

# SOE SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE SOE

Formed on the 13 June 1940 by Winston Churchill. The original HQ was at 64 Baker Street, a top secret address, code names MO1, NID(Q) and A10. Its activities initially focused on Propaganda, Operations and research.

The Bond style Research Dept, was known as "Churchill's Toy Shop"

Under the control of Sir Frank Nelson, the aim of SOE was to spread widespread Civil disobedience, nuisance and sabotage in Axis countries

As the SOE developed, the aims of the organisation turned more to supporting the intended Allied invasion, providing advanced intelligence and creating a secret army, ready to rise up when the invasion occurred.

Training and selection were demanding, carried out all over the country, mainly in remote stately homes, SOE known as "Statley Homes of England"

MD1 nr Aylesbury Weapons training, X11 nr Stevenage Explosives, ISRB nr Welwyn Radio, Weapons, Explosives and Bobbie traps, XV Boarhamwood Camouflage, Hiding weapons, Explosives, Local dress, Money, Personal effects and Documents. RAF Rimney Security, Warnborough Commando training, Aslisaif Scotland Unarmed combat, Altringham Parachute training, Beaulieu Tradecraft.

Equipment Developed for use By SOE included:

The Welrod, silent assassin's gun, Fairburn and Sykes fighting knife  
Suicide pills, Plastic explosives, Limpet mines, Time pencils  
Camouflaged explosives, such as coal to put in train coal bunkers,  
Spikes, to put under car tyres, Trip lines, Contaminants for fuel tanks.  
Clandestine Radios, Miniature telescopes, Silk maps etc.

The SOE were deployed and supported, by two secret RAF squadrons operating from RAF Tempsford. 161 Squadron flew Lysanders deploying key personnel and 138 Squadron flew modified bombers dropping supplies, in cylindrical 1.8m 102kg containers, also agents by parachute.

The Zenith of the SOE came with Operation Jedburgh just before D Day  
For more information watch *Allo Allo* or the sobering drama *Secret Army*