

# Operation Neptune / Operation Overlord

## Teacher Guide

### OPORD Paragraph One

### Intelligence

#### Glossary:

- Bigot - Highest classification, very limited distribution before D-Day
- Enemy Order of Battle and Enemy Defenses - not included because overlay maps that could not be copied
- Rcn Plt - Reconnaissance Platoon, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne (AB) Division Scouts
- D+1 (looks like a / with a - thru it). The day following D-Day, D+2 is two days following D-Day and so on.
- ASP - Army Signal Platoon, higher level communications at Army level
- VHF - Very High Frequency radio wave
- G-2 - Intelligence Staff Section
- PW - Prisoner of War
- GAF - German Air Force
- FUSA - First United States Army (higher headquarters)
- Blackout - Means not using lights at night (small markers on trucks so you can see the rear end of them at night, the lead truck has modified head lights)
- CIC - Counter Intelligence Center
- AR# - Army Regulation followed by specific number, rARs are rule books
- FM# - Field Manual followed by a specific number, tells you how to do something
- H+1 - One hour after an operation starts (ex: D-Day,, H+1 is the first hour after an operation starts on D-Day)
- CR382932 - Is a specific grid coordinate on a map (accurate within 100 square meters). This method was used before GPS.
- OPs - Observation Posts
- Inundations - Low lying flooded areas
- Wheeled Vehicles - Trucks

- Tracked Vehicles - Tanks
- Undulating - Rolling hills
- Fields of Fire - Describes the area you can see. If you can see it, you can shoot at it.

### Teacher's Notes:

- Note the level of detail about the terrain. There is real concern about the flooded areas (many paratroopers drowned in these flooded fields after the jump on the morning of June 6).
- Note **how** important the causeways are - seizure/control of these was absolutely critical to the success of D-Day (that is why this mission is underlined).
- This OPORD was updated on May 27, 1944 - meaning that the order was being refined based on fresh intelligence.

## OPORD Paragraph Two

### Mission

#### Glossary:

- J-Hour - When the paratroopers began jumping into France
- Attachments - Other units that are temporarily assigned to the 101<sup>st</sup> in order to help the 101<sup>st</sup> accomplish its mission.
- Drop and Landing Zones - Annexes are not available because of size and brittle nature of original documents
- 65<sup>th</sup> Armd FA Bn - 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. These are artillery (cannons) that are mounted on tracked vehicles
- QM Trk Co - Quartermaster Truck Company. This is a unit of cargo trucks that are used to transport men and cargo.
- A Brty 474<sup>th</sup> AA AW Bn - This is an anti-aircraft gun battery (about six anti-aircraft guns to protect against air attack.

### Teacher's Notes:

- The 101<sup>st</sup>'s sole mission was to help the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division get off UTAH Beach and move inland. The key was the causeways (elevated roadways) that crossed over the flooded fields behind UTAH Beach.
- This is going to be a very short operation, lasting a day or so. For the 101<sup>st</sup> they needed to land, capture the causeways, help the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division move off the beach and inland, then go back to England.

## OPORD Paragraph Three

### Operations

#### Glossary:

- Parachute Echelon - Paratroopers who jumped into France
- Glider Echelon - Troops brought into France via gliders
- Seaborne Echelon - Not all the 101<sup>st</sup> parachuted into France. Many of the support troops came in over the beaches from ships.
- Enemy Battery - German artillery pieces (like the *Band of Brothers* episode concerning the landing and early fight in Normandy).
- Inundated - Flooded areas
- 6 digit #s - 365872 are grid coordinates of a specific place within 100 meters. This system was used before GPS.
- S-3 or G-3 is the Operations Staff Section of an army unit
- 81<sup>st</sup> AB AA (Airborne Anti-Aircraft Battalion of anti-aircraft guns)
- AAA - Anti-Aircraft Artillery - anti-aircraft guns
- 65<sup>th</sup> Armd FA Bn SP - 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion (Self Propelled). These are artillery (cannons) that are mounted on tracked vehicles.
- Leggings impregnated - Leggings are laced up boot gaiters between your boots and pants. The leggings were impregnated with an anti-chemical compound in case the Germans used poison gas against the invasion forces.

#### Teacher's Notes:

- Key to this paragraph is that the different units in the 101<sup>st</sup> have different subordinate missions to ensure the success of the landings. There is not very much detail. They needed to land, capture/control the causeways so that the amphibious landings could get off the beaches and move inland.
- Again, make sure students see that the dates are different on the updated changes to the order. This reflects new and/or changed missions to subordinate units based on fresh intelligence.

## OPORD Paragraph Four

### Administration/Logistics

#### Glossary:

- Class I - Food and water
- K rations - Condensed field ration, like power bars
- D rations - also a meal for the field, but a little more substantial - like Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) into today's military forces
- Class II - General supplies, batteries, housekeeping material, tents, etc.
- Class III - Fuel
- Class V - Ammunition
- Halazone Tablets - Water purification tablets (yuck!)
- Provost Marshal - Military police
- Blackout lights - very dim markers used on military vehicles at night to avoid enemy detection.
- Serial (i.e. glider serial etc.) - A group of vehicles and/or aircraft organized to transport troops and/or cargo. Serial One, is the first group of several groups that are transporting troops/equipment to their new destination.

#### Teacher's Notes:

- There are not a lot of supplies or resupplies planned for in Operation Neptune, because the 101<sup>st</sup> thought it would be a short operation. The 101<sup>st</sup> was expected to land, fight to secure the causeways leading from UTAH Beach, and be relieved by the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (which landed on UTAH). The planners in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne did not expect to fight more than a few days at the most before the division was to return to England.

## OPORD Paragraph Five

### Command and Communications

#### Glossary:

- Radio Silence - No one uses radios until a certain time or event happens so as not to give your enemy any clues that something important is about to happen
- GPO - General Post Office
- SIGABA - Is a secure means of communication (like having a satellite phone).

- SOI - Signal Operating Instructions (a code book with frequencies, call signs, and passwords)
- CP - Command Post, the headquarters for an army unit
- Net - Radio/communications network
- SCR - Signal Corps Radio - type of radio. SCR300 is a particular model radio produced for the US Army.
- Pyrotechnics - Signal flares - different colors are available to signal different actions that are specified in the order or the SOI

### **Teacher's Notes:**

- On the main order, paragraph five note that the VII Corps Headquarters is on a U.S. Navy ship and the Airborne headquarters were tentative locations - based on where the Airborne thought they were going to land.
- Wire teams would actually lay telephone wire to connect different units with each other. This was a more secure way of communicating than with radios.
- Note the use of carrier pigeons.
- Note the warning not to use existing telephone poles because the Germans might heavily mine or booby trap the poles.