

~~SECRET~~

105

head the SOS in the Oran area. Initially, the SOS at Casablanca will not be unified with that at Oran under one command. General Rocks is called up from Longford Castle, where he has been heading the II Army Corps as Chief of Staff since General Clark came to London. Rocks is told that in case the projected U.S. plan goes through, he will be designated Chief of Staff of the Oran Task Force. He remains at Norfolk house to work out the slate for the task force staff which will be held down to the minimum.

General Ryder is called in and oriented on the proposal for an all U.S. operation. General Porter is going to be placed in command of the 168th Infantry combat team. General Clark discusses with General Ryder the possible use of the 34th Division in the follow-up phase. Ryder is also told that General Clark might take one infantry battalion from his division for use as a headquarters security force. The cadre of the 135th Infantry, now in Scotland, is to return to Northern Ireland at once. The 34th, General Ryder says, is considerably under strength but replacements will be made from troops enroute to the European Theater of Operations.

Once again the 1st Division is having trouble getting the equipment to replace that on the ship that went aground off Newfoundland. Colonel Hughes reports that one ship carrying an estimated 5,000 tons of organization equipment for the 1st's infantry and artillery units has had to turn back in mid-ocean. Hughes believes the ship is carrying the express shipment which was rushed to New York to replace the equipment that was on the vessel that went aground. Under the circumstances it is unlikely that this equipment will be in the hands of troops before October 5. For a D-day of November 5 it would have to be reloaded immediately for shipment to the African theater and would not be available to the troops for training purposes.

General Gale and Brigadier Benoy advise General Clark that the British War Office wants to send telegrams tonight directing movement of supplies to go on the first follow-up convoy for the Algiers-Philippeville-Bone force. The War Office is willing to hold up the issuance of telegrams for the Philippeville and Bone forces, but has instructed General Anderson to release telegrams for the Algiers equipment. This conference occurs prior to receipt of Mr. Roosevelt's cable and General Clark instructs Brigadier Benoy to request the War Office to "send no telegrams for at least the next 24 hours, or until further advice is given by me." General Gale is told that no "new plan" directive has been issued and that "work is to continue along the lines indicated at the last staff conference--Oran, Algiers, Philippeville, Bone.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 1, 1942--The British are finally told today that TORCH has developed a split personality; that, as things now stand, there are really two plans--President Roosevelt's All-American attack and the combined Anglo-American assault that has Prime Minister Churchill as its chief proponent.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

106

General Clark assembles 37 officers, British and American, in a well-guarded conference room at 10 AM to give them the complete picture on TORCH planning. The top-ranking men sit at a rough wooden table at the head of which sits General Clark. On his right is Lieut. General Anderson, who is scheduled to lead the British effort in TORCH; on General Clark's left is his Acting Chief of Staff, Brig. General Gruenther, then comes Admiral Ramsay of the British Navy. The crowded table is studded with top notch British and American military, naval and air talent. Around the room other officers sit attentively on wooden, folding chairs.

"Some of you men are less confused than others about TORCH," General Clark says, grinning. "Let's all get equally confused." The officers, all of whom have been on edge because of secrecy and an ever-shifting plan, laugh and the conference is off to a good start. X

General Clark explains that the American and British governments have different concepts of how the attack on Northern Africa should be made. He says President Roosevelt feels it is essential that the attack be All-American and that we establish ourselves fully on the northwest coast, with half our force striking inside the Mediterranean and the other half outside at Casablanca to assure us of an Atlantic Coast supply port. The Prime Minister, he explains, wants to work on TORCH as all the officers now know it--assaulting Oran, Algiers, Bone and, possibly, Philippeville. The general tells the combined staff that "differences have developed."

The general then reads President Roosevelt's cable to Prime Minister Churchill and the message that General Eisenhower and he sent back to the War Department. He adds that the plan proposed by them--heavy landings at Oran and Algiers and a lighter landing at Casablanca, all with American forces--"does not meet the President's request but I think that is what he may propose to the Prime Minister." If this plan is accepted, General Clark says, the force going direct to Africa from the United Kingdom would make the Algiers assault. General Patton's force sailing directly from the United States to Africa would probably do the Oran landing. The United States, the general adds, "would try to piece together a smaller force for the Casablanca task."

"I think," General Clark tells the intent men facing him, "that the plan will go through that way. It will affect General Anderson most of all because Bone and Philippeville will be out. Algiers, as a British assault, will be out but British troops probably will land there later."

The General then explains that because of these new developments General Gale, the British supply expert, must postpone the planned loading of any ships for the African operation "because if we load one ship we may have to unload it again and that will tangle things up worse than ever. Until the TORCH plan is definitely set, we will do what planning we can, proceeding on this basis:

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

107

"We'll call the President's plan 'Plan A'--that is, General Patton will attack at Casablanca; United States forces now in the United Kingdom will attack Oran, and the operation will have the use of British naval vessels, transports and air force. The U.S. task force from the United Kingdom will be composed of combat teams of the 1st and 34th Divisions and the 1st Armored Division. I am designating Brigadier General Rooks as Chief of Staff of the Oran Task Force. The other plan, entailing All-American landings in force at Oran and Algiers and the use of a small force from the United States at Casablanca, will be known as 'Plan B.' The United States force from the United Kingdom probably will assault at Algiers, secure the port and airfields and get elbow room so General Anderson's British force can come in, disembark at portside without too great difficulty and then start driving to the east for Tunis. The Oran force will turn to the west and establish contact with the force landing at Casablanca.

"That, roughly, is the picture as it stands today. Now, Admiral Ramsay, can you get us additional information as to what additional naval means will be required?"

Ramsay--"I gave that data to the British staff in the rough last night. It does not involve as much additional naval support as we expected."

Clark--"The Prime Minister understands what the British naval effort is to be and he asks that the United States make the rest available."

Ramsay--"And Canada too."

General Clark tells the officers that he learned last night that the Fighting French have intimated they know an operation is afoot and have declared that unless it is headed by a French high command "it is bound to fail."

Admiral Ramsay then points out that if either Plan A or B is used it "will mean a break-up of what we have already planned." He suggests "we use groundwork already done" with the American force getting all available Algiers data from the British.

Clark--"I think we ought to accept. It is my belief that Patton will do Oran and that American forces already here will handle Algiers if Plan B is accepted."

Anderson--"This means our plans will have to be altered completely. If my force is to go into a port already secured by the Americans, then drive east, it entails complete disruption of my present plans."

Ramsay--"If Plan B is used will the first follow-up be British?"

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

Clark--"I think the first would be British. That would be General Anderson's group. It looks as though Anderson will have to have his force on the high seas ready to come in. His plans will have to be extremely flexible. The ships will not be combat loaded. If things go wrong, General Anderson and his force will have to turn around and go home."

Gruenther--"Since the President says he will have to have a week to pave the way for the landing of British troops, won't a D.7 followup have to be substituted for a D.4?"

Clark--"That's right!"

Vice Air-Marshall Welsh--"This means an entirely different air force. It will mean a bigger bomber and fighter force since the heaviest attack probably will come now at Algiers."

Clark--"There's no doubt about it. General Anderson's mission will now be a fighting affair. There'll be need for more air and armored units. Anderson is going to have to fight before he reaches Tunis. There will be a real brawl somewhere between Algiers and Tunis."

Ramsay--"And it won't be with French; it will be with Germans."

Clark--"I don't need to tell all of you that the military aspects of this thing hold a position secondary to the political. There's no question about it!"

Welsh--"I'll try to work out the types of aircraft we need and then see what we've got."

Clark--"It's certain we can't move any more land-based planes into Gibraltar. Capacity is taxed with the American-British planes already earmarked for there. Welsh might have to support Casablanca. You and Vandenberg (Colonel Vandenberg of the U.S. Air Force) will have to work the needs and plans out."

Vandenberg--"It would be better if we changed Spit 5's for Spit 9's."

Clark--"Spit just as high as you can!"

The remark brings laughs and eases the tension of the meeting.

Welsh--"I think I had better get my people and Vandenberg together."

Clark--"Gentlemen, I have given you everything I know about TORCH as it now stands. We have little time and we must wait for a directive. If Oran is attacked by us under Plan A, the force will consist of three infantry combat teams--two from the 1st Division and one from the 34th--and one Armored Division unit. If we attack at Algiers we will adapt General Anderson's plan."

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

109

The conference is thrown open to questions and General Clark rules that the entire TORCH operation will proceed on Greenwich Meridian Time; tells Admiral Ramsay that a memorandum has already been written concerning censorship, press relations and communications for TORCH; that instructions will go out to have the assault forces avoid, as much as possible, any damage to the ports.

Ramsay--"What about the ned D-day? Before you get the President's October 30 date too fixed in your minds you'd better see what the moon is doing. There can be no assault or movement through the Straits of Gibraltar while the moon is too full."

Clark--"As to October 30, we first heard of that date yesterday. I already know that the moon will be best early in November, with the 5th probably being the best D-day."

General Anderson asks that certain members of his TORCH staff go along since "it looks as though eventually Algiers will be my base." He also recommends that the American landing force seize the port of Bougie, about 110 miles east of Algiers. This would give General Anderson a second port at which to land his troops so he can begin driving toward Tunis.

General Clark is asked if the TORCH operation still calls for the use of 13 divisions.

"TORCH now has a completely new appreciation and it may take more," the general replies. "It looks as though we are going to have to fight for it and it means we must be stronger."

The General then breaks up the conference and the bare room begins to buzz like bees in a bottle. Groups go into discussion of the development.

Later in the day, General Clark learns that the Prime Minister has answered President Roosevelt's cable and that Mr. Churchill had agreed to the American proposal. However, the Prime Minister reiterates his desire that British troops land at Algiers. Generals Ward, Ryder, Allen and Porter (who will lead the assault troops from the United Kingdom) and General Rooks, chief of staff, are called in to discuss the composition of U.S. forces that will move from the British Isles to North Africa. General Truscott is called in to go over details of the Oran attack as it was planned for General Patton's forces. General Lemnitzer, who has been a Deputy Chief of Staff, is directed to take over the plans and training section of TORCH with General Barker returning to the European Theater of Operations staff. Colonel Nevins is informed he will be G-3 of either the Oran or Algiers Task Force.

General Lee, head of SOS, and General Styer, SOS officer who has just flown from the United States, are oriented on plans and General Clark tells General Lee he particularly needs help in equipping the 1st Division and obtaining additional service units

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

from the United States. General Lee says he will try to have the equipment for the 1st Division unloaded at the Clyde in order to save time. If necessary, General Clark says he will accept British 25-pounders as substitute equipment for the U.S. 105-mm howitzers. General Lee is told that in connection with TORCH service units fall into three categories: those now in the United Kingdom, many of which are deficient in equipment; those which must be brought from the U.S., combat loaded, to accompany the assault force from the United Kingdom; and those which will sail direct from the U.S. to the African theater. General Styer observes that units in the U.S. should be alerted regardless of the final decision on TORCH. The problem of organizing SOS in the new theater is discussed at length and key personnel is gone over.

Bad luck is dogging the delayed shipment of 1st Division equipment. Colonel Hamblen reports that in addition to the vessel in original 1st Division convoy that went on the rocks in Newfoundland, the second ship bringing over the replacement shipment was lost through enemy action. Now, the third ship starting across with the shipment has had to put into Bermuda because of a shifting cargo!

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 2, 1942--The weight of political influence on military decisions and military commanders is so great that it staggers reason. To date, the political angle has had far more influence on TORCH than has the military. The delay--at least the great bulk of it--has resulted from political, not military, implications.

In fact, the basis of TORCH is political, primarily. Both President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill have promised that a Second Front will be opened in 1942 and the North African theater appears to be the only place where it will have a fair chance of success.

To date, this diary has shown from day to day the delays and changes in plans. The succulent parts of cables crossing the Atlantic have been quoted. Conferences with Prime Minister Churchill have been recorded. All these reports couldn't help but make the reader wonder to what extent the planning of TORCH is political, and to what extent military. He can, however, draw pretty logical conclusions.

General Clark is drawn out a little today on the political factors that have impeded the planning and quick execution of TORCH. It is a subject he is reluctant to discuss but one that he should include in any diary of war because politics is part of war; it is a major factor in determining whether a campaign is won or lost. It may be the deciding factor in TORCH.

"For many weeks," says General Clark, "we had been working on a plan reported to both governments and one that was approved, apparently, by both of them. The first plan had almost reached the

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

point where we were ready to go ahead loading for the North African assault when the delays started. During the past weeks we have been more or less dragged around by the necks and every time we make a move, someone in Washington or London is looking over our shoulder to second guess and suggest revisions or changes.

"I have been told that the President's reply to Prime Minister Churchill is expected tonight and that indications are that we will return, basically, to the plan calling for simultaneous attacks on Casablanca, Oran and Algiers. Even now there is nothing to indicate this will be definite although time is closing in and a decision must be made soon if a Second Front is to be opened this year. So much valuable time has been lost that we can never get back or make up. During this hectic period of indecision we have had at least a half dozen plans before us. Before we could even start laying a foundation for one, we got another.

"Why can't the commanders decide what they can do, not what they have to do? Time is a prime factor in any military operation, yet, those who delay us keep reminding us that TORCH must be carried out at the earliest possible moment. We must not, we are told, lose any time. However, we're still waiting for the mission directive. Don't they realize the time factor necessary for getting new planning underway? There is an urgent necessity for time to plan, time to train, time to assemble for the assault.

"All we had had are repeated and repeated distractions. The longer we wait, the longer it takes to make up minds, make political adjustments and get down to concrete preparations for a TORCH we know is definite, the less chance we have of security; and without security we can't get full success. Cables from Washington all emphasize the dire results if TORCH is not successful. Success requires careful planning and ample time but we can't plan until we know definitely what it is we are planning for."

Developments, particularly in the past three weeks, show the tremendous effect of political considerations on military affairs. The future will show what effect this political factor--which has wasted time and energy and which has brought the introduction of plan after plan--will have on the execution of the TORCH operation that is finally decided upon.

Intelligence reports come in that Free French General De Gaulle sent the following cable to his London headquarters from Syria:

"Americans have planned a landing in North Africa. In connection with this landing the British were to attack Dakar. Vichy knew about all this and has kept the Germans informed of the plan. Vichy has been deceiving the Americans . . . as they previously deceived the British. In North Africa the Americans pretended they were acting in accord with General De Gaulle's Comite Nationale and so got support of De Gaulle's supporters in North Africa. This was

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

not the case at all. Instead the Americans delayed communications between De Gaulle's agents in North Africa and his headquarters in London so that the real truth would not be known to De Gaulle partisans in North Africa. In case of an American landing in North Africa, Marshal Petain will order all French forces to resist aggression. The entire French army, air force and fleet will obey the orders. Undoubtedly Germany will take advantage of this situation to intervene under the color of protecting the French empire. Laval will not declare war at once but will hold out in hope of blackmailing from Germany a little help regarding prisoners of war and food. The idea of America at first was to invade Europe this year. They then needed the help of Free French forces and so opened negotiations in London. Now they have resumed their former attitude of standoffishness toward the Free French."

A cable is sent to the War Department in Washington telling officers that four sources--Vichy, Gibraltar, Tangiers and Washington--~~have reported to the~~ Free French headquarters in London that they have information concerning an imminent attack in North Africa. These sources state that active opposition will be encountered unless a prominent Frenchman is identified with the operation. All reports indicate that countries bordering the Mediterranean have a definite suspicion and perhaps some knowledge of an imminent attack. The serious potentialities of such a situation are obvious," Washington is cabled. The whole matter implies, the cable continues, the failure of our efforts to prevent leakage involving most secret subjects and suggests adoption of corrective measures.

Plans are being pushed for the organization of the Oran Task Force. General Rooks, Chief of Staff of the operation, is setting up key members of his staff in Norfolk House. The bulk of the staff will be built up after the landing. Generals Clark and Rooks agree that the Norfolk group now being set up under Rooks should be the advance echelon of the II Army Corps and that officers and men remaining at Longford Castle should be considered the rear echelon and be subject to call to the African theater as soon as their movement is feasible. General Clark feels he should not set up a separate organization for this but rather should continue to use the II Army Corps as the base designation. The question of a suitable SOS-G-4 organization in the Oran area is brought up and General Clark decides that for the planning phase of the operation General Larkin would be in charge with Colonel Adcock as his assistant. He sees no need to separate SOS and G-4 functions in the early phases of the Oran landing. Later, after arrival in the theater, General Larkin will take charge of the SOS in that area and Colonel Adcock will become G-4 of the Oran Task Force.

Air support for TORCH in case Plan A is decided upon is gone over. A cable is sent setting forth agreement as to what will be a well-balanced air force for the operation. Regarding two groups of B-17's initially required in the African theater, the cable points out that it will be necessary to withdraw these units from operations out of England about six weeks prior to the date when they

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

will be employed initially in the theater. These two groups have been carrying out successful raids on France for the past three weeks. The cable also states that U.S. Air Force headquarters will be established initially at Oran.

It now appears, from a chart showing the loading of each ship carrying equipment for the 1st Division and the estimated dates of arrival, that the bulk of the Division's equipment will not arrive until about September 13. General Allen is ordered to establish an advanced 1st Division headquarters in Norfolk House. It will be ready to operate by noon, September 5.

Other minor matters have to be disposed of: Colonel Corby, surgeon in Allied Force Headquarters, recommends typhus inoculations for all troops entering the theater and he is told to begin checking records to insure that these shots are given all organizations prior to departure; Colonel W. G. Sterling of the War Cabinet Secretariat suggests the use of code names for towns and regions in the North African theater and General Clark says he suggested that almost a month ago but that British Intelligence officers advised against it; General Anderson calls to say he is moving from Norfolk House to another nearby office but he is going to retain an officer on duty here. General Anderson obviously is displeased at the turn in events. General Clark tells him there is nothing further he can do to advance his planning until a final decision is reached. Anderson is advised to continue planning.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 3, 1942--President Roosevelt cables Prime Minister Churchill and agrees to a triple-landing for TORCH. From all indications this is to be the operation that will be carried out!

