

Notes 6N, Copy 2

Brig. Gen. Frank A. Allen

The Pentagon

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Brig Gen Frank A. Allen, former Press Rels Chief at SHAEF, interviewed by F C Pogue at Pentagon, 23 Jan 1950.

1. Doesn't know too much about Davis' organization at SHAEF. Thinks he did all right, but didn't have chance to work it out before he got sick. Had drifted a bit when Allen got it.

Surles wanted Allen back here as his assistant. Had been brought from 1st Armed Div to Devers staff as G-2; organized G-2 there. Old friend of Devers. Had played poker with Devers a lot. Surles suggested him to Ike. Ike insisted and he was sent up to SHAEF.

Bedell didn't like Dupuy. Felt he had special favorites. Allen says Dupuy spent a lot of time on his book, but still did all right.

2. Says Ike told him he was going to get rid of Butcher; too much rank for naval man to have around headquarters. Will you take him. Butcher didn't give too much trouble. Was disquieting to have a man that close to Ike around. Butcher OK on communications work.

3. I wanted to fire Kennedy at the time of his article on FDR and de Gaulle in Feb 45. Bedell wouldn't do it. Kennedy really a sick man. We had set-up worked out for Ike to announce end of war. Didn't accept it. Difficult to avoid trouble. People forget background of war at that time. Couldn't have Russians prolonging the war. Lots of people set on the story that Kennedy spilled. Says Ike called him about restoring Kennedy to War Dept list. Says he hedged on the clearance; not really one. Downey brought pressure. Some sort of kinship between Kennedy and Downey. Ike said they will accuse me of dog in the manger attitude. People over there wanted to fix him and AP both. We didn't suspend AP except long enough to find out the leak.

4. Great difficulties because of number of people and headquarters to deal with. French would turn things lose. BEC was troublesome. British felt that we gave more to Americans, because they could carry more.

Difficulties because Patton got all the headlines. No way to keep newspaper people from doing what they wanted.

You have to give news to the people. Army not accustomed to doing that. Hadn't built upon organization for it; had to improvise. Used as many newspaper people as I could find. Burrows Matthews splendid person (Buffalo Courier and Express) and his wife Major McIlhenny both good for info. My executive officer Ben G. Crosby (State Dept could help you on details.

5. Montgomery would turn newsman down one day; tell them too much the next. Bedell sometimes told too much, but was good to answer my requests to brief the fellows.

6. Communications the great problem. Never had enough. Paris helped some.

7. Had a club of sorts over the French in the control of newsprint. But there was no proper censorship there. Home Office sometimes changed the stories on us. Interfered with some of the stuff.

8. Patton gave trouble sometimes. Fired one of our censors once; I insisted on his being restored. Hunter almost caused mutiny at 3d Army Hq. Patton fussed, but wouldn't fire him. I had to do it.

9. We felt we had to play up the soldier; get as many stories out as possible.

10. Few people realize the housekeeping problem we had, Matter of billets and transportation great.

Great problem because, a story would break from a lower Headquarters and that would catch people out at higher headquarters. Trouble would come because a man would come over from TIME or something like that and then go back and write a story which would cause trouble.

11. We fired a BBC man and asked them to get rid of him because he prefaced a cleared broadcast with full details on Patton's attack.

12. Not wise to have PRD and PWD in same section. One works contrary to other. Not sure that it is well to have them special staff sections; just don't get the information you would as a General staff section.