

Date on Document: January 28, 1944

Description: Letter from Prime Minister Winston Churchill to General Eisenhower. Churchill has told the press they must follow all restrictions of NOT forecasting any dates, locations, etc. regarding Operation Overlord.

Eisenhower, Dwight D., Pre-Presidential Papers, 1916-52; Principal File; Box No. 22

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10, Downing Street  
Whitehall

January 28, 1944



My dear Eisenhower,

The War Cabinet have been giving consideration to the measures necessary to ensure the security of Operation OVERLORD.

We have been disturbed by the tendency of the Press to speculate about impending operations. This has now been dealt with and a notice has been issued to the Press telling them that there must be no attempt to forecast dates even by the month or season; that discussion must be avoided of the desirability or likelihood of landings on particular places, sections of the coast-line, or territory; and above all that there must be no estimates of the scale on which attacks would be conducted either in men or material. A corresponding message has been issued to the American Press by the American Press Censor asking them to observe similar restrictions.

There remains, however, a further source of danger, namely, the Press Correspondents accredited to your Headquarters. In the case of correspondents accredited to forces in the field, it is, of course, possible to exercise a direct measure of control over the messages which they send; and in that case there is less risk of any leakage of information which would be of value to the enemy. But Press Correspondents accredited to forces in this country are in a different position. We know that information, which becomes generally known in Press circles, is readily picked up by members of the neutral Embassies and is transmitted by them in cypher to their own countries, from which it may easily become known to the enemy. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that a very stringent attitude should be adopted in regard to the communication to Press Correspondents in this country of any background information about OVERLORD operations, either before they start, or while they proceed.

I told the War Cabinet that I felt sure that these matters were already in your mind, but that I would let you know at once the anxieties which they entertained.

Yours sincerely,

WINSTON CHURCHILL

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, G.C.B.

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to be classified  
derived  
Aug  
11/5/66*

*DECLASSIFIED  
per Kogin to Shustafson  
11/60/72 BSR  
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