President Roosevelt proposes simultaneous landings at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers with assault and immediate follow-up troops generally as follows:

(A) Casablanca, all United States troops: 34,000 in the assault and 24,000 in the immediate follow-up to land at a port already under American control.

(B) Oran, all U.S. troops: 25,000 in the assault and 20,000 in the immediate follow-up to land at a U.S. held port.

(C) Algiers, U.S. and British troops: in the beach landing, 10,000 U.S. troops followed within the hour by British troops to make the landing secure, the follow-up to be determined by TORCH's Commander-in-Chief. This follow-up would land at a port in ships that are non-combat loaded.

"Your willingness to cooperate by agreeing that all initial landings will be made by U.S. ground forces is appreciated," the President cables the Prime Minister. "It is true that British participation in the form of naval and air support will be disclosed to the defenders early in the operation. However, I do not believe this will have quite the same effect that British forces making the

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

first beach landing would have. x x x It will be necessary to use all available combat loaders in the first assault. The assaulting troops, regardless of whether they are British or American, must seize a port before follow-up forces can be landed. Regardless of what troops arrive subsequent to the initial landing, the situation will be the same."

President Roosevelt says the United States can furnish the following troops: the entire Casablanca force directly from the United States; the entire Oran force from the United Kingdom; 10,000 American troops for the Algiers landing from the United Kingdom.

"As ~~an~~ immediate follow-up forces," the President cables, "we have one armored division in the U.S. and one armored division in the U.K. (both less elements included in the assault echelons) with supporting and service troops, including ground echelons of air units. Later, additional infantry and armored divisions can be furnished from the U.S. and the remaining U.S. troops in the U.K. can be made available."

President Roosevelt says combat loaders capable of lifting 34,000 men will be ready to sail from U.S. ports by October 20. Transports, other than combat loaders, will be ready to lift 52,000 men and there will be sufficient cargo vessels to support the personnel. In the United Kingdom, he adds, there will be U.S. transports with a personnel lift of 15,000 and nine cargo vessels. "In round numbers," Mr. Roosevelt continues, "the shipping shown as available in the U.S. is estimated to be sufficient to move the first, second and third convoys of the Casablanca force."

Regarding the naval picture, the President tells Mr. Churchill that the U.S. "cannot provide forces for the escort and support in this operation in excess of those now available in the Atlantic plus all ships which can be expedited in readiness for service as is now being done."

Then, the President continues: "If the operation is to be executed along the lines indicated . . . all the remaining requirements must be furnished from British sources. As we see it, this would mean in general that it will be necessary for you to furnish: (a) all shipping, including combat loaders, required for the Oran and Algiers forces except the U.S. shipping now in the U.K. earmarked for TORCH; (b) the additional troops required for the Algiers assault and the follow-up forces, and (c) the naval forces required for the entire operation less the U.S. Naval Force indicated above."

The President asks the Prime Minister to confirm as soon as possible, "in order that I may continue with vigorous preparations for TORCH at the earliest practicable date," that the U.K. will provide the troop lift, troops, naval forces and shipping noted as needed. The President reiterates that the Commander-in-Chief "should be directed to execute the operation by the earliest practicable date and that this date should be fixed by him."

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

115

"I am convinced of the absolute necessity for an early decision," the President says. "I feel that the operation, as outlined herein, is as far as I can go toward meeting your views, and seems to me to be a practical solution which retains the Algiers operation and is sufficiently strong to be a good risk throughout."

The President says his "latest and best information" from North Africa shows that an All-American expedition "will meet little resistance from the French Army in Africa. On the other hand, a British commanded attack in any phase or with de Gaullist cooperation would meet with determined resistance." He says that maintenance of the French Civil government "is essential to friendly relations." He concludes that he is "willing to risk explanation of British troops in Algiers by telling the French that they are not intended to remain in French territory but that their object is primarily to march into Axis held Tripoli from the rear. x x x As you and I decided long ago, we were to handle the French in North Africa, while you were to handle the situation in Spain."

General Clark calls a conference of the Combined Staff at 11 AM and read the telegram from President Roosevelt. "Well, there she is!" he says, concluding. "We're almost back where we started from. Patton will handle Casablanca. The Oran force will be made up of two combat teams from the 1st Division, one from the 34th Division and it will be supported by the British Navy. At Algiers we'll have one U.S. combat team, a Ranger Battalion and whatever British troops you (turning to General Anderson) decide on. Our problem is still basically the same: mostly naval, a question of where we stand on combat loaders, landing craft and the ability of the navy to support the landing."

Ramsey--"We're going to have combat loader trouble. Arrangements for one landing are perfect. For the other one, one-fourth is very good, one-fourth is poor and I just don't see the other half anywhere."

Gale--"We are now holding some trans-Atlantic shipping in the United Kingdom."

Ramsay--"We've got our teeth out. Three strong attacks are not possible. The necessary combat loaders just don't exist."

Clark--"We're going to have to tackle it to see what we can do, not what we can't do. We must determine our maximum minimum and ask the navy and shipping authorities to supply it."

Gale--"I don't believe the ship resources can be found in such a short time."

Clark--"Can't we get enough for the initial assault? We're going to have to call on SOS to bring over what they have organizational loaded. These will be hospital and maintenance units and supplies mostly. General Anderson, what will you have for Algiers?"

Anderson--"A total of about 29,000 troops and one American

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

116

combat team."

Clark--"You will keep the 168th (combat team from the 34th Division). I hope you will be ready to throw in three brigades and that they will go down combat loaded."

Gale--"Are we still figuring on a seven day period before the British go in."

Clark--"That was under Plan B. I guess we'll have to call the new one Plan Z!"

Welsh--"We'll need more air under this plan than under the old scheme."

Clark--"The air units at Gibraltar will help General Anderson move eastward..."

Welsh--"We'll have to have four fighter squadrons at Algiers at once. We'll also need two bomber support squadrons then build up our strength after we have North African bases."

Anderson--"What about Algiers and the plan..."

Clark--"You go ahead and figure on Algiers as you've always planned. The British probably will help in the initial operation at Algiers."

Ramsay--"If we work it right the U.S. Navy may be able to help cover the Straits. Then we can do Algiers and Oran all right. I think our naval forces might be stretched."

As the conference breaks up he tells the officers he expects to get later in the day the gist of what the Prime Minister will cable back to Washington in answer to the President. During the day, he calls key officer after key officer into his office to discuss the particular phase of TORCH involved. At 4 PM he goes to the War Cabinet Offices with General Eisenhower. The two American generals are ushered into a huge room where Churchill sits at a 40-foot long table, working. The Prime Minister looks tired and dishevelled. Soon the office fills with British officers including General Sir Alan Brooke, General Ismay, Sir John Dill, Lord Louis Mountbatten, Admiral Ramsay, Sir Dudley Pound--virtually every high-ranking Britisher connected with the war effort. The men sit down, discuss the President's cable of this morning and confer concerning an answer. After over an hour of discussion, Churchill says: "Let's get the cable off now!" He invites Sir Alan Brooke and Generals Clark and Eisenhower into the office of one of his secretaries. Together, the four men draft the answer while a stenographer--the Prime Minister had hollered for "a shorthand writer"--pounds it out directly on a typewriter as the four men talk over the exact phraseology. They knead in the suggestions of all the men who participated in the conference in the outer room.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

117

The conferees decided that to do Algiers and Oran properly they should have seven combat teams and the combat loaders to lift this size a force. Only five, as the plan stands, are available and there is nothing to improvise with. As to landing craft, all training would have to stop if the craft were taken away. General Clark suggests that the only alternative is to "steal from Casablanca. Admiral Pound also points out that the United States naval force for TORCH remains an "X" quantity. He asks that the U.S. state definitely what it has got so the British can see what their navy can do to fill the gaps. General Clark suggests two points for the cable--(1), that the U.S. Navy "get off the pot" and detail what it can provide, and (2) that the three landings be made more equal, with the Algiers operation being made bigger and the Casablanca one smaller "to give the essential appearance of strength at all vital points."

This is the way the Prime Minister's cable finally goes to President Roosevelt:

"We have spent the day looking into the physical possibilities of your general outline. We think that a working plan can be made on the basis that the emphasis is shifted somewhat, namely reducing Casablanca by ten or twelve thousand and making up the deficiencies in the follow-up. These troops with their combat loaded ships would give sufficient strength inside, while making the entire assault American. This evens up the three landings and gives the essential appearance of strength at all vital points. Without such a transference there is no hope of Algiers on account of the shortage of combat loaders and landing craft. We all think this would be a blemish on the plan.

"Tomorrow we suggest that either General Clark or General Eisenhower should come (to Washington) with Admiral Ramsay who knows the whole transportation escort story and the naval aspects from our end, and Mountbatten on the landing details which are crucial. The party would reach you Sunday morning. We do not know here what naval forces you are able to supply. Please let this be imparted to Admiral Cunningham, who, in view of the importance of the operation, we propose to place in naval command under the Allied Commander-in-Chief.

"Delays due to changes already has extended (D-day) three weeks. The Free French have got an inkling and they are leaky. Every day saved is precious. We have therefore already ordered work to go forward on these lines but of course the decision rests with you. (signed) Churchill."

When the Prime Minister and the three generals complete drafting of the telegram, Mr. Churchill turns to them and says: "It's great not to argue when you get into a tight place. It makes you appreciate the accord between us. I know we all desire to get the plan and get going."

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

118

General Clark tells the Prime Minister that "it looks as though we're back where we were two months ago."

"That's the tragedy of this thing. We could have settled it two months ago," Mr. Churchill replies. "This is one of the tangible difficulties of having our two staffs separated by all those miles of ocean."

Mr. Churchill is quite pleased by one phrase he placed in the cable: "The Free French have got an inkling and they are leaky." He keeps looking at it and chuckling."

After leaving Mr. Churchill's office, Generals Eisenhower and Clark go back to Grosvenor Square and send General Marshall a cable detailing Churchill's suggestions and declaring that they favor his three-point in virtually equal strength landings if the means can be found. Without the combat loaders and one combat team from the Casablanca force, Algiers must be abandoned, they say.

Mr. Churchill points out, just as the two American generals are leaving, that he has received recent cables on the progress of the battle in the Middle East. General Alexander of the 8th British Army sends an optimistic report and says he has got Rommel in a pocket and that the British have been shelling him all day. Says Churchill to General Brooke: "I wonder if Alec will take the offensive!" The Prime Minister then tells Generals Eisenhower and Clark that it looks as though the North African attack will have to wait until November 10. "Every week, every day counts," Mr. Churchill says grimly. "We don't know what is going to happen in Egypt before we can attack North Africa."

Conferences during the busy day include the following:

Generals Ward and Oliver of the 1st Armored Division come in to discuss matters pertaining to use of their unit in TORCH. General Clark tells General Ward that any units taken from his command to form the Headquarters Security Force will be returned to him when his division enters the theater. There is some discussion as to whether the 1st should retain its M-3 tanks or exchange them for the newer M-4s. General Ward feels it would be unwise to make the substitution at this time because of additional training involved.

Colonel Hamblen reports that it appears that SOS of the European theater will be unable to maintain a U.S. force in North Africa until such time as the line of communications can be shifted to the U.S. General Gale makes a similar report. He also outlines the relatively long time required for the overland movement of the Algiers force to Tunis under the latest plan.

Late at night, it looks as though neither General Eisenhower of General Clark will go to Washington at present. They recommend against it to General Marshall, pointing out the necessity for both of them remaining in London until the plan is more definite.

\*

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

119

LONDON, SEPT. 4, 1942--President Roosevelt agrees to lessen the Casablanca force and it looks as though TORCH now is finally shaping up into a definite operation. The President sends the following cable to the Prime Minister:

"I am willing to reduce the Casablanca force by the number of combat loaders capable of carrying a force of one regimental combat team, approximately 5,000 men. Since a similar reduction was made in original Oran assault for this releases a total of British and U.S. combat loaders for some 10,000 men for use at Algiers. As that locality has been estimated as the softest spot, this combat loaded force may be found sufficient with whatever else it is found possible to improvise.

"I do not see advantage of Eisenhower or Clark coming over at this time. I know they have heavy and pressing responsibilities in organizing slowly-arriving American forces and I am sure we have a full understanding of their viewpoint. Furthermore, I do ~~not~~ want to see Eisenhower later on before final takeoff and two trips appear out of the question. We would be glad to see Ramsay and Mountbatten if you wish to send them, but I do not desire that their visit shall cause any delay in reaching a final decision.

"I hope to cable you tomorrow a list of U.S. naval craft which can be made available for the operation. (Signed) Roosevelt."

General Clark calls the combined TORCH staff into conference and details the overnight developments. He tells the officers that at last it looks as though the TORCH plan is definite. "The divergent views of the two governments are closer to agreement and it now appears likely that one additional combat team from the U.S. will be taken from the Patton force and made available for the attack at Algiers," the general says. "That will give us one combat team from here, the 168th; one combat team from the Patton force, and the U.S. Ranger Battalion for the initial assault on Algiers." Saying that force, which will be followed up by General Anderson's British troops, will total about 11,000 men, General Clark asks Admiral Ramsay if he thinks the troops can be lifted and carried to Algiers. Ramsay says he thinks they can be and adds he thinks we might be able to get three combat teams through at Algiers.

"In that event," says General Clark, "it would be necessary to have one British combat team. It was the President's idea that the initial assault at Algiers be made by American troops that would take the port and seize the airports. Then you (looking at General Anderson) would land and pass through on your drive to Tunis. Our information is that there will be little resistance to American troops. I intend to make Ryder (General Ryder of the 34th Division) commander of the Algiers force. I am going to bring him here so you two can plan and coordinate the Algiers attack. Oran is set up and ready to go ahead under General Rooks."

Anderson--"We'd like to have you take over our Algiers plan."

Clark--"We'd like to very much. Ryder can go over it with you. General Eisenhower has ordered General Lee up so we can go into the supply problem. We're particularly worried about maintenance and supplies for the attacking troops."

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

120

Anderson--"Do you still want the British brigade groups?"

Clark--"Yes. Beach parties for all three combat teams would be highly desirable if your forces are in follow-up, floating reserve. Now about the date. It looks like November 7. The convoy from the United States probably will sail about October 20. The assault won't be any sooner than November 7, I believe."

Mockler-Ferryman--"Our intelligence operatives say a Sunday would be an ideal day. The closest Sunday is November 8."

Clark--"Sunday, eh? They hit Pearl Harbor on a Sunday."

Welsh--"I think General Anderson's forces should be situated so they can land at both Algiers and Bougie."

Clark--"Ryder's orders will permit him to push east and take Bougie. If he can get the assistance of the French he will push as far east as he is able to go. There are many questions we are going to have to work out. It looks as though we are getting nearer and nearer together and closer to a solution."

After General Clark outlines what air strength appears available for TORCH, Air Vice Marshall Welsh says he believes the air force at Casablanca is "frightfully big in view of the fact that air opposition there will be small." He asks that an air pool be built up in Oran so it can be moved either east or west. General Clark says he is going to take every plane the U.S. will give to the operation and then leave its use up to the Commander-in-Chief's discretion.

Admiral Ramsay points out that a British commander will have to be designated for the naval forces supporting the Oran attack. He also speaks of the necessity for U.S. naval beach parties accompanying the U.S. combat teams and expresses the hope that the U.S. Navy will bring in the necessary personnel to operate the port of Oran.

After the conference, General Gale tells General Clark that the British Quartermaster General "is willing to put at our disposal anything he has in the way of equipment and/or personnel." He offers to furnish a British "movements officer" for the Oran force and General Clark accepts because it will be helpful in view of the fact that all shipping involved will be British. General Gale mentions that the British Director of Movements will require an outline plan by September 15.

General Clark receives a report that the 168th Infantry combat team now training in Scotland "is not far enough advanced in basic training for the task involved." The general orders strengthening of the command "from the top down." With D-day now set back, the General believes it may be possible for the 16th Infantry combat team to be trained at Inveraray during the period September 25-October 5. He tells General Lemnitzer, the new G-3, that it is "most important

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

121

for each combat team to have about five days' training in going over the side from the combat loaders into landing craft and actually landing on the beach." This will not involve complete unloading of the vessels but some of the heavy equipment--including guns and trucks--must be included in the practice exercises.

Lieut. Colonel Ramsey returns from a quick visit to Gibraltar and he reports that the accommodations there are adequate for the advance headquarters of TORCH.

General Clark, relaxing a little after the hectic schedule he has been following for the past three days, remarks to confidants what a pleasure it is to work under and be alongside General Eisenhower.

"This would be an almost intolerable situation were it not for my fortunate, close, personal relationship with the Supreme Commander," he says. "The cooperation we have is the result of having been old friends for a long time; the result of having worked together before on many, many problems. There's a definite advantage in having officers who know each other well working together. It makes the situation much more compatible and, in the present case where we are working so closely together, I know how and what 'Ike' thinks and says. And he knows the same about me. Neither of us has to worry about what the other is doing and, therefore, can concentrate fully on his own work. It's an ideal team combination and a solid thing to cling to in hectic days like those we have just been going through."

Oddly enough, it was General Clark, then a Brigadier General, who suggested to General Marshall that General Eisenhower, then a colonel, would be the ideal man for the War Department Plans division. It was General Clark who announced, as he was speaking to a war games critique in Louisiana in 1941, that Eisenhower, who was sitting in the front row, was a brigadier general. The two men have been friends since West Point days. Whenever either man has been asked who should take a certain job, each has recommended the other.

