TO THAT ENABLED US TO HOLD THIS CEREMONY HERE TODAY. SOME OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED FIGURES IN THE OSS SERVED THE STATE DEPARTMENT WITH DISTINCTION, TOO.

THEY INCLUDED AMB. DAVID BRUCE, RALPH BUNCHE, AMB. WILLIAM COLBY, CORA DU BOIS, AMB. RICHARD HELMS, FISHER HOWE, AMB. HUGH MONTGOMERY, AND AMB. ROBERT MURPHY.

AS YOU DRIVE ACROSS THE ROOSEVELT BRIDGE TOWARDS WASHINGTON, THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL IS VISIBLE TO YOUR RIGHT. BEHIND IT, THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT; AND BEHIND IT, THE TOP OF THE US CAPITOL.

TO YOUR LEFT, THIS COMPLEX OF BUILDINGS IS VISIBLE. THEY ARE MONUMENTS TO THE US INTELLIGENCE AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMUNITIES. THEIR HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE WAS RECOGNIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR WHEN THEY WERE ADDED TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES THIS YEAR.

CHARLES PINCK, PRESIDENT  
THE OSS SOCIETY  
JUNE 16, 2017

OSS FOUNDER GENERAL WILLIAM DONOVAN'S IMAGINATION WAS SAID TO BE SO POWERFUL THAT HE COULD "SEE AN ACORN AND ENVISION AN OAK TREE." THE ACORN HE PLANTED HERE 75 YEARS AGO WAS THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES. THE OAK TREE IS THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, THE US SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND, AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH IT. WE ARE VERY HONORED TO HAVE THEIR LEADERS WITH US TODAY.

AFTER WORLD WAR II, THE BRANCHES OF THIS TREE GREW SEPARATELY. SINCE 9/11, THEY HAVE GROWN TOGETHER - AND NOW FIGHT TOGETHER - AT THE TIP OF THE OSS SPEAR. GEN. MICHAEL HAYDEN SAID "CIA HAS NEVER LOOKED MORE LIKE ITS DIRECT ANCESTOR, THE OSS, THAN IT DOES RIGHT NOW."

NED PUTZELL, GENERAL DONOVAN'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT, WROTE THE FOLLOWING: "INSPIRED BY HIS PERSONALITY AND HIS VISION, THOUSANDS OF DEVOTED PEOPLE TOOK THE UNEVEN ODDS.

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PEOPLE OF ALL AGES LIVED OR DIED AS DUTY DEMANDED OR CIRCUMSTANCES PERMITTED. THEY KILLED AND WERE KILLED ALONE OR IN GROUPS, IN JUNGLES, IN CITIES, BY SEA AND BY AIR. THEY ORGANIZED RESISTANCE WHERE THERE WAS NO RESISTANCE. THEY HELPED IT TO GROW WHERE IT WAS WEAK. THEY ASSAULTED THE ENEMY'S MIND AS WELL AS HIS BODY. THEY HELPED CONFUSE HIS WILL AND DISRUPT HIS PLANS."

GENERAL DONOVAN DESCRIBED THE OSS AN "UNUSUAL EXPERIMENT TO DETERMINE WHETHER A GROUP OF AMERICANS CONSTITUTING A CROSS-SECTION OF RACIAL ORIGINS, ABILITIES, AND TEMPERMENTS COULD MEET AND RISK ENCOUNTERS WITH LONG-ESTABLISHED AND WELL-TRAINED ENEMY ORGANIZATIONS."

HE ESTABLISHED THE PRINCIPAL THAT INTELLIGENCE AND POLITICS SHOULD BE DIVORCED FROM ONE ANOTHER. NOEL RILEY WROTE THAT "POLITICS WERE IRRELEVANT TO THE DIRECTOR. HE VALUED CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE, A LOVE OF ADVENTURE, AND A WILLINGNESS TO FIGHT THE ENEMY."

OSS DREW ITS PERSONNEL FROM ALL SEGMENTS OF AMERICAN SOCIETY BECAUSE GENERAL DONOVAN SAID THAT NO COUNTRY IN THE WORLD HAD MORE CITIZENS WITH KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER COUNTRIES. HE DESCRIBED THEM AS "GLORIOUS AMATEURS" AND SAID THEY PERFORMED "SOME OF THE BRAVEST ACTS OF THE WAR."

WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE SEVERAL OF GENERAL DIONOVAN'S "GLORIOUS AMATEURS" HERE TODAY. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THEM TO STAND AS I READ THEIR NAMES. PLEASE HOLD YOUR APPLAUSE I HAVE INTRODUCED ALL OF THEM: JOHN BILLINGS, MARION FRIESWYK, PAUL ROBERTS AND ART REINHARDT.

THE SPIRIT OF THE OSS WAS DESCRIBED BEST BY WILLIAM CASEY WHO WROTE THAT "YOU DIDN'T WAIT SIX MONTHS FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY TO PROVE THAT AN IDEA COULD WORK. YOU GAMBLERD IT MIGHT WORK. YOU DIDN'T TIE UP THE ORGANIZATION WITH RED TAPE. YOU TOOK THE INITIATIVE AND THE RESPONSIBILITY. YOU WENT AROUND END. YOU WENT OVER SOMEBODY'S HEAD IF YOU HAD TO. BUT YOU ACTED. THAT'S WHAT DROVE PEOPLE CRAZY ABOUT THE OSS."

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OSS RECRUITED AMERICA'S LEADING ACADEMICS FOR ITS RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS BRANCH THAT BECAME THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH. GENERAL DONOVAN CALLED THEM HIS "PROFESSORS" AND ATTRIBUTED MUCH OF THE OSS' SUCCESS TO "GOOD OLD-FASHIONED INTELLECTUAL SWEAT."

ITS PERSONNEL WERE DRAWN FROM EVERY BRANCH OF THE US MILITARY. IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR OSS ROOTS, MEMBERS OF THE US SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND WEAR THE OSS' INSIGNIA, THE SPEARHEAD, WHICH CONTINUES TO POINT THE WAY FORWARD.

ITS MOST LASTING LEGACY, IN ADDITION TO HELPING SECURE AMERICA'S VICTORY IN THE GREATEST CONFLICT THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN, WAS BEST EXPRESSED BY GENERAL DONOVAN AT THE FINAL GATHERING OF OSS PERSONNEL ON SEPTEMBER 28, 1945.

WHAT HE SAID IN 1945 IS STILL TRUE TODAY: "ONLY BY DECISIONS OF NATIONAL POLICY BASED UPON ACCURATE INFORMATION DO WE HAVE A CHANCE OF A PEACE THAT WILL ENDURE."

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