

BIGOT

COMSAG (44) 10

11th January, 1944

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Copy No. 77

SUPREME ALLIED HEADQUARTERS



SUBJECT: Operation 'OVERLORD'

TO : Commanding General, First Army Group

GENERAL

1. The object of Operation 'OVERLORD' is to secure a lodgment area on the Continent from which further offensive operations can be developed. The lodgment area must contain sufficient port facilities to maintain a force of some twenty-six to thirty divisions, and enable that force to be augmented by follow-up shipments from the UNITED STATES and elsewhere of additional divisions and supporting units at the rate of three to five divisions per month.

2. The operation will be carried out in two phases:-

Phase I - The effecting of an assault landing on the NORMANDY beaches between the limits of QUINEVILLE in the WEST and CABOURG-LIS-BAINS in the EAST, to be followed by the early capture and development of airfield sites and the capture of the port of CHERBOURG.

Phase II - The enlargement of the area captured in Phase I so as to secure the whole of the CHERBOURG, LOIRE and BRITTANY group of ports.

TARGET DATE

3. The Commanders mentioned in paragraph 5 are jointly to report, after examination, the earliest possible date after the 1st May, 1944, on which, in their opinion, the operation can be successfully undertaken.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

4. The Supreme Allied Commander is to co-ordinate and control the planning and execution of the operation as a whole.

5. The Allied Naval Commander, XCF, the Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group and the Air Commander-in-Chief, AEAFC, are to be jointly responsible to the Supreme Allied Commander for the planning of the operation and for its execution when so advised.

6. The Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, is to command all land forces engaged in the operation until such time as the Supreme Allied Commander allocates an area of responsibility to the Commanding General, First Army Group.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority J.C.S. MEMO
Date 7/5/72
By DJH, NARS Date 11/16/73

2.

7. The allocation of an area of responsibility to the First Army Group is to be effected by the designation of an appropriate boundary line, the general principle being adopted that UNITED STATES forces will be on the right and BRITISH/CANADIAN forces on the left of the line throughout the operation. The effective date for the allocation of an area of responsibility to First Army Group will be when, in the opinion of the Supreme Allied Commander, the number of UNITED STATES troops landed on the Continent warrants their control being exercised by the First Army Group Commander.

8. Except in emergency, and then only for the shortest possible time, a BRITISH or UNITED STATES formation lower than a corps is not to be placed under command of another nationality.

ALLOTMENT OF FORCES

Naval forces

9. An estimate of the landing ships and craft likely to be available for the operation is shown at Appendix 'A'.

10. Other naval forces which will be available will be designated later.

11. An estimate of merchant shipping likely to be available is shown at Appendix 'B'.

Land forces

12. An estimate of the UNITED STATES and BRITISH/CANADIAN land forces which will be available in the UNITED KINGDOM for the operation on 1st May, 1944, is attached at Appendix 'C'.

13. The following UNITED STATES forces are to be placed under the command of the Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, until such time as the Supreme Allied Commander allots you a sphere of responsibility:-

First Army reinforced by:-

a. Such UNITED STATES airborne troops as are required for the operation consistent with the lift available.

b. Such ranger battalions as the Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, may require for the operation.

c. Such First Army Group troops as the Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, may require for the support and maintenance of UNITED STATES forces.

d. An attached supply and maintenance organisation to support the UNITED STATES forces to consist of a base section headquarters and such SOS troops and personnel as are necessary. These troops will pass to your control when your headquarters is set up on the Continent.

Air forces

14. An estimate of the air forces likely to be available on 1st May, 1944, is shown at Appendix 'D'.

15. An estimate of the air lift likely to be available on 1st May, 1944, for the operation is shown at Appendix 'E'. It is being assumed for planning purposes that sufficient transport aircraft and crews will be provided to assure the lift of one airborne division on D day followed by a second within approximately twenty-four hours.

3.

TASKS

16. You will work in close co-operation with the Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, with whom direct communication is authorized, during the planning, preparation and mounting of the operation.

17. You will arrange for the troops mentioned in paragraph 13 to be placed under the command of Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, at a time to be mutually agreed upon.

18. You will attach to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, a suitable staff and signals increment from First Army Group, at a time to be mutually arranged. This increment will rejoin Headquarters, First Army Group, when the latter is established on the Continent.

19. You will keep the Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, informed in regard to the status of UNITED STATES forces mentioned in paragraph 13 and of any major deficiencies in the requirement of men and material which cannot be met through normal channels.

20. You will be prepared to set up your Headquarters on the Continent when, in the opinion of the Supreme Allied Commander, the number of UNITED STATES troops landed on the Continent warrants it. You will from that time be responsible for operations on the Continent within a sphere allotted to you by the Supreme Allied Commander.

21. You will prepare plans, in close collaboration with the Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group, and Ninth Air Force, for the assumption of command as indicated in paragraph 20 and for the deployment of UNITED STATES Army forces not already committed.

LATER INSTRUCTIONS

22. Additional instructions regarding the cover plan, administration, training, signal communications and civil affairs will be issued later.

SUBMISSION OF PLAN

23. You will keep the Supreme Allied Commander informed of the progress of your planning.

CANCELLATION OF PREVIOUS DIRECTIVE

24. The previous directive issued to the Commanding General, First Army Group (COSSAC (43) 75) is hereby cancelled.



F. B. Morgan
F. B. MORGAN,
Lieutenant General,
Chief of Staff to the
Supreme Commander (Dontagoste)