TORCH planners have received a very interesting note from Sir Samuel Hoare, British Ambassador to Spain. It discusses certain political implications of the plan.

"The operation known as TORCH seems to me to raise many political as well as military problems," Sir Samuel writes. "Its success or failure may indeed principally depend on political developments. With the French attitude in Africa rests the issue between a hazardous military operation and a popular movement of liberation, with the Spanish reaction the vital security of our lines of communication. It is to the Spanish considerations that I address myself in this note.

"The temptation to cut our lines of communication will be very great. We shall appear to have put our neck between two Spanish knives, and Spanish knives are traditionally treacherous. The Germans will be on General Franco's back, dinning into his ears: "Now is

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

your time. You can cut the Allied throat, destroy the naval and air bases at Gibraltar and win a dazzling reward for your country in North Africa." Let no one under-rate the power of this temptation, or think that because nine Spaniards out of ten do not want war, General Franco might not risk it for the big stakes that in these circumstances it might offer him. He and his brother-in-law made no secret of their wish to see Germany win the war. What better chance than this could they have of expediting a German victory? Spanish help might take one of two forms. Spanish guns, manned by Spanish troops, might fire on the harbor and airdrome of Gibraltar and immobilize them in a few hours, or German bombers be permitted to operate from Spanish territory. In both cases action might be swift and very damaging."

Hoare suggest that the Allies "economically and politically must accumulate the maximum of Spanish good-will in the next few weeks. x x x On the political side we must avoid incidents of all kinds that are likely to inflame the Spanish government. Our intelligence organizations must be particularly cautious, and we must keep off provocative action x x x." He says the Allies "must, in addition, be prepared with effective sanctions in case this policy of good-will fails in its effect. They must be ready to strike back if Spain directly or indirectly attacks them. There should therefore be available a striking force--air, sea and land--to make immediate retaliation against Spanish territory." Hoare next suggests that "we would diminish the danger if we do not rely exclusively on the Straits for our entrance and exit and part of the expeditionary force were based on Casablanca and the Atlantic seaboard."

"More important still," says the British ambassador, "is the size of the expeditionary force. It is absolutely essential x x x that it should be of such strength as to make reasonably sure of some swift success. Any initial failure or fumbling will be almost certainly fatal so far as Spain is concerned. x x x." Hoare recommends that "a carefully worded declaration should be made by H.M. government and the United States government, stating that we shall respect the integrity of Spanish territory x x x and that nothing that is being done prejudices Spanish claims and aspirations in the future. x x x Furthermore, it is most important from the Spanish point of view, that both/military operations and the political approach to the Spanish Government the United States government should take the lead. The American Ambassador in Madrid should, I suggest, transmit a personal message from the President to General Franco assuring him of American good intentions. x x x

"Lastly, I feel that if between now and the date of the operation Rommel gains considerable victory, or events in Russia permit of a substantial withdrawal of German divisions to the west, the risk of Spanish collusion with the Germans will be most seriously increased."

Cables are pouring back and forth now. General Marshall suggests that the major tactical features of TORCH "be settled immediately."

\*

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

123

LONDON, SEPT. 5, 1942--Fifty-six United States warships have been earmarked for TORCH and Admiral Ramsay is satisfied that the force will be adequate. Arrival of President Roosevelt's naval strength cable to Prime Minister Churchill fills in one part of the TORCH preparations picture that has been noticeably missing. X

The President says the maximum number of American naval vessels that can be made available for TORCH is as follows: one modern battleship, two old battleships, one aircraft carrier, two converted aircraft carriers, (these craft capable of carrying 78 fighters and 30 dive bombers), two eight-inch cruisers, three large six-inch cruisers; 40 destroyers, and six fast minesweepers.

Although this list is not final, Admiral Ramsay says he is satisfied that the American naval force will be strong enough to support the Casablanca landing. He adds that "by some juggling of available shipping" the necessary lifts for seven regimental combat teams can be found for the Oran and Algiers landings. Other ships also are being located from which troops can be landed on the beaches some time after the assault. This personnel will use the same landing craft that the first assault troops will have used in going ashore.

General Clark is pleased with the way TORCH is now shaping up. At last he feels that the planners have their feet on the ground. The only problem still in snarled shape is that of supply. He calls in Generals Gale, Lee, Gruenther and Lemnitzer and Colonel Hughes. Gale says that because of the convoy schedule, it will be necessary to support U.S. forces from the United Kingdom with 40 days of supply from this country. Gale, Lee and Larkin are instructed to confer with the British Quartermaster General immediately to determine what supplies may be obtained from the British. Colonel Hughes, who, General Clark believes, has the best over-all picture of the supply situation, estimates that the SOS of the European Theater can meet food and ammunition requirements for 40 days in the North African theater. He bases this estimate on a force of 112,000 men. In addition, Hughes says up to 20 days of supply can be furnished in many other categories. Lee promises to give a "complete picture" of the supply situation on Monday. He says he will call upon the U.S. for shipment of supplies that cannot be obtained from the British.

The main SOS difficulty lies in serious shortages in a few items, notably spare parts for weapons and for motor vehicles. These, the general orders, must be obtained from the U.S. as quickly as possible. General Clark points out to General Lee that supply figures must be based on the Table of Basic Allowances since, even if assault units land at a reduced scale, the remainder of their equipment will come in with follow-up convoys. X

The routing of supply convoys required from the United States to support the Oran and Algiers forces is discussed with Colonel Hamblen. General Clark tells Hamblen that until a line of communication is opened direct from the U.S. to the Mediterranean, supply shipments will be sent to the United Kingdom, thence to North Africa.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

General Ryder flies in from his headquarters in Northern Ireland and is told by General Clark that he is going to command the Algiers assault. He is told the composition of his force: his own 168th Infantry combat team, one combat team from the United States (probably a team from the 9th Division), and one British brigade group. These three units will go down assault loaded. In addition, Ryder will have another British brigade group unit loaded and in floating reserve.

Ryder's command and the status of General Anderson is a touchy matter. General Dewing comes in to tell General Clark that he believes General Anderson should command the Algiers force from the outset. Such an arrangement, General Clark replies, is contrary to the agreement between the two governments that the assault on North Africa will be led by Americans. General Ryder will command during the landing operation. General Clark tells him he must work with General Anderson and make use of the plans developed by the British First Army when TORCH called for a combined Anglo-American assault. General Ryder is setting up a 34th Division TORCH headquarters at No. 1 Cumberland Place, the same building where General Anderson is now located. General Clark stresses to General Ryder that it is "most important" that he get along well personally with General Anderson "no matter how difficult that may be."

The status of training of the 168th combat team is discussed with General Ryder. Reports coming down from the amphibious base in Scotland indicate the team needs much more practice. General Clark telephones British General Drew, commanding the base, and tells him that he proposes to send General Porter to the training area to push the 168th and that in all probability the unit will remain in training until September 20. General Clark proposes to replace the regimental executive, two battalion commanders and others if necessary. General Drew says he feels the situation with respect to the 168th "is not hopeless." Ryder feels that the Colonel of the 168th should be retained in command. One of the most difficult things for a superior officer is to change commands but General Clark says that personal feelings must not enter into decisions that involve such an important mission and the lives of so many enlisted men.

The remainder of the 34th Division, of which the 168th is a part, and the rest of the 1st Armored Division--that part not participating in the original assault at Oran--will be brought into Oran as soon as possible after the assault. Additional Oran forces will be taken from the United States directly to the North African theater once the operation is underway. However, there is a possibility that the 29th Division, which is due to arrive in the United Kingdom late this month under command of General Gerow, might be used in the new theater, moving down to Africa soon after the original assault.

Brigadier Vogel comes in to discuss Anglo-American commands and is told that after General Anderson lands he will take over the Algiers command from General Ryder. The British generals command will include U.S. troops. General Anderson must be prepared to land against

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

opposition at Algiers and Bougie. Brigadier Vogel is also told that Admiral Cunningham is going to be Naval Commander-in-Chief of the combined United States-British fleets under the supreme commander of the operation. Admiral Cunningham is coming over from Washington to join this headquarters. Admiral Ramsay has gone to Washington to take over the British Navy end of TORCH over there.

Generals Lemnitzer, Oliver and Rooks come in to discuss with General Clark matters pertaining to the Oran Task Force. They are told that Combined Operations now reports that landing craft is available for an armored combat team to train at the North Ireland amphibious base. General Oliver is pleased, saying this is preferable to shipping his armored Unit to Toward. Oliver is told to go ahead and prepare for training his team in Ireland. It now looks as though the 1st Armored combat team will use M-4 instead of M-3 tanks. The M-3s cannot be loaded on the type of assault equipment that is going to be used on the three Maracaibo type landing boats that will take the tanks ashore at Oran. M-4 tanks have a lower silhouette and can be loaded aboard this type of craft.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 6, 1942--Prime Minister Churchill cables President Roosevelt that he feels the TORCH plan is substantially set and that both nations should go "full speed head" in preparations to execute it. This is the cable he sends Mr. Roosevelt:

"We agree to the military layout as you propose it. We have plenty of troops highly trained for landing. If convenient, they can wear your uniform. They will be proud to do so. The shipping will be all right. I have just had your number 184 (a cable) and it is evident that you too have skinned yourselves to the bone. Unless we suffer serious losses in the assault, we consider that the naval forces now jointly to be provided justify us in going full speed ahead with staging operations. I am sending Admiral Ramsay with the agreement of General Eisenhower over at once to furnish Admiral Cunningham with the means of going into naval details with you. It is imperative now to drive straight ahead and save every hour. In this way alone shall we realize your strategical design and the only hope of doing anything that really counts this year. We strongly endorse the request which we understand Eisenhower has already made to Marshall that the force you are releasing from Casablanca may be sent over here complete with its regimental combat team. Kindest regards. (signed) Winston Churchill."

Norfolk House is humming and officers are arriving by the score every day. General Rooks has set up the framework of his Oran Task Force and they are working long hours making detailed plans. A great many officers of the II Army Corps are being brought up from Longford Castle. General Ryder is getting his Algiers Task Force group into operation and it is working with General Anderson, making the greatest possible use of previous British planning. General Truscott, who was left at Norfolk House as a contact officer when General Patton returned to the United States, is integrating the plans of the

~~SECRET~~



126

~~SECRET~~

Casablanca force with the plans being made by the Algiers and Oran groups. General Clark, getting reports from all three groups, remarks what a burden it is off his shoulders to have such an able staff. He knows every key man personally and knows his capabilities and specialties. General Clark merely makes a daily report to General Eisenhower. He has been given a free hand to make decisions and he sends out order after order with General Eisenhower's name signed. On the matters of greatest importance, the Commander-in-Chief and his deputy confer at either General's office.

Because some units now under command of General Hartle in Northern Ireland (the 34th Division and the 1st Armored Division) will participate in TORCH, General Clark telephones General Hartle and asks him to come to London so he can be oriented on the plan. Colonel Robinette, who will command the 1st Armored combat team that will assault with the 1st Division at Oran, is called in for a conference. He reports that he is experimenting to determine the best method of landing his tanks on the Oran beach. He is trying out Maracaibos and rubber pontoon equipment. He believes that when the armored unit moves forward from the beachhead it should be controlled by the Oran Task Force commander rather than by General Allen who will lead the 1st Division. With the radio equipment his combat team has, direct communication may be established between armored columns and the task force commander who may either be afloat or ashore. The radios have a range up to 100 miles.

With the naval problem finally shaping up and with the various task force commanders getting their plans into shape, General Clark turns to the aviation problem. With Colonel Bentley he talks over the training and employment of transport squadrons and parachute troops. Bentley believes the entire paratroop attack should be concentrated on Oran which he says is the logical point of attack. He thinks the paratroop units are of insufficient strength to spread them in two or three places. He is instructed to give General Clark a memorandum showing what transport squadrons and commanders are available and where he wants them trained. General Clark will issue necessary orders as soon as he has the memorandum.

General Clark questions Colonel Bentley concerning the probability of cracking up transports in the landings south of Oran. Bentley says there will be room for 12 transports to return to Gibraltar. The remaining 20 transports will fly south after the paratroops have jumped. The planes will land in the desert and he is hopeful that these landings can be made without too great damage to the airplanes.

General Gilkerson of the 8th Air Force is called in to discuss that units part in TORCH. Offensive operations against Germany must be curtailed in order to prepare B-17s and other aircraft ready for African operations. The curtailment must start soon. General Gilkerson does not like the command setup, saying he feels that formation of a new fighter command headquarters--using air units from General Spaatz' Fighter Command--is a mistake. He believes the best solution would be to use the existing fighter command headquarters. He reports that General Arnold has warned him that our air forces in North

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

127

Africa are liable to face very strong German air units after October.

High-ranking officer after high-ranking officer files into General Clark's office. General Allen has moved a planning group of the 1st Division into Norfolk House to collaborate with the Oran planning group. General Clark calls General Allen and General Andrus, commander of 1st Division artillery, in for consultation. He goes over the Oran operation with them and certain changes in 1st Division commands are discussed. Generals Lemnitzer and Rooks confer with the Deputy Commander-in-Chief concerning training for the Oran expedition. Stress is placed on the training of shore parties that will accompany the regimental combat teams.

A general dealing with an operation the size and importance of TORCH has to deal with a multitude of things, large and small. But today General Clark gets the strangest request to date. It comes from Colonel Eddy, the U.S. Naval Attache at Tangier, Morocco, who is currently here for espionage conference. The memorandum he submits to General Clark deals with nine problems. This is the strange one:

"I recommend that on D-day, when the landing operations actually begin, I be authorized to arrange for the assassination of the members of the German Armistice Commission at Casablanca and for any members of the German or Italian Armistice Commissions who may then be in the city of Oran. About twenty of the German Army and Navy officers live together in a hotel in Casablanca and the assignments have already been made for this job to men who have the demolition materials already in their hands. I might add that our principal agent in Casablanca is the father of a boy who was shot as a hostage in Paris recently and the father is impatiently awaiting permission to carry out his assignment."

The general reads the memorandum, then pencils in the margin: "O.K. Looks good to me. M.W.C."

Colonel Eddy's report is fascinating. It details what undercover agents will work with landing forces at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers. All of the agents are Americans who have great prestige and remarkable contacts in French Africa. Another part of Colonel Eddy's report deals with plans to destroy key power stations, tunnels and bridges in the areas where the attack will take place. These plans are complete since they were designed in anticipation of Axis aggression. These are the sidelight facets that must be taken care of to prepare for the operation.

\*

\*

\*

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

128

LONDON, SEPT. 7, 1942--Six words--"We believe it to be satisfactory"--put the TORCH operation on an all-out, green light basis today as Generals Clark and Eisenhower reply to a revised directive sent them by General Marshall. It states:

"The operation will be executed at the earliest possible date, as fixed by the Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces participating, with the view of accomplishing as rapidly as possible these initial, intermediate and ultimate objectives:

(1) Landings in the Casablanca area and the Oran-Algiers area, to be simultaneous if practicable, with the establishment of lodgments in the Casablanca area in French Morocco and in the Oran-Mostaganem-Algiers area in Algiers.

(2) Seizure of ports for follow-up forces.

(3) Rapid exploitation in order to acquire complete control of the area, including French Morocco, Spanish Morocco (if the situation requires) and western Algeria to facilitate extension of effective air and ground operations to the eastward.

(4) Combined air, ground and sea operations with the view of insuring complete control by the United Nations of the entire North African area from Rio de Oro to Tunisia inclusive and to facilitate air operations against enemy forces and installations in the Mediterranean area."

General Marshall receives the briefest cable to date from his two top generals in the European Theater. The cable, signed by General Eisenhower, says: "General Clark and I have discussed the language of the proposed directive and have nothing to state. We believe it to be satisfactory."

Later the Chief of Operations of the War department is sent a long cable that says: "We are now apparently assured that substantial agreements have been reached and that all preparations can proceed unhampered by uncertainties and changing conditions that heretofore have placed heavy additional burdens upon all planning personnel and troops. I assure the Chief of Staff that we here have at least some faint understanding of the tremendous difficulties he has had in bringing about this result and that we are highly appreciative and grateful." The Commander-in-Chief and his deputy pledge they will make only imperative requests and they ask "your complete support in assuring prompt satisfaction." Every request coming from the theater for TORCH will be based on minimum requirements. The TORCH leaders declare they "will not tolerate submission to the War Department of requests and requisitions that represent anything more than the bare essentials." They warn that there will be thousands of requests for maintenance supplies, since it is hard to know what the SOS has on hand in the United Kingdom. Everything will be done to avoid duplication.

Once again General Clark concentrates today on the important air plans involved in TORCH. All air plans will be headed up and coordinated by Air Marshall Welsh. The Britisher will be air officer on the staff of the Supreme Commander; there will be no-over-all air commander for the operation. General Doolittle will head United States air units and an undesignated R.A.F. officer will head the British units.

Welsh questions, during a long conference with General Clark, the advisability of using air transport squadrons for the movement of paratroops to Oran. General Clark agrees with Welsh that the rapid movement of ground forces

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

to Tunis by air in order to beat Axis forces to that key point may be of the greatest importance to the success of the entire undertaking. Welsh says the use of paratroops at Oran should be weighed carefully against the possibility of losing many transports in that operation. Such a result would limit our ability to move ground forces later by air to Tunis or east of Algiers. Welsh reports that he has set up a balanced and versatile R.A.F. unit to support both army and navy operations at Algiers. All air force units will be under the Supreme Commander and he will decide how and where bombers, fighters and transports will be used. As soon as set decisions have been made as to objectives and distribution of the available air power, Welsh will be given a directive and air plans will be coordinated under his supervision. This plan will be presented to Air Chief Marshall Portal for his approval insofar as the British command is concerned.

