

Telephone No. : EUSton 4321. **Extn. 74.** MINISTRY OF INFORMATION,
Telegrams :—"MINIFORM, LONDON."

MALET STREET,

LONDON, W.C.1.

In any further communication on this subject
the following reference should be quoted :—

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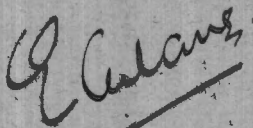
Your reference :

14th June, 1944.

Dear Stagg,

The enclosed "hand-outs" entitled
"INVASION HIGHLIGHTS NO. 1 AND NO. II"
may prove useful as commentary guidance,
and I will forward any further "dope"
which may be issued from time to time.

Yours sincerely,



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Newsreel Section.

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INVASION HIGHLIGHTS - I.

THE PLAN

Plans for landings on the European Continent were prepared by a British General who was appointed in March 1943. He was assisted by an American General as his Deputy and a Joint Planning Staff. The Plan, as evolved, was approved by the Quebec Conference in August 1943.

THE NAVIES

In the initial stages of the operations, over 4,000 ships, with the addition of several thousand smaller craft, were engaged. These comprised ships of the Royal Navy, United States Navy, the Canadian and Australian Navies, and the French, Greek, Dutch, Polish and Norwegian Navies.

Participating in these operations, are 1,000 merchant ships manned by 50,000 volunteers.

In the total Allied Naval Forces engaged there are more officers and men than there were in the Royal Navy at the commencement of the war.

Two hundred Allied minesweepers, without which the Naval Forces could not operate, are at work in the Channel. They carry 10,000 officers and men, 2,800 tons of mine-sweeping gear, and almost 70 miles of sweep wire.

The bombarding force brought well over 600 guns, ranging from 16-inch to 4-inch, to bear on enemy targets, firing at a rate of 2,000 tons every 10 minutes.

Targets up to 8 miles inland were reduced by accurate naval gunfire. Destroyers have been operating at little over one mile offshore, and one dropped anchor at 2,000 yards and continued the bombardment from there.

About 50% of the smaller types of landing craft are manned by Royal Marines, who also man the guns in flakships, and man one in every four of the guns in battleships and cruisers. They are also with the first artillery to land.

Small 83-foot cutters of the Coast Guard Rescue Flotilla with both task forces have rescued at least 444 troops and sailors from drowning.

THE ARMIES

A senior staff officer has described the administrative task involved in the preparation for invasion as being equivalent to that of moving the populations of two of the biggest cities in the United Kingdom, transporting them across the sea, and making arrangements for their food, ammunition, petrol, and all their domestic amenities, in addition to their fighting needs.

The task of water-proofing Allied invasion vehicles and tanks occupied the whole steel sheet rolling capacity of the industries of Britain - 280 factories. Enough steel plates were fitted to vehicles to lay an armoured road from London to Berlin. Some 250 lorries were engaged for 8 weeks in transporting the material from factories to R.A.O.C. depots; each lorry covered the ordinary mileage of a year in those two months. The R.A.O.C. had the task of receiving, assembling and issuing 500,000 components to some 5,000 different depots.

THE AIR FORCES

Announcing the Allied landing in France on 6th June, Mr. Churchill said: "The Anglo-American Allies are sustained by about 11,000 firstline aircraft".....

Between 1st June and the night of 6th June, the Allied Air Forces flew 31,000 sorties.

During the night of 5/6th June, 1,300 aircraft of R.A.F. Bomber Command dropped well over 5,000 tons of high explosives on 10 coastal batteries in France.

During the same night, more than 1,000 troop carriers and gliders of the 9th U.S.A.A.F. and the R.A.F. flew paratroops and airborne infantry into the zone of operations. The machines formed a train 9 aircraft wide and 200 miles long. Less than 2% of the transports which took part in the initial operations was lost.

Between midnight and 8 a.m. of 6th, more than 10,000 tons of bombs fell in the coastal areas of Northern France. During the first 24 hours of the invasion, 15 - 20,000 tons of bombs were dropped, and at least 30,000 Allied airmen were in the air over Europe in this period.

On D. Day, only 1 railway bridges and 5 road bridges between Paris and the sea were left standing; between Rouen and Paris, every railway bridge had been destroyed. Altogether, 25 railway and 9 road bridges across the Seine had been put out of action through air attack by 7th June.

Between dawn of 6th June and midday of 8th June, Allied aircraft had flown about 27,000 individual missions. In that period, 176 enemy aircraft had been destroyed in the air. Allied losses were 289 aircraft, including all types except gliders.

THE BOMBERS

A number of officers have described the administrative task involved in the preparation for invasion as being equivalent to that of moving the population of two of the biggest cities in the United Kingdom, reorganizing their services, and setting arrangements for their food, sanitation, transport, and all their essential necessities, in addition to their fighting needs.

