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June 7th, 2024 (608) 237-9192

**D-Day**

On June 6th, 1944 an invasion force of over 7,000 ships and over 195,000 naval personnel stormed the beaches of Normandy, France as a part of Operation Overlord, or what we know as D-Day. These Normandy landings were the final push in liberating France from German control and ending World War II as a whole.

Major General Dwight D. Eisenhower was placed in command of the Allied Forces that would take part in the D-Day invasion. The operations was originally set to take place on June 5th, 1944 but, because of bad weather the invasion had to be delayed a day. The allied forces had planned the operations specifically around the moon, tides, and time of day so any further postponement would have been detrimental to any hope of surprise.

Adolf Hitler and the German front knew an invasion was coming, but they didn’t know when. Part of the planning process was to periodically deceive the opposing military forces as to when and where this amphibious assault was taking place. The goal of the Normandy landings was to capture the five main beachheads established by German forces. These five beaches were codenamed Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. Taking control of these beaches would drastically change the tide of the war in the Allied forces favor. Failure was not an option.

Over 10,000 soldiers from Allied forces were killed in this gruesome endeavor. These soldiers died heroes. This initial invasion into France catapulted a summer of fighting to liberate France and force the German command to retreat. Liberating city by city, the Allied forces set their eyes on Germany, Hitler, and the rest of occupied Europe.

General Eisenhower drafted two different statements at the onset of these landings. One of these statements was a victorious one and one was in case of failure. Thankfully, the statement in case of failure was never needed. Operation Overlord eventually paid off on May 7th, 1945, when German General Alfred Jodl signed the unconditional surrender at Reims, France.

Former NBC Nightly News Anchor and Author, Tom Brokaw stated in his book, *The Greatest Generation*, “there on the beaches of Normandy I began to reflect on the wonders of these ordinary people who lives were laced with the markings of greatness.” This generation of Americans were truly the greatest generation.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to reach to my office at Rep.Pronschinske@legis.wi.gov.