Following the conference with Welsh, General Clark calls in Colonels Gale and Vandenberg. They discuss Welsh's proposals and Vandenberg says he feels Welsh's plan is "characteristic of the British in that it does not provide sufficient air support for ground troops. General Clark tells him that he will go to Portal, if necessary, in order to obtain more air attack support from the R.A.F. but that this will not be done unless we are convinced it is necessary. General Clark emphasizes the necessity for the British and U.S. Army Air Forces to get together and work as a team in the TORCH operation. Whatever the initial distribution of air forces is, General Clark declares, it must be possible to concentrate for an attack eastward from Algeria. "Plans," says the general, "must have in view the concentration of air strength in support of ground forces striving to reach Tunis before the Axis can gain control of that vital area."

Vandenberg points out, while the subject of getting more British bomber support is being discussed, that it will take about nine weeks to transfer bomber squadrons from operations in the United Kingdom to operations in North Africa. He adds that operations of the four U.S. fighter groups now in the U.K. must stop very soon in order to prepare for movement to the new theater. Welsh also mentioned that British fighter squadrons to be used in TORCH are now being prepared for their missions but that U.S. squadrons earmarked for the same theater are still operating across the English channel. General Clark orders preparation immediately of a directive preparing the U.S. air force for the African operation.

As to the use of paratroops, General Clark proposes to set up an airborne task force under the command of Colonel Bentley. The directive is being prepared and combined training of transport squadrons with paratroops will be started. Colonels Bentley and Raff and Major Yarborough, all paratroop experts, are called in and told by General Clark that a single locality should be selected for the paratroop attack and that Oran appears to be the logical place. Raff says he will be able to jump about 520 men, using three squadrons of transports. General Clark stresses that Colonel Bentley's command over the paratroops will terminate as soon as the men reach the ground when they will come under the Oran Task Force commander.

Bentley, who has spent considerable time in North Africa, also recommends that the TORCH attack be made on Sunday morning. He says that French officers and many enlisted men habitually leave their stations on Saturday afternoon and do not return until late on Sunday. He believes resistance would be materially less on Sunday than on a week day. The probable Sunday is November 8.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

130

Another problem that is causing concern is the strength and use of automatic weapons units. General Clark says these units must be integrated into the regimental combat teams which they will support. General Thiel and Colonel Harriman are called in to go over the problem. Harriman says the required number of 90-mm anti-aircraft guns are on hand but that we are still short of automatic weapons. General Thiel agrees to turn over automatic weapons available in the European Theater to the TORCH operation. General Clark plans to assign two automatic weapons batteries in the assault. A full automatic weapons battalion will be assigned to each armored force combat team. Harriman reports that automatic weapons battalions are being trained to use their weapons as anti-tank guns. General Allen, when he comes in for conference, is also asked about the automatic weapons situation and he is told that such units will begin training with the combat teams with which they will be in assault.

General Clark decides that the remainder of the 34th Division and the 1st Armored Division will follow the assault elements into Oran. The 29th Division, which will arrive in the U.K. during September might be sent to the African theater, although, at the present time, a plan to bring a division direct from the U.S. seems preferable, the general says. The date when the next division can be brought into Oran will depend not only on the convoy schedule but also on the ability of the SOS to supply additional units in North Africa.

Colonel Wolf, commanding an Engineer Amphibious Brigade, is told by the general that he tentatively plans to use the engineer boat brigade at Oran. The shore regiment will furnish the beach parties for the Oran force. The general tells Colonel Wolf that he proposes to bring the entire engineer unit into the TORCH operation plans as soon as possible.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 8, 1942--The toughest problem and perhaps the crux of TORCH is rapidly becoming logistics--getting men, materiel, food to the scene where fighting starts and tactics come into play.

The SOS has no accurate record of what supplies are on hand in the United Kingdom. General Lee says he has unbalanced stocks for only 15 or 20 days use in the North African theater. Based on the convoy schedule it is estimated that 45 days of supply are required for TORCH and that that amount of supply must be in the United Kingdom by October 10 so loading can get underway. Because the supply-on-hand situation is so confused, General Lee and General Clark agree that a cable should be sent immediately to the United States asking for shipment of the entire 45-day requirement.

"This solution," says General Clark, "will undoubtedly result in the shipment of many items already in the U.K. in sufficient quantities. However, since the SOS does not know exactly what it now has, and there is not sufficient time remaining to find out before taking action to obtain supplementary supplies from the States, this solution appears to be the best open to us."

General Gale and Colonel Hamblen do not believe such a large shipment can be made from the United States in time for a November 4 D-day and Gale proposes that the Algiers assault and follow-up convoys be loaded completely before the loading of the Oran force is started. He estimated this will give us an additional 13 days to secure our equipment and supplies. No difficulty is anticipated with

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

131

obtaining agreement from the Director of Movements and the commander of the First British Army has already agreed to the plan. Colonels Hamblen and Ross estimate that 25 to 30 cargo vessels would be needed to move the 45-day supply from the United States to the United Kingdom and they doubt that this number of vessels can be assembled without considerable delay. General Styer of the SOS, who arrived recently from Washington, proposes that the cable be sent at once and that SOS headquarters in Washington will have to determine what can be done to meet the demand. Styer too doubts that the tonnage requested can reach England by October 10. Lee is told to "bend every effort toward getting equipment and supplies that are available here in the SOS ready for loading."

General Styer remains behind to talk to General Clark and tells him that his observations show that "no one knows exactly what we have in the way of supplies in the United Kingdom or where they are." He says the ration situation appears to be well handled. In extenuation, however, he says SOS units are short-handed and adds that operations people, generally speaking, "do not appreciate the importance or magnitude of supply problems until confronted by a situation such as now exists."

General Hartle, now commanding the Vth Army Corps in North Ireland, is brought over to be oriented on TORCH. General Clark tells Hartle that he might be placed in command of the Oran Task Force, using the II Army Corps staff which is now preparing Oran plans under General Rocks.

The plans for the eastward drive to Tunis may be revised if French resistance in Algeria does not materialize. General Anderson is called in and it is decided that troop transports will move into Philippeville and Bougie and unload at dockside if possible. This will expedite unloading of supplies and lessen the distance to be traveled in order to beat the Nazis into Tunisia. The British Navy has agreed to furnish the extra ships.

General Ryder, who will command the initial assault on Algiers, then turn the combined command over to General Anderson, joins the conference and, once again, General Clark stresses to both officers their command relationship. General Anderson is also informed that the Allied Force Headquarters probably will be in Algiers once the operation has started and the British general intimates that the locality "might be a little small for both headquarters." General Clark replies that Algiers is a city of considerable size and that it should be able to hold both Anderson's headquarters and the over-all TORCH headquarters. The possibility of eventual British withdrawal from French North Africa is also discussed and Anderson says that if all goes well his force probably would be used farther to the east against Rommel, rather than be returned to the United Kingdom.

Plans for the Algiers assault are well developed, Ryder reports. He asks for 68 additional 36-foot assault boats since he hopes to use another unit in the Algiers attack--a British Commando group in which he will insert some U.S. troops. Ryder says his relations with the commander of the British 78th Division and the Algiers Naval Task Force commander are very pleasant and he adds that he will "get along all right with General Anderson, although it is a little difficult at times."

General Clark also dives into the air problem again. He brings in Air Marshal Welsh and Colonel Vandenberg and tells them General Spaatz now understands that his primary task is to get the TORCH air force ready. These units must soon be withdrawn from European operations and this brings up the problem of explaining the sudden stoppage of that task which has been receiving extensive publicity.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

132

That knotty task is being turned over to G-2. Both Welsh and Vandenberg understand fully what air operations are involved in TORCH and they say they are satisfied. Welsh says he now understands that in addition to the transports to be used in the paratroop attack, approximately five other squadrons will be available in the United Kingdom for later operations in North Africa. That will make a total of 65 transports plus those still inoperating condition after the initial attack. Welsh suggests the formation of a group of transports under headquarters control that can be used in moving troops and supplies anywhere in the theater.

Detailed maps and mosaics are now being assembled by the G-2 section. The photo map coverage at Algiers is good while that at Oran and Casablanca are fair. Models have been constructed of some of the beaches with the work in the Algiers area completed. The Oran beach models will be ready by the end of September while those for Casablanca are being made in the United States. Excellent, detailed photographs of these models have been made. They show every detail of the shoreline. Mosaics on a scale of about 1/15,000 will be distributed down to companies and, possibly, platoons.

Norfolk house is now throbbing with activity. The rabbit-warren like offices are filled with busy officers and men, holding conferences, poring over maps. The tempo of work has been stepped up and lights burn behind blackout curtains until after midnight in many offices, particularly the plans and training and the intelligence sections. General Clark hardly has a chance to get up from his desk, so fast do the high-ranking officers under him file in for conferences that are shaping up TORCH. At Inverary, Tidworth, Longford Castle, Cheltenham, Northern Ireland, troops are training and brains are working on the task ahead.

Generals Clark and Eisenhower dine again with Prime Minister Churchill again this evening. Mr. Churchill is his old bubbling self and, now that TORCH has taken final shape, the Prime Minister is eager to "get on with the show." He mentions repeatedly that he wants the operation to start "at the earliest possible date."

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 9, 1942--Although the problem of supply for TORCH is still in a confused state, the SOS has begun packing for shipment to North Africa all task force items that are presently available. They will be taken to the ports where vessels will be combat loaded. Items being packed are based upon requisitions from the 1st and 34th Infantry and the 1st Armored Divisions.

The cable that will request 45 days of supplies for the TORCH operation has not yet been dispatched to Washington. General Lee's draft gave the impression that 15 to 20 days of supplies were available from the United Kingdom. General Clark, watching every out-going cable like a hawk and keeping his fingers on scores of section pulses, says this is not an accurate statement of the true situation, hence, he directs clarification of the message.

Regarding ships to move the 45-day supply need, General Larkin reports that if 25 ships arrived from the U.S. and accompanied the convoy to North Africa without reloading in the United Kingdom, he might be able to have the supplies in the hands of the troops in as little as ten days after its arrival. This would expedite things materially.

Colonel Stirling, secretary of the British War Cabinet, reports to General

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

Clark that the Prime Minister "is pressing the British Chiefs of Staff" for early action on TORCH. General Clark is asked what factors are preventing a D-day earlier than the tentative first week in November date and the Deputy Supreme commander outlines it thus:

"Some of these factors are the non-arrival of equipment for the 1st Division, lack of maintenance supplies, unbalanced SOS stocks, the date of arrival of the Algiers force combat team from the United States (October 10), conversion of combat loaders, and completion of auxiliary carriers in the United States. Also, the schedule of amphibious training for two regimental combat teams of the 1st Divisions calls for a termination about October 8. I must repeat that we insist upon time for assault rehearsals and we are unwilling to put British soldiers in United States uniforms."

The British naval support plan is submitted to General Clark and he comments that "practically the entire British fleet will support the attack in the Mediterranean." He describes Admiral Cunningham, who is coming here from the United States to head the naval part of TORCH, as "the damn best man the British have." It looks as though aircraft carrier support will be the weakest link in the plan. The Prime Minister has been dabbling with the idea of having a force from Malta attack Tunis at the same time American troops are landing at Algiers, Oran and Casablanca but his military advisors think such an attack is "a little too bold."

The British have proposed that a combined planning staff with army, navy and air representation of both British and Americans be formed. The proposal is typical of requests that result from the differences in American and British staff organization. General Clark declines, saying the proposal, if adopted, would result in partial adoption of British staff procedure which is largely a committee system. The British, he adds, are having some difficulty in understanding American staff methods and for that reason "procedure has not always been as smooth as it might be." That was why a British Deputy Chief of Staff (Brigadier Whiteley) was included ten days ago in General Clark's headquarters. General Clark explains to Whiteley how, under the American system, a commander presents questions for investigation to his general staff and how the staff officer concerned obtains the best information from all sources before giving an answer. General Clark says that the decision reached some time ago--to follow U.S. staff organization and procedure--should not be changed. The discrepancy in U.S. and British ranks also causes complications. For instance, Colonel Vandenberg points out the Air Marshall Welsh, who will have only three British squadrons under him, corresponds to an American lieutenant general while General Doolittle, commanding the American air effort which will be much larger, is only a Brigadier General and highly outranked by Welsh. The same difficulty exists in both air and ground commands.

General Lemnitzer and Brigadier Vogel report that General Anderson has put in for the shipping required for his third and fourth follow-up convoys. The total requested is greater than all shipping available for the Mediterranean at the time it is asked for. General Clark tells Lemnitzer that the distribution of the follow-up shipping in the Mediterranean must be spread out for both Algiers and Oran but that Algiers will have priority over the Oran force. The general approves for planning purposes the staff recommendations for supply levels, estimated ammunition expenditure, gasoline and oil consumption and hospitalization. All classes of supplies will be built up progressively for the total force ashore to not less than the following levels: by D-30--14 day level; D-60--30 day level; D-90--45 day level.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

Movement from North Ireland to the Swansea and Liverpool areas of two boat battalions from the Amphibious Engineer Brigade is authorized by the General if billets can be found. These units will be going into training for use in the Oran assault. Actual practice in loading and unloading vessels, which can be obtained at Liverpool and Swansea, will be of great training value and the General is anxious to get it started.

The problem of handling public relations once TORCH gets started comes up for discussion. General Robert Mc Clure is called in and he feels that P.R. officers be placed under the control of G-2. If public relations are placed directly under the Chief of Staff, General Mc Clure feels the C/S will be forced to arbitrate between the conflicting interests of publicity and censorship. If both are placed under G-2, the Chief of Staff will be saved much time and trouble. Major Phillips, now a public relations officer in the European Theater of Operations, has been recommended as P.R.O. for Allied Force Headquarters and General Clark proposes to bring him into the group shortly so policies and plans can be developed.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 10, 1942--Plans for the attack on Oran are progressing rapidly. General Allen, whose 1st Division troops will spearhead the assault, tells General Clark he is well satisfied with development of plans for the landing.

Small details of the assault are beginning to be developed now. General Allen plans to arrange with the British for reconnaissance of the Oran beaches by officers of his staff prior to the attack. They will make their survey from submarines. General Clark approves the plan in principal but instructs General Allen that actual arrangements "must be cleared through me in view of the possible loss of security involved. The British believe that Allen's combat teams can be put ashore faster as units if companies embark on different vessels in the convoy. This, says the General, brings the disadvantage of having companies separated during the voyage and beyond the control of battalion commanders.

One complication for the Oran task force has arisen. General Rooks reports that new medium tanks arriving in the U.K. are M-3s rather than the planned M-4s. The M-3s are not the right shape for combat boats so unless M-4s are received, light tanks will have to support the Oran combat teams.

General Clark calls in Colonel Hamblen and discusses the tonnage that can be put ashore over the Oran beaches in the four or five days the assault convoy will be anchored offshore. The general's Oran staff has figured 11,500 tons to be the maximum, this figure being based on the amount that can be lifted by the available landing craft and the physical capacity of beach parties to handle the loads. The possibility of using "coasters," each of which could carry about 1,000 tons with balanced loads, is being investigated. If these "coasters" can be obtained they will make possible the use of additional facilities at some other small ports in the Oran region.

The chief air advisor for TORCH has been changed. The British Air Ministry has instructed Air Marshal Welsh to command R.A.F. units supporting the Eastern Task Force (Algiers) and have assigned Air Commodore Saunders to Welsh's old job. The general once again plunges with Welsh into the thorny air support problem.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

The capacity of the Gibraltar airport is discussed. Under present plans 250 fighters must leave Gibraltar during the first three days. In addition, three fighter squadrons will be needed for local defense so must remain at Gib. In addition, there will be some aircraft on submarine patrol and others for the fleet air arm. General Clark says "it seems possible that we must reduce our total requirements somewhat." Welsh is detailed to determine the maximum airport capacity of Gibraltar so it can be determined how the reduction can be effected. Crated Spitfires can be erected at Gibraltar at the rate of 20 a day so, under present plans, this means the work must start not later than D minus 12, or around October 21. Welsh feels that as the fighters begin to appear at the Gib airdrome, the Axis will be strongly tempted to bomb before the force begins to operate. Present plans calls for 168 American pilots to arrive in Gibraltar by special convoy on D minus 14 and Welsh suggests their arrival might be delayed by having a small detachment test the newly assembled aircraft.

General Clark instructs Colonel Vandenberg to cable the War Department that final decision as to the employment of the TORCH air force would be made in London. He explains that a large force must not be committed in advance to the Casablanca operation. "Our air plan must be flexible," says the general. "It must provide for such contingencies as the failure of our ground force to get ashore at Casablanca, or for strong Axis reaction early in the operation over the Mediterranean coast with no resistance by the French in the Casablanca area. In any event, we must be prepared to mass our air effort to the east where eventually the strongest hostile air forces probably will be met."

British Commodore Troubridge tells the general that heavy air attacks are not likely outside a radius of about 200 miles from Sardinia. Troubridge has seen a great deal of service in the Mediterranean.

The shipment of fighters to Russia is placing a handicap on TORCH air plans. General Lyon says the British have agreed to furnish Russia with 200 fighters a month and, because they are falling behind in deliveries, they have substituted American P-39s, which were in the U.K. enroute to Russia from the States, in place of British Hurricanes. Vandenberg reports that 54 P-39s that were in the U.K. are already enroute to Murmansk and that another 220 are either loading or on their way to ports for shipment to Russia. That leaves only 20 P-39s available in the United Kingdom. Vandenberg also reports that the British could replace the P-39s with Hurricanes for TORCH use but only at the expense of British Fighter Squadrons already set up for TORCH.