The task of water-transporting Allied invasion vehicles and tanks demanded the utmost speed and efficiency of the mechanics of Britain - the RAF. Some 200 Lancasters were engaged for 2 weeks in reorganizing the material from factories to RAF bases, and each factory covered the ordinary mileage of a year in those two weeks. The RAF had the task of receiving, assembling and loading 500,000 components to some 5,000 different types.

THE AIR FORCE

Throughout the Allied invasion in France on 6th June, the Generalissimo of the American Air Force and the British Air Force...
Between 1st June and the night of 6th June, the Allied Air Force flew 12,000 sorties.
During the night of 5th June, 1,500 Lancasters of the RAF...
Dropped 7,000 tons of high explosives in the coastal belt in France.

Passed by the British Censor. Quote No. P.

INVASION HIGHLIGHTS - II.

THE NAVIES

One of the United States 14" battleships operating in the Baie de Seine fired 650 tons of ammunition in one day; and up to noon on D-Day H.M.S. Warspite (15") fired 175 rounds.

H.M. destroyer Glaisdale fired more than 300 rounds of 4" ammunition in 40 minutes, destroying and setting on fire a German strong point and harassing two 75 mm. guns.

During the bombardment of the Tilly-sur-Seulles area, Panzers opposing the Armies' advance were shelled at a range of $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles by H.M. cruisers Argonaut and Orion. The cruisers' fire, directed by Forward Observation Officers, is equivalent to that of a full regiment of British field artillery.

Targets up to 15 miles inland have been shelled by H.M. battleships Rodney and Warspite, and during the 24 hours between 0800 on 8th and 0800 on 9th June 46 targets were engaged by Allied warships.

Obstacle Clearance Units have been organised for the task of clearing such obstacles as partly submerged mines and staked shells in the beach area. One of these Units, despite losses, made two miles of beach safe in four days by the detonation of 4,200 "obstacles".

During the first four days of the Invasion operations one Headquarters Ship alone passed approximately 11,000 signals in order to get vessels to their exact destinations and provide for their speedy unloading.

THE ARMIES

General Montgomery has stated: "We have won the battle of the beaches". The Allied beachhead in Normandy is now some 60 miles long and 18 miles deep at the point of furthest penetration; the total area of Allied occupation thus extends to something between 400-500 square miles, about 3 times the size of the Isle of Wight.

In 1939, the movement of the British Expeditionary Force to France, landing through four ports, without enemy interference, and comprising men far less heavily equipped than is now the case, took 2 weeks. In 1944, the Allied Armies, landing on a hostile shore, established a foothold in France in 2 days and already present a fighting force many times more formidable than was Lord Gort's.

Allied formations so far identified in France are: The British 6th Airborne Division, the 50th-Northumbrian-Division, the 3rd Infantry Division, the 3rd Canadian Division, and the United States 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions.

Much of the success of the air-borne landings has been due to the use of one of Britain's secret weapons, the Hamilcar glider, which has a wing span greater than that of the Lancaster bomber and is yet so manoeuvrable that it can be landed in little more than a small meadow. This glider can carry a fast light tank, armed with a gun, and, started up by its crew while still air-borne, the tank can go into action as soon as the glider touches down.

German prisoners taken in the fighting in Normandy now total 10,000.

THE AIR FORCES

Between 7th March and D-Day, the Allied Expeditionary Forces, R.A.F. Bomber Command and the 8th U.S.A.A.F. together made 87,900 sorties and dropped 32,600 tons of bombs on most of the 82 main railway centres between the Vosges and the Belgian frontier. When the Allies landed in Normandy, 50 centres had been completely destroyed, 8 all but destroyed and 17 severely damaged; the whole of the railway network to the North and West of Paris was paralysed.

Of the 12 heavy gun batteries along the invasion area of the French Channel Coast, 5 had been wiped out by D-Day and 7 so badly damaged that they could take little, if any, part in the battle; to accomplish this, 4,400 tons of bombs had been dropped, mostly by Marauders in daylight and R.A.F. heavy bombers at night.

In the course of 1,700 sorties, some 600,000 lb. of bombs and 3,500 rocket projectiles were discharged against enemy radar and radio installations with the result that, on D-Day, 21 of these installations were unserviceable.

From 5th to 8th June, more than 32,000 sorties were flown by all the Allied Air Forces together.

By 11th June, all the bridges over the Seine between Paris and the sea were known to be down.

During the first 6 days after the Allied landing, the 9th U.S.A.A.F. flew more than 13,000 sorties, and more than 5,800 tons of bombs were dropped on all types of targets in and around the battle zone; fighter-bombers alone hit more than 800 different objectives. Well over 1,000 individual missions were flown by 9th U.S.A.A.F. troop-carriers and gliders. In these operations, the 9th U.S.A.A.F. lost 112 aircraft, excluding gliders, and destroyed 40 enemy aircraft over the Channel and the beachheads.