

**Speech by H.E. Sylvie Bermann,
French Ambassador to the United Kingdom
at the presentation of the insignia of *Chevalier*
in the *Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur*
to three Second World War veterans
*French Residence, Tuesday 14 July 2015***

Ladies and gentlemen,

I'm now going to present three Second World War veterans with the insignia of *Chevalier* in the *Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur*. They all played an active role in liberating our country, and do us an honour by being here this evening.

Two of them are British and took part in the Normandy Landings. The other, a Frenchman, fought under the Free French in the Royal Air Force.

We owe our freedom and security in large part to their dedication and readiness to risk their lives.

These gentlemen teach us a lesson which we must strive to pass on to future generations. They embody the virtues of self-sacrifice, perseverance and dedication to the cause – virtues which society could learn from today.

Michael Noss, you landed on Juno Beach on D-Day in daylight, having been anchored off the beach on the night of 5 to 6 June. You spent the remainder of the war driving east through Belgium, Holland and Germany.

John Shine, you were part of the 57th Flotilla, which was part of Q Squadron on D-Day, and you were part of the first wave that landed on Omaha and Utah beaches at 6.30 on the morning of the Landings.

Charles Calis, you were condemned to death for the sabotage of German aircraft, before scaling the wall of the jail in Belgium where you were imprisoned. You travelled to Casablanca, where you joined the French Air Force, ending up in Algiers. From there you were sent to Scotland, where you became a qualified RAF pilot, and in 1944 you joined a Free French RAF station near York.