The problems of logistics and air support now occupy the General virtually throughout the entire day. Naval support and troop dispositions have been disposed of and groups are working on them with definite plans and facts before them. General Porter returns from Inveraray and tells General Clark that he is pleased with the way the 168th Infantry regiment combat team is shaping up. Colonel O'Daniel has been placed in command of the regiment. Porter has just seen the team go through a night assault exercise.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 11, 1942--Two interesting TORCH-vital developments come up today: (1) Everything possible is going to be done to strengthen the Algiers force, and, (2) An expert tells General Clark that a Casablanca landing would be possible, because of surf conditions, about one day out of seven.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

136

General Anderson's request that additional shipping be furnished him to strengthen the Algiers force is discussed at a conference that General Clark holds with Generals Gale, Gruenther and Lemnitzer, Commadore Douglas-Pennant, Brigadiers Vogel and Whiteley and Colonel Nevins. Anderson wants to get into Philippeville and Bone as soon as possible to start driving toward Tunis. For this reason he wants the necessary troops afloat close behind him when he first lands at Algiers. Vogel points out that if Anderson's request is met, the British force will be able to move east on Tunis at an early date but that the Oran force will be penalized by relative immobility until about D.50. Gale declares that fulfillment of Anderson's request will involve more shipping and naval escorts and that such a move would have to be taken up with the British Admiralty since it would reflect on the world maritime situation.

General Gale asks whether we are prepared to accept reductions at Oran in order to strengthen the Algiers force and General Clark replies "yes, but the extent of the Oran reduction must be given study and General Anderson will not necessarily be given all he requests." Reason for such a decision is that the occupation of Tunis before the Axis can move in is still one of the prime reasons for executing TORCH. General Lemnitzer is instructed to go into Anderson's request at once to determine equitable distribution of strength. After that decision is made, General Gale will make a definite proposal to the Admiralty. Proposed modification of the plan will be of no value unless the shipping can be found and the navy can provide the necessary escorts.

The expert who brings the disconcerting news about Casablanca is C.V. Clopet, an intelligence officer who has spent 12 years in Casablanca. He says surf conditions along the coast of French Morocco are very unfavorable at this time of year and in his opinion landings will be possible on about one day out of seven. "An attempted landing on other days," he says, "may result in disaster." He suggests daily reports from Casablanca on general weather and tide conditions.

Clopet tells General Clark it would be wise to plan alternative to landings through the surf, direct attacks at small ports along the Atlantic Coast. In that way, troops could be landed at dockside. He adds that defense of these small ports "is weak and could be overcome easily." Conversely, the defenses at Casablanca are strong against any attack from the sea. He believes defense there would be vigorous in case of direct attack. He believes there are eight submarines, 14 destroyers and a battleship based at Oran and that this force is ready for action except that the battleship probably would operate at reduced speed.

The report by Clopet bears out a point already stressed by General Clark: that the chances are at least one in four that when Patton's force arrives at Casablanca the condition of the sea will be such that a landing won't be possible. That means the Casablanca Task Force will have to lie offshore waiting for the right conditions and meanwhile the Oran and Algiers attacks will have been made and Casablanca defenses will be on the alert because they undoubtedly will know that a large force is waiting to attack. The time schedule of three simultaneous attacks will be upset.

General Spaatz, commander of the U.S. Air Force in Britain, comes in to go over TORCH air problems with General Clark. The air general reports on the difficulties he is encountering in trying to prepare for TORCH and, at the same time, maintain operations against Germany and the occupied European countries. Spaatz

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

says that British Air Marshal Slesser is "definitely opposed to us using either P-39s or DB-7s" in TORCH. The air general believes the United States planners of TORCH should press the matter and General Clark promises to do so. Air Marshal Welsh reports that the capacity of Gibraltar airdrome will permit 175 fighters to depart on D-day, that 220 planes will be able to clear for North Africa by D plus 4 and 250 very soon thereafter.

Late in the day, General Lemnitzer and Brigadier Vogel, completing their study of General Anderson's request for additional forces, recommend that he be allowed a total of 51,000 (7,000 less than requested). General Clark approves the recommendation. This means that at the time of arrival of the third fast convoy, the distribution of troops in the area will be: Algiers, 110,000; Oran 70,000. General Gale is taking the plan to the Admiralty to see whether or not the necessary vessels and naval escorts can be provided.

A staff coordination memorandum comes out today. It places General Lemnitzer in charge of plans and training, making him responsible for coordinating the Allied Army, Naval and Air Operations Plans and Training staffs. Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman gets the same type of assignment as head of the Allied Intelligence staffs and General Gale is named chief Administrative Officer to coordinate the Army, Naval and Air administrative staffs. No G-1 has been named yet.

Generals Clark and Eisenhower leave London late in the evening for an overnight conference with Prime Minister Churchill and high-ranking British officers.

\* \* \*

CHECKERS, ENGLAND, SEPT. 12, 1942--Prime Minister Churchill, despite his great eagerness to launch TORCH at the earliest possible date, agrees after long conferences starting last night that the North African assault will have to be postponed until about November 15. Mr. Churchill agrees after Generals Eisenhower and Clark and high British officials outline the obstacles in the way of a late October or early November attack.

From the time the two generals arrive at Checkers until they depart around noon, TORCH--its problems, its shifting plans, its hopes--is almost the sole topic under discussion. The two American generals explain the difficulties in getting ammunition and arms to the United Kingdom in time to get it aboard combat loaded vessels, the stumbling blocks in planning for TORCH air support, shipping space restrictions. The other conferees--General Sir Alan Brooke, Lord Louis Mountbatten, Lord Leathers (head of the War Shipping Administration), Major General Holmes (British Director of Movements), Vice Admiral Moore of the Home Fleet, and Colonel Hollis, Secretary to the British Chief of Staff--support arguments for the postponed date.

The shipping problem is growing more acute. After dinner, while the officers are conferring with Churchill in his study, a report comes in that seven submarines have attacked an Allied convoy in mid-Atlantic and ten ships have been sunk. It is not known yet whether the convoy was east or west bound. No matter which way it was headed--east with fighting supplies and food or west in virtual ballast--it means ten less ships for war shipping and every ship is beginning to count more every day.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

The problem of getting aircraft earmarked for Russia re-assigned to TORCH is discussed and Churchill says "PQ" convoy number 18 is now enroute to Russia and if it goes through successfully Churchill says he "can't bring myself to tell Joe (Stalin) that there just ain't going to be no more convoys this year" because of TORCH demands. Russian convoy 19 is now being loaded and whether or not it sails depends on the success of "PQ" 18. If the convoy, now halfway to Russia and approaching the danger zone where it must face bombardment from land based planes, is "smashed up," the Prime Minister says "PQ" 19 will be transferred over to TORCH use. That change would throw TORCH D-day back to November 15. Lord Leathers reports he has succeeded in pulling 150 or the 200 P-39s destined for Russia out of "PQ" 19. X

If convoy 19 goes through to Archangel, all the ships will have to remain "frozen in" for the winter. That will mean the loss of at least a quarter-million tons of shipping that could be used, at least in part, in TORCH. The Prime Minister recounts a Russian convoy anecdote that illustrates brutally the serious condition of the British navy.

"I don't like to tell you this," Mr. Churchill says to Admiral Moore. "It hurts me more than a little. But when I was in Moscow last month, Joe turned to me, during a discussion of the Russian convoy losses, and said: 'You have no glory left in the British Navy. Your navy only runs the British convoy halfway to Russia, then turns around and dashes back to England while the merchant ships get slaughtered.' Stalin is right and imagine me having to take that kind of a lashing from Joe." X

Churchill asks if some destroyers can't be taken from the Indian Ocean fleet to help TORCH. And, the Prime Minister, the old sea dog who was the First Lord of the Admiralty in the First World War, is told that the British have only seven destroyers in the Indian Ocean and that they constitute a force barely large enough to give protection to the rather small fleet operating in that region. The British Navy, General Clark remarks later, "appears to be in a hell of a shape."

The Prime Minister suggests that to help TORCH the present schedule of a US-UK convoy arriving every seven days be changed to every ten days. Lord Leathers tells him that would mean the loss of 50,000 tons of shipping space per day. Churchill blinks.

Every way the conferees turn in an attempt to find a shortcut, the answer comes back inevitably to: D-day must be set back!

At one point, Mr. Churchill discusses a report that has just come in to him. It says the French Governor of Madagascar has just invited the Japanese to come in and help the French resist British troops who are consolidating their hold on the island. Says Churchill, bitterly: "There are a certain number of skunks who come to the top in skunky times!"

The night conference with the Prime Minister lasts until 3:15 A.M. when Mr. Churchill, who is notorious for staying up late since he naps in the afternoons, turns to the weary and worried men and says jauntily:

"I guess there's no use keeping you people up late. You might as well go to bed!"

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

Returning to London, General Clark plunges immediately into a series of conferences that last until well into the evening. The snarled SOS situation is gone into again with General Gruenther and Colonel Hughes. Stressing the fact that loading of the Oran force would start October 8, General Clark tells Hughes that combat weapons for the 1st Division must arrive in the United Kingdom by September 26. This is the bare minimum of time for the weapons to be distributed and combat loaded. The general stresses to Colonel Hughes that he must make it "vividly clear" that if the weapons are not here by September 26, the assault teams will have to attack with insufficient arms and ammunition. "Make them realize," says General Clark, "that is something isn't done and done fast those men will be going in virtually with only their bare hands."

Later, the general remarks that "the SOS has let us down badly all the way along."

Brigadier General Craig of the U.S. Air Force goes over the TORCH air problem with General Clark. The chief topic concerns how the R.A.F. and the U.S.A.F. can't get together on how much air support should be given TORCH. Craig is asked to sit in on a conference with Commodore Saunders, Colonels Vandenberg and Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman. The divergence of opinion on the strength of the air forces results, Saunders says, from the fact the Air Ministry is planning a more or less short term view of TORCH while the U.S. plan is more inclusive. That accounts for the contemplated U.S. A.A.F. being so strong and the R.A.F. relatively weak. The Air Ministry does not wish to commit, at this date, any more aircraft than are necessary for the seizure of North Africa. If the attacks are successful, the R.A.F. will rush over more air support so the assault can be continued eastward. On the other hand, the U.S. is not only planning for air support of the initial assault and the drive to Tunis, but is also preparing for a continued, vigorous, long-range offensive, possibly against Sardinia and Italy.

Attempting to find out the exact status of equipment for the Oran Task Force, General Clark instructs General Rocks to detail ten officers to work in cooperation with the SOS in an attempt to find out what equipment is available and move it to the assault teams as soon as possible. This search will be not only for 1st Division equipment but also for equipment for the 1st Armored Division and the Engineer Amphibious Brigade, all of which will be the spearhead attackers at Oran.

General Oliver, commanding the 1st Armored Division, reports to General Clark on the attack proposed for his force. Because of the type of landing boats available, the 1st Armored will go ashore originally with light tanks. The heavy tank battalions will follow later. Reason for this is that the M-3 tanks with which Oliver's division is equipped will not go in the Maracaibo boats and, not knowing if M-4s, which will go in Maracaibos, will arrive in time, Oliver's plan is now set and it does not depend on the equipment of heavy tank battalions.

General Clark makes one succulent remark as he discusses TORCH's chances of success. It is:

"If Spain, as the result of our North African landings, enters the war at the side of Germany and jumps on our back in the Mediterranean, we in TORCH might as well turn in our suits."

\* \* \*

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

LONDON, SEPT. 13, 1942--The question of just how French leaders, military and civil, can best be approached in North Africa when the "zero hour" is near has come up for discussion.

Both British and American planners of TORCH feel that a straightforward statement from President Roosevelt should be delivered to the authorities at the 11th hour, even as the assault forces are making ready to clamber over the sides of the combat loaded ships and start ashore in the dark. The gist of this message should be that the American forces are going to land, that they have but one goal--to beat the Axis into Tunisia, that French territory will not be occupied except to achieve the eastward drive goal and that the cooperation of the French in North Africa is asked. This message would be delivered by Mr. Murphy or some other American official who has the respect and trust of the North African French.

General Clark believes this plan should be carried even farther. He thinks one of the high commanders--either General Eisenhower or himself--should be ready to go to the leading French official should he ask to see the leader of the attacking force. General Clark thinks the first thing the official will do upon being served the Roosevelt message will be to ask to see the expedition's leader so he can talk with him and get oral assurances of good intent. The leader must be readily available. How to get him into Algeria so he can be ready for conferences is one of the major problems. Should he go in two or three days ahead of the attack, wear civilian clothes and wait for the 11th hour summons? Should he lie offshore in a small boat, waiting for the signal to rendezvous and be taken ashore? Is the risk of flying in too great?

These are the kind of problems that confront the men working on the civil and political end of TORCH while the purely military men go ahead with their tremendous task of planning for the attack.

Another problem is to determine how, when and if the naval units will bombard from the sea. General Ryder, in discussing the Algiers operation with General Clark, says he is convinced the French Navy and coastal defenses are going to go into action as soon as the attack begins. He predicts house-to-house fighting in Algiers. "I hope the battleships won't have to bombard Algiers but if they must, they will," General Clark says. He believes the general feeling growing is that the French army will offer only token resistance. This assumption is based partially on reports from Madagascar where resistance to a British consolidation of position during the past three days has been very light.

General Ryder is concerned about what General Anderson is going to do with the American assault troops at Algiers after the British force has landed and Anderson takes over command. General Clark tells Ryder that he and his troops will be under General Anderson's command and that "he will have you until stability is established." General Clark hopes to pull the American Algiers force back after the British troops have landed in strength. The British plans are subject to approval by Allied Force headquarters and General Clark tells his Algiers Task Force leader that he anticipates no trouble over the question of troop uses.

Regarding resistance by the French navy and coast defenses, General Clark says this headquarters will establish and publish a policy to be followed concerning bombardment of French ports.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

141

Commodore Saunders says the Air Ministry opposes diversion of the 33rd Fighter Group (now being made ready in the U.S. for shipment to Africa) from the Middle East, for which it was earmarked, to the Western Task Force at Casablanca. General Clark tells Saunders the decision has been made, presumably with the approval of the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington, and that plans call for the group to come across aboard a British aircraft carrier that will accompany the African assault force. The air support picture is clearing slowly. Lord Leathers reports that 151 of the P-39s destined for Russia have been recovered from "PQ" 19 for TORCH use.

Training schedules of the 1st Division are discussed with General Allen and Colonel Coda, his Chief of Staff. Loading tables must be ready by September 16 and the 1st Division equipment will start going aboard October 8. As to the ammunition supply, Colonel Coda says the 1st Division can fight for a week at Oran but after that time it will have to be replenished, not only with ammunition, but also with spare gun and truck parts. General Allen is told that when the 18th Infantry combat team completes training in Ireland it will not be returned to Tidworth. The 1st Division commander is to find out from the British what bivouac areas are available in the north for the 18th when its amphibious training is completed. From the camp it will go directly to the combat loaded boats.

Colonel Vandenberg reports that AirCCommodore Saunders appears to understand the American viewpoint on TORCH air operations better than he formerly did. Saunders, however, is not clear on his responsibility in connection with the Casablanca operation. He is told by General Clark that "much of this planning must necessarily be made in the United States but the plans are subject to revision by us. They will not be changed unnecessarily."

In the evening, General Clark has Sunday dinner with Walter Lippman, the American columnist, and Mrs. Lippman.

\* \* \*

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

142

LONDON, SEPT. 14, 1942--Use of British paratroops to aid General Anderson's drive eastward to seize Tunis is discussed today and has the enthusiastic approval of General Clark and General Browning, commander of the 1st British Parachute Brigade. Machinery is set in motion to get the British paratroopers training in Southern England with the 64th Transport Group (American).

General Browning, faced with General Clark's proposal, says that "any part or all of my force is ready for such an operation and we will be glad to take part in it." Browning's 1,700 jumpers are trained and ready but the Royal Air Force does not have the paratroop carriers. The 64th, with 40 to 45 planes, is available and arrangements are made to have the transport group start training with the British chuters by weekend. A unit of U.S. paratroops is already set up to land at Oran. Browning's group will be used to aid Anderson's force. Once the American paratroopers bail out over Oran and achieve their mission--seizure of two airports--it will take them two weeks to be ready for another operation since they will lose a certain amount of equipment and time is required to dry and re-pack their chutes. Use of British paratroopers will obviate this two week delay. Fully-equipped parachute units will be flown into Oran after the airports have been captured. They will then be fully prepared to participate in more easterly operations. General Anderson is greatly interested in obtaining parachute troops and the proposed arrangements will be outlined to him. Colonel Sterling is called in and he says such rapid action in obtaining the paratroopers might make the British Chiefs of Staff feel they are being "short-circuited." So, General Clark plans to draft a note stating that he foresees the need of using British paratroops in TORCH and that he wants to make U.S. air transports available for their immediate training and later movement to the theater.

General Anderson comes in for a conference and says that he is pleased with what he saw in watching the 168th combat team in an exercise. He also speaks favorably of the 18th Infantry combat team, which is also training in Ireland. Real purpose of Anderson's call is to try and induce General Clark to reduce the number of U.S. vehicles being taken into Algiers in the early convoys for use of U.S. signal and headquarters units. General Matejka reports his purpose in taking the units is to have all communications in shape by D.33, when the Allied Force headquarters is scheduled to be set up in Algiers. General Clark decides to cut the number of signal vehicles on the second fast Mediterranean convoy to 25 from the original plan of 62.

General Craig, who has been sitting as a neutral observer while British and U.S. officials thrash out the air support problem, reports to General Clark that he believes "the situation has largely solved itself." He says the directive given to the Air Commodore appears workable in all respects and that the air appreciation prepared by Saunders will be satisfactory. Craig recommends taking "all air strength possible" on the operation, pointing out the tremendous distance we will be from our base in the United States compared to the R.A.F. bases in Britain. It will be relatively easy for the British to call for air reinforcements; it won't be so easy for us.

A glaring example of lack of coordination arises today. General Gruenther reports that a number of signal units needed for the Casablanca force have been erroneously shipped here from the United States. Two of the units--the 56th and 61st Signal Companies--cannot be replaced in the U.S. in time to sail with the Casablanca force. Officers are now trying to use these units inside the Mediterranean or else find a ship to take them from the U.K. to Casablanca. Such a convoy complication would be "most undesirable," General Clark says.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

143

Admiral Bennett, U.S. Naval officer in charge of amphibious training, is called in to discuss contemplated withdrawal of the Engineer Amphibious Brigade from his control. It is now at Roseneath. The maintenance company, a non-mobile organization that operates heavy machinery and keeps landing craft in condition, is particularly needed, Admiral Bennett says. The Admiral and three members of his staff is oriented about the huge ramifications of TORCH and he realizes the importance of his task, pointed toward now-defunct ROUNDUP, is rapidly decreasing. In view of this, the Admiral says he will not oppose withdrawal of the unit provided it is not done before the amphibious training is more or less completed. General Clark says the unit probably will not be pulled before November 1. Admiral Bennett is told by General Clark that if the entire amphibious brigade is needed in TORCH that he would have to take it but that he would not unnecessarily cripple the current training program in Ireland.

General Ryder is called in during the naval conference and he explains that he wants a naval officer to work with him in coordinating naval and military operations during the landing. Admiral Bennett promises to provide an officer. General Clark is told that the four naval officers that will accompany his advance group to Gibraltar on D minus 3 will be Admiral Bieri, Captain Wright, a communications officer and one other officer. Admiral Cunningham, the TORCH naval commander, will establish his base in Gibraltar about the same date.

In outlining TORCH to the navy men, General Clark tells Admiral Bennett: "We're now in the throes of childbirth. Serious trouble has arisen over shipping, air support, naval escort, logistics. These have been great burdens and they are still on our backs. It looks, however, as though we have our heads above water now."

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPT. 15, 1942--As the Target Date, currently set as November 4, draws closer and closer all problems of TORCH, save one--logistics--seem to be clarifying satisfactorily. Looming ever bigger and bigger as a threat to the success of the major move to defeat the Axis is the snarled condition of supply.

General Eisenhower calls in all his high-ranking general today: Generals Clark, Lee and Spaatz. He talks frankly to each of them about the problems, but the real reason for the meeting--the reason for which General Eisenhower staged the conference--is to point out to Lee that the confused situation on logistics must be clarified immediately. Just how much supply is available in the United Kingdom for TORCH must be determined quickly and accurately.

"This thing is going off, definitely, and we're going to have to go in there if we have to go in armed with nuts and bolts instead of guns and bullets," General Clark declares. "We've all got to realize that an early November date must be met and those boys can't go in their barehanded."

Later, General Lee comes over to confer with General Clark who tells the SOS general of his "apprehension over the ability of the SOS to perform its mission." The Deputy Commander-in-Chief says he realizes how terribly difficult the SOS job is and adds that his only criticism is that he can't get definite answers to specific questions on what the quantities are on vital items--ammunition, spare parts, maintenance supplies--within the United Kingdom and just what must be rushed over from the United States.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

The conference is later joined by Colonels Satzman and Adcock and Generals Larkin and Gruenther. The group discusses detailed requisitions which are being submitted to the 11 Army Corps to cover supplies which should arrive at Oran on the D-4 convoy from the United Kingdom and the D-7 convoy from the United States. A total of 50,000 tons can be handled by the port of Oran from both convoys and it is therefore imperative that General Lee determine what proportion of this 50,000 tons can be supplied from here so the War Department can be instructed as to the supplies which will have to be dispatched from the United States direct to Oran on the D-7 convoy. General Lee said he was confident he could furnish the breakdown of the 50,000 ton shipments in the "very near future." General Lee is also instructed to answer categorically questions submitted by General Gale in a memorandum on "Ability of SOS to meet Initial Supply Demands." Gale asks to have a Deputy in his over-all organization, an American to help him work on the supply bottlenecks that are developing. He says it is "quite impossible" for him to keep up with all the details of planning for the supply of three task forces. Gale, in discussing U.S. participation in the Algiers force, says he hopes supply requirements for these units can be met from SOS in the United Kingdom. He says he does not, as yet, have complete information.

The problem of giving the 1st Division combat teams the necessary amphibious training, yet, getting to the troops their fighting equipment is discussed by General Clark with General Allen and his Chief of Staff, Colonel Coffa. Generals Rooks and Lemnitzer also sit in on the conference. General Allen suggests that the troops go into training in Scotland, return to Tidworth and get their equipment, then return to Scotland. General Clark vetoes the idea, saying he sympathizes with the division's problem of issue and loading but that he feels strongly that "we should take full advantage of all opportunities to train the regimental combat teams as fully as possible." He rules that a strong cadre, under the second in command, remain at Tidworth to prepare the equipment for shipment and get it to the port of embarkation. In that way, the combat teams can concentrate on amphibious training without interruption. The TORCH force will load in the Firth of Clyde region.

General Ryder and his staff come in to present, to Generals Clark and Eisenhower, the new Chief of Staff of Allied Force Headquarters, Brigadier General W.B. Smith, and Generals Gruenther and Lemnitzer a detailed account of how they plan to assault Algiers. Working in front of huge maps in General Clark's office, the entire Algiers plan is reviewed. General Clark says it looks "very satisfactory." General Clark has General Ryder remain to stress to him that the capture of Algiers and its adjacent airports "must take complete precedence over any effort to capture Bougie." General Clark declares that this "secondary mission," for which a strong demand is made by General Anderson, "is to be undertaken only after the capture of the primary objective--the Algiers region."

Sandwiched in between these all-important conferences are meetings on more minor, but still highly important, matters. General Matejka reports that the British have agreed to the establishment of a connection on the Gibraltar-London cable. This line will run directly into 20 Grosvenor Square, seat of the European Theater of Operations of the U.S. Army. It will connect directly with the TORCH operations room at Gibraltar. Matejka says the communications problem at Algiers is less troublesome than at Oran. Communications with the convoy coming from the States will be through United States channels as long as possible for security reasons. It will be possible to communicate with all convoys afloat directly from Gibraltar. Major Phillips is made public relations officer of



~~SECRET~~

Allied Force Headquarters and instructed by General Clark to outline the entire public relations program. He will operate, consecutively, at Norfolk House here, Gibraltar and Algiers. A few correspondents will be flown to Gibraltar and a limited number will accompany the assault forces. Philipps will also outline censorship proposals and determine who will be the field P.R.O.s with the Oran and Algiers forces. During the early phases, he will not have to concern himself with press relations of the Casablanca force since it is coming directly to the attack from the United States. Colonel Sawbridge, the headquarters G-1, has gone into the matter of replacements for the task forces and reports the matter seems satisfactory.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 16, 1942--Robert Murphy, a rawboned, redheaded State Department career officer who will be the key political man in North Africa prior to and during the initial phases of TORCH, arrives under an alias from the United States to get his final instructions before returning to Africa.

From the airport he is whisked to a hideaway where he confers with Generals Eisenhower and Clark, Ambassador Winant, Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman, Mr. Mack and Averill Harriman. The most startling news brought by Murphy is that President Roosevelt has drafted a letter for almost immediate delivery to the French in which he tells them "we're coming into North Africa at an early date." The letter, of which Murphy has a copy, does not reveal any details. It is cleverly hazy, making it appear that the assault will come anywhere from next week to next spring. It proposes that French General Giraud be made Commander-in-Chief of all troops, with the French naturally included. The President hopes <sup>have Giraud</sup> to come in and head up everything--military, political, civil and monetary.

General Clark believes it is "dangerous to let them know ahead of time about the operation unless we are assured the North African French will come along with us. If they are going to do so it should be handled through diplomatic channels and we should move in immediately." The general remarks that Murphy "has a rattlesnake by the tail." He describes him as a good, keen fellow but lacking in military background." Murphy, who has not been in North Africa for several weeks and who will be returning to the United States so he can fly to Africa from there, believes the French will resist for only 48 hours and then capitulate to the assaulting force. Murphy feels that upon his return to Africa he can organize groups that can seize coastdefense batteries, radio and telegraph stations, newspapers, and sensitive points of communications and other key objectives. TORCH G-3 will prepare a list of these objectives for seizure or destruction prior to or on D-day. These will list the desired priority of destruction.

Before the five hour meeting with Mr. Murphy, General Clark calls in Mr. Mack so they can go over the political situation. The general plan to return to Washington within 10 days and he wants to take back a complete report on the political phases of TORCH. Mr. Mack said he believed President Roosevelt's message guaranteeing the integrity of French North Africa providing there is no resistance should be delivered to General Juin, top-ranking general in that region. Mack says that Juin will not have control of the navy and it probably will start shooting. He believes Juin's reaction, upon receiving the President's note, will be that he has orders to defend and defend he must, or, that he will ask for time to report to his government. Mack believes Murphy can handle Juin but that it might be necessary to have a military plenipotentiary standing by so that



~~SECRET~~

either the Commander-in-Chief or his deputy can go to him for consultation. Mack also suggests that Juin might be flown to either General Eisenhower or General Clark. Murphy, the general stresses, must observe military action very closely when he returns to Africa and keep Allied Headquarters fully advised. Generally, Clark points out that some system must be worked out so Murphy can send signals to the fleet to let it know whether or not it should start bombardment to knock out coastal batteries and other installations. TORCH leaders are convinced the attack will not be a surprise.

The entire political phase of TORCH is canvassed. Various methods of psychological warfare, including the use of airplanes equipped with loud speakers, employment of aerial sky writers, use of fireworks and leaflets, are discussed. The text of leaflets to be dropped over Algiers, Oran and Casablanca depends on what President Roosevelt's message includes. General Clark suggests that it might be wise to attach coupons to the leaflets, the coupons to be turned in to some Allied headquarters for rations or cash. Certificates written in Arabic are being prepared to instruct natives who might surround crashed pilots that, if they return them unharmed to American military officials, they will receive a certain amount of money. General Clark also suggests that booty be stored in warehouses to it can be passed out to native leaders to get their support or sympathy.

The air support problem apparently is ironed out satisfactorily, leaving logistics as the only major TORCH hurdle. British and American views on the air operation are now harmonious and Air Commodore Sanders proposes to outline the entire directive for final approval. Colonel Vandenberg reports that he and Sanders are in "full agreement" about plan strength and uses and that he believes arrangements for the delivery of essential ground supplies to air forces at Oran and Casablanca are satisfactory. Sanders is told by General Clark that he plans to <sup>have</sup> General Doolittle at Gibraltar since the Commander-in-Chief must have an air man at his side to advise him as the fighting progresses. Air commanders will be appointed and assigned to the three assault forces.

The supply problem, with time of the essence in deciding it, grows more and more tangled. An SOS cable on supply shortages is held up because the list includes shortages for units not set up for the TORCH force. General Clark says the cable "would only further confuse the already muddled supply situation." Anyway, the requisition could not be filled in time for TORCH loading which begins October 5. Colonel Hughes is told of the instructions given yesterday to General Lee but Hughes is not clear as to what Lee is doing about it. Later Colonel Hamblen is called in and General Clark explains that "we now plan to get such maintenance supplies as we can from the United Kingdom and ask for shipment of the remainder direct to destination from the United States. This seems desirable even if it results in some overloading of port capacity. There is a possibility a few extra ships involved might be staged at Gibraltar until berths can be found for them in the ports of destination."

Possible use of a British Marine outfit, which has been suggested by the Prime Minister, is discussed by Generals Clark and Bruenther and Brigadier Whiteley. The British officer is told that it is desirable to get the marines ready for possible use by D-60 and that it would be used with artillery and paratroops to attack Sardinia and Sicily if the operation develops sufficiently. When Whiteley shows apprehension about use of the Marines, thinking they might replace another outfit, General Clark tells him they constitute "an ace in the hole" and their use is "very indefinite."

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

General Ryder reports that the logistics problem for Algiers seems to be coming along satisfactorily. He is investigating the possible use of British ammunition and spare parts to make up shortages. He is worried about the continuity of U.S. command and is told to appoint General Porter as his Deputy Commander so that command would pass to Porter automatically in the assault phase. General Clark explains that the command definitely is to be American until General Anderson takes over.

Captain Wright of the U.S. Navy comes in to discuss naval matters and says he is convinced the Straits of Gibraltar cannot be kept open if we hold only the south side. General Clark tells him it is the opinion of Sea Lord Pound that some convoys could be put through under those conditions but that if Gibraltar airfield and harbor is bombed early in the operation before we develop enough force to move into Spanish Morocco, the Straits will be closed and TORCH forces will be dependent on communications over the overland route from Casablanca to Oran. A plan to cover this contingency is being worked out.

General Lemnitzer's G-3 section is instructed today to keep in mind the necessity of preparing alternate plans to meet the following contingencies: closing of the Straits by Axis entry into Spain or hostile action by Spain herself; Axis or Spanish bombing of Gibraltar prior to D-day because "due to the congested condition of the field all our airplanes might well be destroyed;" what should be done in case weather conditions make it impossible to land through the surf; the possibility of a simultaneous attack by British troops from Malta against Tunis on D-day; possible "Trojan Horse" tactics that might assist in the attacks.

中 中 中

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 17, 1942--To circumvent, at least partially, some of the ever-more-crucial TORCH supply problems, General Clark rules that equipment held by troops that will not participate in the North African operation can be taken from them and put in the hands of the Oran Task Force. General Rooks is instructed to "get whatever you can for the assaulting troops and the more complete the better."

General Larkin is called in to report on the progress being made in preparation of General Lee's supply report--concerning the breakdown of the 50,000 tons for the D.1 and D.4 convoys. As usual, the report does nothing but confuse the situation. General Clark tells Larkin that "the SOS simply is not fulfilling its obligations." He stresses that it is imperative that TORCH planners have a report showing just what is available in the United Kingdom for these two initial convoys and what items must be shipped immediately from the United States to fill in the ammunition, maintenance and other supply gaps.

Admiral Lyster of the British navy, a salty, colorful officer who will command all aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean during TORCH, comes in to explain his setup and make three interesting proposals to General Clark. He believes that at least 12 Spitfires should be detailed to be flying over Oran at the time our troops land so that they can begin using the two Oran airports just as soon as the Oran force seizes them. He suggests that it would be wiser to lose 12 planes instead of an aircraft carrier and that these land-based aircraft will be better able to support ground troops than his carrier-based planes. When the Spits reach

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

148

Oran they will have enough fuel to last two and a half hours. If the airports are not taken in that time, the fighter planes will have to land on the desert and trust to luck.

Admiral Lyster also recommends that TORCH leaders take steps to procure an 18-acre graveyard on Gibraltar. He wants to "plough the dead under" so the area for dispersing the 175 planes that will be crowded on Gib airport can be extended. "The living and the dead must make their contribution," says the Admiral. Although he says he knows he is "getting out of my field," Admiral Lyster propounds a theory of "exploit, exploit, exploit" after the operation starts. He says we must be ready to exploit the landing and drive eastward at the greatest possible speed "at all costs." He believes that troops on Malta--4,000 to 5,000, supported by fighter planes, should move from Malta in an attack on Tunis that would be simultaneous with our attacks on Oran, Casablanca and Algiers. He offers to contribute 18 planes that would drop dummy parachutists to divert and confuse the opposition at Algiers. He suggests that it might be wise to strip some of the bombers and "stuff them with soldiers" so the drive to the eastward can be exploited. The Admiral is proceeding tonight to the Firth of Clyde where some of his units will engage in combined operations training and prepare for departure of the huge armada that will make up the TORCH Mediterranean invasion force.

The staff in Norfolk House is growing constantly. Today the permanent Chief of Staff, Brigadier General W.B. (Bedel) Smith, reports in and starts operating in the office next to General Clark's. General Gruenther becomes Deputy Chief of Staff. Other offices are filling up. Eight geopolitical experts have arrived from the United States. General Doolittle returns from air plans conferences in Washington and General Clark calls him in almost immediately. The air general is pleased with progress but tells General Clark he is going to do some "house cleaning" in his personnel to get stripped for action. General Clark stresses to Doolittle, who is quite an individualist, "the absolute necessity for teamwork and cooperation with the British." Doolittle is instructed to go over the TORCH air directive with Air Commodore Sanders.

General Noce, over from the United States to inspect the preparedness of the Engineer Amphibious Brigade, reports to General Clark that he is pleased with the training the unit is receiving. The brigade is going to be used as shore parties and as port battalions. General Clark informs him that he hopes to retain the landing craft used in the assault in the North African theater and later utilize the boat regiment to operate these craft in coastal supply movements. Noce praises the ability of the maintenance company which he says is ahead of the Navy in keeping landing craft fit. General Clark tells him he has decided to leave the maintenance company on its present job in Scotland until November when it will pack up and prepare for movement to the TORCH theater.

\*a

\*

\*

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 18, 1942--A convoy crisis arises today to complicate the already snarled TORCH supply picture and immediately all the resources of General Clark and his big staff are thrown into the breach to solve it. How many "battles" must be fought in offices before the real battles start!

The U.S. Navy has decided that the maximum number of ships it can convoy safely from the United States directly to the African theater, arriving D-6, is 20. This means elimination of the D-6 convoy that was to carry all the gasoline

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

that was scheduled for the Oran Air Force. A total of 8,000 tons of cargo would be unavailable and it is of vital importance. The Navy decision would also eliminate 3,008 aviation signal troops and 5,000 II Army Corps personnel. What the cable really means, says General Clark, "is that the schedule for convoys on which everybody has agreed is all torn up." Colonel Hamblen is instructed to draft a reply advising Washington of the seriousness of the situation. Meanwhile, the staff begins looking for a way to circumvent this new crisis.

To balance the new and gloomy development on the nightmarish supply problem, the air problem is straightened satisfactorily now as General Doolittle reports his approval of Air Commodore Sanders plan.. And Sanders agrees to enlargement of the plan to include the strategy of having 12 Spitfires circle over Oran so they can use the Oran air fields as soon as they can be seized on the morning of the assault. The possible sacrifice of the Spitfire--which will result if their gasoline runs out before they can land on the airdromes--is necessary in order to be ready to strengthen the weak carrier-borne support.

The first of a series of tri-weekly TORCH Combined Staff meetings is held today in Norfolk House and they probably will continue from now until the time the staff is ready to depart, by air to Gibraltar and by ship to Oran and Algiers, for the opening of the Second Front.

General Eisenhower, the Commander-in-Chief, presides at the long, green, cloth-covered table. At his right sits General Clark, the Deputy Commander, and on his left the Chief of Staff, General Smith. The huge rectangular table, covered with pads and pencils, ashtrays and place cards for each officer, is surrounded by every key man in TORCH, with the exception of General Patton, head of the Western Task Force who is planning the Casablanca assault in the United States. The officers include: British General Anderson whose task it will be to drive eastward from Algiers to take Tunis; Air Marshall Welsh, Air Commodore Sanders and General Doolittle, who will have charge of air operations; Admiral Burrough of the British Navy and Captain Wright, representing Admiral Bieri of the United States Navy; General Ryder, who will lead the Algiers assault force; General Rocks, at present planning the Oran assault that is presently set for the command of Major General Hartle, currently in Ireland; British General Gale, on whose shoulders falls the responsibility of directing supply operations; Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman, the trim, mustached British officer who heads TORCH intelligence; Mr. Mack, the political affairs advisor; and other brigadier generals, brigadiers and colonels who head the special sections in TORCH planning. Most important of these is Brigadier General Lemnitzer, the soft-spoken, black-haired American who has charge of plans and training for TORCH.

General Eisenhower explains that he believes these tri-weekly conferences will give all of icers a chance to air their problems, share their views. He explains that General Clark, after handling organization of TORCH since it was decided to make North Africa the major theater, will be Deputy Commander and free of paper work once the operation starts. He explains that General Clark probably will fly into Gibraltar three or four days before TORCH is to start and that he (Eisenhower) will be there on the day previous to D-day.. Later, the Allied Force Headquarters will be moved to either Algiers or Oran, depending on conditions but with Algiers preferable. The entire chain of command is explained and General Eisenhower points out that since TORCH is essentially an all-American operation, it was deemed wise to have Americans fill the key spots. General Eisenhower will still retain his post as Commander of the European Theater of Operations, designating a deputy just before he departs for Gibraltar. This retention

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

150

of command will make it possible for TORCH to have priority on any replacements that might be wanted from the United Kingdom. Later, two theaters of operations might be set up--one for the European Theater and the other for Africa. General Eisenhower tells the British and Americans gathered in the now smoky room that differences in staff procedure have caused difficulties but that it was thought best to proceed on the American plan. After he has made a survey of the general situation, Eisenhower asks the British to bring up any problems they face.

General Anderson asks for definite commitment of the First British Parachute Brigade to his force. He says it will be invaluable in the drive to the east. General Eisenhower says the paratroops are too valuable to be committed to a specific task so long before the operations start and says their disposition must be kept flexible to meet demands that might arise. However, he adds, every effort will be pointed toward aiding General Anderson's overland drive from Algiers to Tunis.

Air Marshall Welsh says the greatest danger to the TORCH convoy is going to be from submarines and he asks the opportunity of having an anti-submarine air unit based at Oran. He wants to put gasoline and depth charges for this work aboard the Oran convoy but all space on this convoy has already been taken. General Eisenhower says that a survey will be made to determine what sacrifices will have to be made to get this anti-submarine materiel aboard. Welsh also wants to have a squadron of U.S. P-38s based at Gibraltar so they can fly to Algiers the morning of the attack to support ground troops. He says the Algiers aircraft carriers will be within range of Axis planes based on Sardinia. The P-38s would be equipped with belly petrol tanks so they could return to Gibraltar. This brings up the subject of overcrowding of aircraft at Gibraltar and Welsh says present plans call for 175 planes on that vulnerable field with a study being made to see if 200 can't be jammed in, particularly if the 18-acre graveyard can be graded and utilized.

After discussing a multitude of subjects raised by various phases of TORCH, General Eisenhower breaks up the meeting, calling the next one for Monday noon. He and General Clark then go into a long conference in Clark's office. The Deputy Commander has, as he described it, "ants in my pants." He asks if he can't take over command of the Oran Task Force. This operation is running into the most organization and supply snags and General Clark wants to plunge directly into it. He also wants to be closer to the front when the fighting starts. General Eisenhower, after long argument, discourages him, saying that no one can fill his present post and that he has the most fundamental knowledge of all officers involved in TORCH.

The plans and training section is drawing up alternate plans for General Patton's Casablanca force in case it is unable to land because of surf conditions. A number of alternatives will be provided but they probably will call for the Western Task Force to land inside the Mediterranean. These plans must be ready by next Wednesday when General Clark plans to leave for Washington to have a final conference on TORCH and take a last look at the organization of Patton's force.

General Doolittle comes in to oppose Welsh's proposal that an anti-sub air squadron be based at Oran. Doolittle feels the British are unwilling to make room in their own Algiers convoy and want to saddle the Oran group with the equipment. He also opposes Welsh's plan to put a squadron of P-38s on Gibraltar

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

so it can fly to Algiers to support that attack. Doolittle says he does not want that many P-38s at Gibraltar because of the danger of a bombing attack, that the P-38s are half again as big as Spitfires and will take more of the already crowded aircraft space, and the P-38s would have to drop their belly tanks once they got into combat and hence would not have sufficient fuel to return to Gibraltar.

In evaluating the British and American views on air operations, Doolittle points out to General Clark that the Americans want overwhelming superiority of air support while the British want the minimum. He says the British want to bolster their own air support by drawing from the U.S. force and he vigorously opposes such a withdrawal, declaring the British argument is fallacious--that each attacking force should support itself. After operations have developed, General Clark plans to pool the air support for most expeditious use.

Strange things develop in planning warfare and Colonel Wilbur, G-2 on General Patton's force presents a queer factor that may carry great weight in determining the final assault date.. Wilbur, who has spent some time and study in North Africa, reports that the Moslem religion must be taken into consideration since it prohibits any warfare during the 11th and 12th months. He says November 10 would be the final date to open a campaign without offending the Moslems. He believes the Axis would propagandize our flaunting of Moslem customs should we attack later than November 10. He reports great care must be taken to prevent damage to the sacred Moslem cities of Raubab and Sale.

A periscopic reconnaissance of the Mediterranean shore prior to D-day now appears practicable. General Gruenther reports to General Clark that investigation shows a crew can make sketches and get valuable photographs. Gruenther also reports that use of the Royal Marines has been approved and that they are to go into renewed training immediately under direction of Commando officers. The 1st Armored Force, Gruenther says, has given up insisting on M-4 tanks because it is now too late for them to arrive in time. General Clark instructs that a cable be sent to the War Department explaining why the Armored Force will be going over the beaches in light tanks only. General Gale reports that the 1st Armored cannot be loaded at Belfast because of limited dock facilities. The loading of troops and materiel will be done at Liverpool. All gear is scheduled to be packed and loaded by October 6.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 19, 1942--The tentative assault date for TORCH has now been moved back to November 8. This will be the date recommended by Generals Clark and Eisenhower when they confer with Prime Minister Churchill at Checkers Sunday night.

Principal reason for pushing the proposed date back four days is to give more time for troops to get their equipment, more time for loading, more time to attempt to get additional ammunition and spare parts for guns, more time to smooth out kinks in convoy schedules. The delay results primarily from one cause--the problem of logistics. General Clark calls in most of his key officers and all of them are pleased that they will have four more highly valuable days to get all phases of TORCH on a firmer footing.



~~SECRET~~

The dangerous situation resulting from yesterday's cable changing the convoy situation is gone into thoroughly with General Holmes, British Director of Movements, and Generals Gale and Smith. All agreed that the best thing to do is send Washington a cable saying that the urgent D.6 material must come in five fast ships to the UK to join the second fast convoy arriving in the Mediterranean from the United Kingdom. If this is not possible, the U.S. Navy will have to enlarge the fast D.6 convoy from the U.S. to Africa, the convoy that the Navy wants to limit to 20 ships. General Smith, who was formerly in Washington attending conferences where he learned the Navy's attitude on convoys, tells General Clark he believes the navy, under the above circumstances, will enlarge the convoy since it has its protest on the record and thus will escape responsibility. General Clark says the D.6 supply must be moved into Oran "at any cost."

General Holmes says the change in D-day will make it possible to set back the loading date from September 26 to 30 and although he maintains that still makes the loading situation "tight," it gives a margin of safety. He adds it is difficult to plan the convoy until he knows the schedule and tonnage of ships coming from the U.S. to join the first UK-Mediterranean follow-up convoy.

Russian convoy "PQ 18" got through with the loss of only 11 of the 50 ships-- a remarkable record. Holmes believes Prime Minister Churchill will order "PQ 19" to sail September 23. It is Holmes belief that the Prime Minister will then decide to move the target date back to as late as November 15 so the "PQ 19" escort can be used in TORCH.

General Clark learns that the change from a 20 to a 25-day cycle for U.S. convoys to the Mediterranean will probably mean that convoys from the U.K. will have to "sweeten" the supplies for U.S. forces at Oran and Algiers. The British believe they can swell their convoys to take care of this contingency. Holmes points to the necessity of having firm loading plans. He says 18 of the British First Army's ships are already loaded in detail but that last night he was ordered by the British General Staff to restow 15 of them. If everything goes right, Holmes is convinced he can have the convoys on schedule for the November 8 date.

The convoy cable is approved by General Clark and it offers two alternatives. 1--send five ships to the U.K. so they can fit directly into the second U.K.-Mediterranean convoy, or, 2--enlarge the convoy sailing direct from the U.S. to Oran. General Clark's cable points out "that the most practical solution appears to be to have the navy enlarge its Oran convoy regardless of increased hazards."

General Allen of the 1st Division returns from an inspection trip to Scotland and reports that the 18th combat team is excellently trained, with the exception of one company. The 18th is to move from Toward to the Glasgow region on September 21. It will be replaced at the amphibious training base by the 16th which will have its special assault training from September 24 to October 2. The 168th is moving out of the Inveraray base tomorrow and the 26th will take its place. This third combat team of the 1st Division will take amphibious training until September 30. Special reconnaissance and Ranger units will get amphibious training in conjunction with the 16th and the 26th regimental combat teams. Allen says postponement of D-day until November 8 will give his troops more time to assemble their equipment. He said he has figured from the start that his division will go into combat only 70 percent equipped because of the supply muddle. He adds that his assault troops will go in with 75 mm howitzers and that reserve battalions will use the 105s.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

The Oran force set-up is discussed with Generals Rooks and Lemnitzer. Because of the lack of shipping space, Rooks is instructed by General Clark to use light transportation, eliminating 2 1/2 ton trucks as much as possible. The 1st Armored combat team must be reduced to two light-tank battalions and one medium-tank battalion because of the ballup on shipment of M-4s. The armored troops will have no supporting anti-aircraft but this danger will be minimized by the outfits mobility. Lemnitzer is pleased about moving D-day back four days since he had figured the Oran troops would not get their equipment in time to start loading October 8.

General Ryder, who will command the Algiers assault, reports to General Clark that his ammunition situation looks fairly good and that he will have sufficient to "get going." He has enough hand grenades but is lacking in anti-tank mines. General Clark tells him to see what can be done about obtaining them from the British.

Since General Clark is leaving for Washington either next Wednesday or Thursday so he can discuss the entire operation face-to-face with War and Navy officials and have a final checkup on General Patton's plans and troops, he calls in two section heads. General Lemnitzer is instructed to draw up alternate plans for the Patton force so they can be used in event the surf conditions make it impossible to effect the Casablanca region landing. In such an event, Patton's force probably will have to proceed into the Mediterranean. General Clark also wants to return to the States with the gist of all political plans that have been or are being made. Colonel Holmes is preparing this.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 20, 1942--The biggest individual problem of TORCH is that of supplying the Oran Task Force. Casablanca's logistics are being handled from the United States direct. The Algiers force, made up of American units that have been in the United Kingdom since last spring and British troops that can draw their supply without trouble since they are at the fountainhead, is having a far easier time getting equipped for the operation.

General Clark calls in Generals Larkin and Gruenther and Colonels Adcock, Hamblen and Niblo to go into specific Oran problems. The ammunition and maintenance situation is confused, Adcock says the Oran assault force will go ashore with four and a half units of fire. There appears to be sufficient artillery ammunition for 11 days but the attackers will be short on .81 mm mortars since only 10 of the 89 mortars called for in the assault are available from SOS here. No pyrotechnics are available so General Clark instructs Colonel Adcock, the Oran G-4, to procure them for the air corps.

Adcock, summing up, says the Oran supply situation is "in a mess but if everything comes through all right we are going to be able to meet the loading schedule. With the exception of certain equipment and supply, there is going to be enough for the attacking force to go in but replenishment of supply will be needed within a few days." Adcock says there are two difficulties in preparing convoys for the Oran assault: (1) it takes four to six weeks to "marry up" equipment with the troops to which it belongs, and, (2) the SOS has no schedules to show the status of what is available here and what is coming from the U.S. SOS manifests do not show specifically what is on the way. Guns are here but the fire control mechanisms for many of them have not arrived. That makes the guns useless. A ship carrying these vital gunsights has been sunk in mid-Atlantic.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

154

It develops at the conference that the U.S. and British convoy schedules to the Mediterranean are not being integrated and that unless something is done, more ships will pile up at Oran that the docks can berth. The British sailing schedules are firm and General Clark instructs Colonel Hamblen to draft a cable instructing convoy officials in Washington to make their schedules dovetail with the British. Adcock says if Oran gets a supply convoy on D plus six and the British and U.S. schedules are integrated, the long-range supply situation may clarify. Restitution of the D plus six convoy will go a long way toward solving the Oran supply problem.

A lanky, husky civilian--Culbert--who will be General Patton's "on-shore" man at Casablanca, arrives from Africa. He does not believe that surf conditions are too severe for the Western Task Force landing. He thinks the greatest danger to the Casablanca force will be the French navy. He says one cruiser, 50 destroyers and 20 submarines are in the Casablanca-Dakar region and predicts they will fight unless there is some change in the political setup. Culbert goes into conferences with political division officials. He probably will accompany General Clark back to the States so he can talk with Patton before returning to Casablanca to make internal preparations for the attack.

Alternative plans are being prepared for General Patton in event his base plan is thrown off schedule by surf conditions. General Clark believes Patton should have several plans to meet any contingencies. He might make a direct frontal attack on the ports, going in with all the warships guns blazing so he can land at dockside. To prepare for any eventuality, General Eisenhower should have several plans he can order Patton to execute. General Clark suggests: Plan X--stall for time in hope that the weather will clear within seven days; Plan Y--proceed to the Oran area and have the combat-loaded troops land over the beaches, run some of the convoy to Gibraltar and send the organizational outfits to the U.K. Plan Z--push inside the Mediterranean to Philippeville, Bone, Bougie and any other available ports. Lemnitzer suggests the entire Patton force might proceed en toto to the U.K. and be ready to push off at a moment's notice to attack Spanish Morocco if necessary.

Plans are going ahead for the training of British paratroopers. General Clark says "we must exploit every opportunity to use parachute or air-borne troops as soon after D-day as possible. Our readiness to do so might be of critical importance in furthering General Anderson's advance." In all probability the 64th U.S. Transport Group will train with the British paratroopers. General Clark points out that it is essential to have the American pilots and the British jumpers train jointly prior to actual operations. Colonel Bentley is instructed to provide the necessary transports for such training. After a long conference with air and paratroop officers it is decided to take two companies of British paratroops, about 250 jumpers, into Africa shortly after D-day. This number can be lifted by one transport squadron. Restrictin the mass flight of British paratroops to Africa is the shortage of gasoline in that theater for the return flight so the planes can haul down more jumpers. General Clark tells General Doolittle to be prepared to send an additional transport squadron if an urgent situation develops.

The proposal that a squadron of P-38s fly from Gibraltar to Algiers on D-day has been vetoed but the scheme to have an anti-submarine air squadron based at either Oran or Algiers is still being considered seriously. If it goes in, it will mean the elimination of one fighter group but, if convoys run into trouble, anti-submarine planes might be of far more value than fighting planes.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

General Larkin reports to General Clark that the changed target date will extend the loading time four days. He thinks this will give the SOS time to do its loading job. Later in the day, General Larkin comes to General Clark's office to indicate that a lot of buck-passing is going on in the SOS and that he wants the general to understand one of the many reasons the supply situation is so confused.

Generals Clark, Eisenhower and Smith leave in the evening for Checkers where they will stay overnight with the Prime Minister. An important conference is to be held tomorrow morning.

\* \* \*

CHECKERS, ENGLAND, SEPTEMBER 21, 1942--November 8 is the date!

Prime Minister Churchill, apprised of the supply, convoy and general TORCH situation, agrees to execution of the North African attack on November 8. An attempt is going to be made to get General Giroud over to England so the way can be paved for the assault forces to move in with a minimum of opposition.

Mr. Churchill, expressing disappointment at the status of TORCH and apparently in a tight spot because of its shipping complications, is in rare conversational form. He wants to know how he is "going to tell Joe" that PQ 19 won't be coming through. This, says the Prime Minister, is going to be "frightfully embarrassing" because PQ 18 was a success, with only 13 of the 40 ships failing to reach their destination. He is alarmed that U.S. troop arrivals in the United Kingdom will have to be cut down. He now says that he can't remember ever agreeing to TORCH being the big operation, substituting for ROUNDUP. He now wants to start planning for JUNIPER--the plan calling for an attack on Norway.

Churchill walks peripatetically around the room as he talks. One moment he is striding in front of the British and American officials and the next he has hopped onto the hearth of the fireplace and is warming his back, rubbing the heat into it with his hands. It's a tough evening and morning for the American officers. Lord Mountbatten complains that the U.S. promised to supply small landing boats and that to date only eight have arrived in the United Kingdom. Churchill believes the British Isles are going to be too lightly defended when the assault and follow-up troops have gone into the TORCH theater. Next he is pouring out words on why JUNIPER should be executed this winter. He needs Northern Norway to protect the Russian convoys.

The Prime Minister debates out loud with himself on what to do about PQ 19. If he lets it go it will delay TORCH until November 28. "It's very disheartening," says the Prime Minister, as though talking to himself. "I feel PQ 19 should go through. I just can't tell Joe it's not coming when his people are bloody and dying and holding the enemy. PQ 19 is loaded. I guess I just gotta tell Joe." The American generals say nothing but General Clark believes he would leave PQ 19 set up ready to go in case anything arises to delay TORCH further.

General Clark interprets Mr. Churchill's reference to TORCH not being the Second Front operation as a sly move by the Prime Minister to get JUNIPER started and as a fulcrum to proceed later on ROUNDUP. He believes Churchill wants to use American troops at every available point but that he is doing in craftily by saying each operation is THE major operation. "We should be able to rip at

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

156

Hitler's mouth (ROUNDUP) while we are ripping at his belly (TORCH)," says Churchill. General Clark believes the real motive of Churchill is to have TORCH and JUNIPER going at the same time.

The conferees, in addition to the Prime Minister and the three American generals, include Admiral Cunningham, Sir Dudley Pound, Lord Leathers, Anthony Eden, General Holmes and Lord Mountbatten. None of them have a great deal to say. The Prime Minister is too full of ideas. The discussion concerns military and naval strategy all over the world.

Regarding the buildup of American troops in the United Kingdom, General Clark suggests bringing over new U.S. divisions (those with only their 13 weeks basic training) without their equipment. They would be furnished with British equipment and their training would be completed here. They might even be fed in with British divisions.

Churchill says he thinks he will wire President Roosevelt ("Get a message off to my boss," is the way the Prime Minister puts it) about some of his ideas. The Prime Minister is elated at the way Russia is fighting. He thinks Stalingrad, where street fighting is now raging, will fall but he doesn't think the Russians will crack. When informed that the PQ 18 convoy went through so well, Churchill beams and shouts: "I'll bet Joe is drooling at the mouth over the package we delivered to him."

One small incident occurs that brings out the humanness of the Prime Minister. As the men sit down to dinner, General Clark is on the Prime Minister's left. The butler comes and whispers in the PM's ear and the general overhears: "Have you got your short snorter card with you, Sir." A short snorter card is a \$1 bill that trans-Atlantic air passengers get. If a short snorter can't produce his autographed bill, other short snorters can collect \$1 from him. Churchill jumps up from his seat and hurries out of the room. He returns, grinning, sits down and then nonchalantly pulls out his bill. "Have all you fellows got your short snorter cards," he asks triumphantly. The guests dig wildly. General Smith is without his and it costs him \$6. Mr. Churchill laughs triumphantly.

When General Clark returns he instructs his officers that November 8 is the date "unless something catastrophic happens and I want you to make every preparation for it on the basis that we are going into action on that date. TORCH is still the big operation and it can't be debunked.

Returning to London in the late afternoon, General Clark finds that shipping authorities in Washington have agreed to send priority items for the D plus 6 TORCH convoy sent over on from five to seven ships. General Gruenther says these ships will be able to fit straight into the British convoy providing they are loaded properly. The British are willing to take the additional ships in their convoy.

General Ryder reports on progress in Eastern Assault Force plans and he is rather optimistic. He has built up, because of being in the U.K. longer, a 60-day reserve supply for the 168th Infantry combat team. It is all on hand with the exception of ammunition expended while the 168th was taking amphibious training. He expresses concern about the ammunition supply for the combat team coming over from the U.S. to aid in the Algiers assault. It will come with 10 units of fire so General Clark instructs Ryder to arrange for additional ammunition to come from the SOS of ETO. Ryder inquires concerning what the Algiers force will do if

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

it runs into bad weather and it can't land simultaneously with the Oran force. An alternate plan will be drawn up to meet this contingency.

General Rooks expresses concern about the shortage of fire-control equipment for the 1st Division artillery and asks that it be dispatched over by air. The equipment would not total a plane load so General Clark says he will take the matter up personally when he arrives in Washington. Rooks also reports that he now has a list showing what ships will be available for the Oran D-day convoy and hence he is able to prepare loading tables for the Director of Movements. The list shows that more trucks than expected can be taken. Rooks is enthusiastic and says that the only thing that can now stop the Oran force is lack of equipment.

The air problem is now shaping up satisfactorily. General Clark goes over it again with General Doolittle to stress that nothing should be committed definitely to Casablanca except on orders of the Commander-in-Chief. General Patton will have the 33rd Fighter Squadron but will get no Spitfires unless the 33rd is knocked out of action. Doolittle is told that no paratroops or heavy bombers are to go to Casablanca initially.

General Clark instructs General Lemnitzer to prepare a list of fifth column activities to be undertaken in Africa prior to D-day. It will show the priority of fifth column missions--assassinations, seizure of forts, radio stations, public utilities, bridges, etc.--in each of the assault areas. It will be taken to Washington so Mr. Murphy can evaluate it, take to Africa, then inform commanders what can be accomplished and what cannot.

\* \* \*

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 22, 1942--Because of the absence of Generals Clark and Eisenhower at Checkers yesterday, the regular General Staff Conference was postponed until today. The new D-day--November 8--and means of expanding TORCH to make it more certain of success are discussed.

General Eisenhower says November 8 is now the day and that nothing--not even the Russian convoys--will be allowed to stand in the way of TORCH. The only possibility of change will be if President Roosevelt finds the date objectionable. General Eisenhower declares that the proposal of having troops from Malta attack Tunis on D-day must be re-examined. He believes such a force might be the deciding battalion in TORCH. He says that Admiral Cunningham is convinced one British brigade might make this attack which could either be a direct threat of a ploy to draw troops away from other regions where heavier landings will be made. "If this thing fails," says General Eisenhower, "Malta goes anyway. It's a good gamble."

The subject of the anti-submarine patrol at Oran comes up again declares the problem boils down basically to one factor--which will have the more important mission: the anti-sub planes or the fighter squadron it will replace. Both tasks are highly important. General Clark says he believes the best solution is to put both air units in and then have the Commander-in-Chief decide which will use the available aviation gasoline.

Other topics that come up at the meeting include: the use of

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

158

U.S. Navy shore personnel at the port of Oran, coordination of naval air commands under the Commander-in-Chief, whether of not a bombing attack on Crete on D-day wouldn't be a good ruse to draw Axis fighters from the Algiers region.

The meeting, as did the first one, evolves into a roundtable discussion in which the leaders of TORCH discuss their problems. General Eisenhower again stresses that he wants the men to bring their difficulties and ideas to either General Clark or himself. He says there can be no holding back; that there must be complete confidence and cooperation. He promises to pass the officers' ideas along to the Prime Minister.

After the conference, officers who have participated are called in to discuss particular items brought out in the round-table discussion. Commodore Douglas-Pennant gives General Clark a diagrammatic view of the naval plan and then the two men plunge into the anti-sub air squadron poser. Douglas-Pennant believes the anti-sub outfit could operate with greater striking force if it is based at Oran. After the operation develops another anti-sub squadron will go into Algiers. Following this, General Clark calls in Air Marshall Welsh and after the British airman has explained all details of the proposed plan, General Clark decided that the anti-sub outfit should go into Oran. In order to conserve cargo space and lessen the problem of getting fighting equipment across the Oran beaches, Welsh agrees to have the squadron fly in as many depth charges as possible. The anti-sub squadron and the fighter squadron will both go into Oran. However, they will have to share the same gasoline and the Commander-in-Chief will decide which planes should be in use at what times.

General Larkin and Gruenther confer with General Clark concerning what equipment must be loaded aboard the five vessels being rushed from the United States to the United Kingdom to join the British convoy to Oran. The vessels must come properly loaded because they will fall in with the British ships and proceed to the Mediterranean almost immediately. Unless SOS gets straightened out on just what ammunition is available in the U.K., General Clark says some of it will have to come over with the five vessels, then taken off and distributed to troops for combat loading.

In order to be certain the U.S. Army-Navy is set for the Oran operation, General Clark calls in General Rooks and Admiral Bennett. General Clark stresses that the cargo priority for Oran must be for combat troops and tells Admiral Bennett to coordinate his supply through Generals Rooks and Larkin. The Navy will furnish the Oran shore parties, the beach personnel and the port personnel. The question of what the Oran Task Force should do if weather prohibits execution of its operation and Captain Wright suggests a landing on the Balearic Islands. An Alternate plan for the Center Task Force will be developed soon.

The alternate plan that General Eisenhower will give General Patton in case he runs into Atlantic Coast difficulties has been boiled down to two possibilities: The first will call for the combat-loaded troops to land in the Oran area and the remainder, with the possible exception of eight or ten supply ships that would go into

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

159

Gibraltar, would proceed to the United Kingdom; the second plan would divert the entire Patton force to the U.K. to constitute a "reserve wallop" for the Commander-in-Chief, possibly for an attack on Spanish Morocco if necessary. The Philippeville, Bone landing by General Patton's force has been discarded because of too many precarious angles--movement into a zone of intense enemy air activity, concentration of too many naval vessels in a small area, possibility of overwhelming enemy resistance.

As General Clark prepares to leave tomorrow for Washington, TORCH appears to be shaping up ever better. General Gruenther comes in to report: 1--that the air plan is completely "buttoned up" and mimeographed for distribution; 2--directives have been issued to the Algiers assault and attack forces and to the Oran Task Force; 3--that General Patton's directive for the Casablanca mission will be ready later today; 4--that the naval plan is being put in final form and will be ready for dispatch to Washington tomorrow with General Clark.

\*

\*

\*

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 23, 1942--As General Clark completes final details for his trip to the United States, he receives a heartening last minute report from General Lee of the SOS. Lee feels the supply situation is much improved. He reports that the SOS has unloaded 200,000 long tons of supplies and equipment since the first of the month and will handle another 100,000 during the remainder of the month.

Although there may be some difficulty in obtaining all the ammunition required for the Oran combat convoy, Lee says it now looks as if this force will have enough to get by with until the D plus six convoy from the United Kingdom is unloaded.

Generals Gale and Gruenther and Colonel Hamblen are called in by General Clark and they too feel that many of TORCH's supply difficulties are clarifying and that we will be able, in all probability to meet the November 8 date.

Transport of the forward echelon of Allied Force Headquarters to Gibraltar is discussed the Air Commodore Sanders and Colonel Gale. General Clark plans to have U.S. Air Transports take the compact headquarters group. They will be escorted by "Flying Fortresses." Following establishment of headquarters at Gibraltar and until it is possible to move the headquarters to either Algiers or Oran, General Clark plans to have two or three "Flying Fortresses" on call at Gibraltar to provide air transportation on important missions to the North African front.

General Clark, who has been working virtually night and day for the past six weeks, clears out of his Norfolk House office at noon for a final pre-Washington conference with General Eisenhower. Then, following lunch at his flat, he becomes "Citizen" Clark as he shops for gifts for his family. The "family side," submerged so completely under the "military side" for so long, comes out as the

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

160

lanky general jostles with the crowds on Regent Street to get gifts of silver for his wife, mother and mother-in-law and appropo presents for his son and daughter.

Burdened with brief cases, map rolls and a little luggage for the trip to the United States, the general and the small staff that is accompanying him, leave Norfolk House at 3:00 P.M. for Hendon airport and the start of the long flight.

ENROUTE BY AIR TO UNITED STATES, SEPTEMBER 23, 1942--The C-47 carrying General Clark and his party to Prestwick, Scotland, where they will depart for the United States, takes off from Hendon air-drome at 3:58 PM and heads northwestward over the colorful mosaic of the English countryside.

The party is made up of General Clark, General Larkin, Colonel Slocum, Lieut. Col. J.P. Eason (a British member of the Allied Force staff), Lieutenant Beardwood and F.P. Culbert, the undercover man who will direct fifth-column activities at Casablanca. Also in the plane are Brigadier General Gilkeson of the Air Corps and Lieut. Col. Jackson, an Air Corps officer acting as a courier. The plane drops in to Prestwick at 6:28 PM .

Officers in the party, and General Clark himself, take turns watching over the secret baggage which includes all directives and plans for TORCH, detailed maps of the operation and half a million dollars in French Moroccan currency which will be turned over to General Patton's force for use when it lands. The lobby of the Prestwick airport is like the lobby of Grand Central station. It is milling with people who are traveling. There are all types of uniforms. From Prestwick, flights start not only to the United States and Canada but also to Russia. The airdrome is tremendous and covered with all types of planes.

Following dinner in the Prestwick mess hall, General Clark's party lounges around in the lobby, waiting for the weather report on conditions over the Atlantic to come in. Although it has been raining, the skies clear about 9:00 PM and a satisfactory report comes in on conditions over the Atlantic. Loading of the huge, four-motored Stratoliner, named the "Comanche," is started and by 10:00 PM General Clark's party starts going aboard. Because the ship is loaded so heavily with gasoline, three officers have to crowd up in the cramped radio and navigation room for the take-off.

The U.S.-bound Stratoliner is air-borne at 1034 PM and General Clark is heading eastward to Washington to make a complete report on TORCH--on what has been done and what will be done in the final few weeks before the Second Front is opened. It is a tremendous job.

By the time enough gas has been burned so the three officers can return to the passengers cabin, the plane is well out over the Atlantic, flying through broken clouds under an almost full-moon. Eight bunks are made up and General Clark's party turns in for the night.

\*

~~SECRET~~

\*



~~SECRET~~

161

ENROUTE BY AIR TO UNITED STATES, SEPTEMBER 24, 1942--General Clark's plane drones steadily on through broken clouds under an almost full moon. The ship, which weighed 55,600 pounds at the takeoff, is scheduled, on the basis of wind reports, to reach Gander Lake, Newfoundland, in 17 hours. Through the flight the altitude averages from 800 to 1,200 feet. By midmorning one of the port motors of the four-motored stratoliner has begun to miss and shoot out black smoke.

During the morning, General Clark goes through the huge, weighted brief case to study papers on TORCH operations that he is taking to Washington. He also confers with Culbert and with Colonel Slocum. At 10:37 A.M. (Eastern War Time), the coast of Newfoundland is seen through ever thickening clouds. The plane heads for the Gander Lake airport but the weather has closed in and the pilot, Captain Terry, decides to Head for Presque Isle, Maine. Before reaching that airport, the plane receives reports that the ceiling is almost zero there so Captain Terry decides to shoot for Montreal. To date, no Stratoliner has been able to make a non-stop westward hop from Prestwick to Montreal.

As the big plane heads west through rapidly worsening weather, the carburetors on two more engines begin acting up and Captain Terry, with his gas supply diminishing, with three of his four motors functioning badly and with the weather getting worse, looks for an emergency landing field. He spots a small field and, after circling the field, drops down to a landing made mushy by the heavy rain. The "Comanche" is greeted like a thing from Mars by about three hundred Royal Canadian Air Force cadets who are in training at the field--Windsor Mills, Quebec. The students are taking primary training in Gypsy Moths which would fit under the Stratoliner's landing gear. The trans-Atlantic plane lands at 1:25 PM (EWT).

Flight officers, students and mechanics surround the huge trans-Atlantic plane. General Clark and his party are taken to the Officers' Mess Hall where they clean up and get refreshments. Study of the plane's motors shows that three new carburetors will have to be flown up from Washington before the plane can take off. General Clark calls General Marshall by long-distance phone and tells him he is requesting that another Stratoliner fly in from Dorval Field, the U.S. Air Transport Command field in Montreal.

When the weather has cleared, the second Stratoliner comes over the tiny, soggy field. The pilot circles it twice then comes in for a landing. When the huge plane hits the sod, rocks and mud fly up and both wing flaps are badly riddled with holes. Examination of the second ship shows that it has been damaged too badly to take off; that repairs will have to be made on the flaps and it will take hours. General Clark then confers with Canadian officials with the result that he is loaned two planes--a bi-motored Beechcraft and a bi-motored Graumann amphibian. Essential secret documents and personal baggage are taken from the "Comanche" and loaded into the two R.C.A.F. planes for the 75 mile flight into Montreal. General Clark, riding in the Beechcraft, takes off at 6:01 PM and arrives at Montreal at 6:55 PM. Because of the lightness of the two R.C.A.F. planes, General Clark makes arrangements to have his party fly into Washington aboard two British Hudson Bombers.

After eating at the Dorval Airport cafeteria--and getting such unusual things are orange juice, real coffee, fruit, milk with some cream in it--the baggage is stowed on the two Hudsons. They are late in preparing for the takeoff and meanwhile, reports come from Windsor Mills that the second Stratoliner has its wing flaps repaired and is ready to come in to Montreal. If feasible, General Clark wants to go into Washington in the Stratoliner instead of in the two Hudsons.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

162

When the plane, named the "Cherokee," lands, Captain Parker, the skipper and the man who flew Admiral Byrd over the pole, says the ship is capable of going on to Washington so the baggage is transferred from the two Hudsons to the Stratoliner and the General's party takes off from Montreal at 9:59 PM. The flight is extremely smooth and uneventful and the "Cherokee" lands at Bolling Field, Washington, at 1:46 AM. General Clark and his party are quickly passed through customs and the travel weary group spreads throughout town to various quarters. General Clark, despite the late hour of arrival, is met at the army airport by Mrs. Clark.

\*

\*

\*

~~SECRET~~