



## OPERATION OVERLORD – TOP SECRET

### Mission

The time has come to reopen the western front. Hitler's Third Reich is weakening, and there is an opportunity for Allied forces to again set foot in Western Europe. You (like American General Dwight Eisenhower) have been put in charge of designing an Allied invasion of Northern France – designated as "Operation Overlord."

France has been occupied now for over three years. 700,000 German soldiers are waiting for your forces, and the northern coast of France is heavily fortified (refer to back of this sheet).

**You will need to use all the military resources available to you in order for your mission to be a success. Success will depend on:**

- The use of naval, air, and ground support.
- Picking a good landing spot in France from which you will strike.
- Having thorough plans (Where will your troops strike? Where will they go afterwards? How will you handle the fortifications along the coast? How will you handle the Nazi troops scattered throughout France? How will your attack be a surprise?)

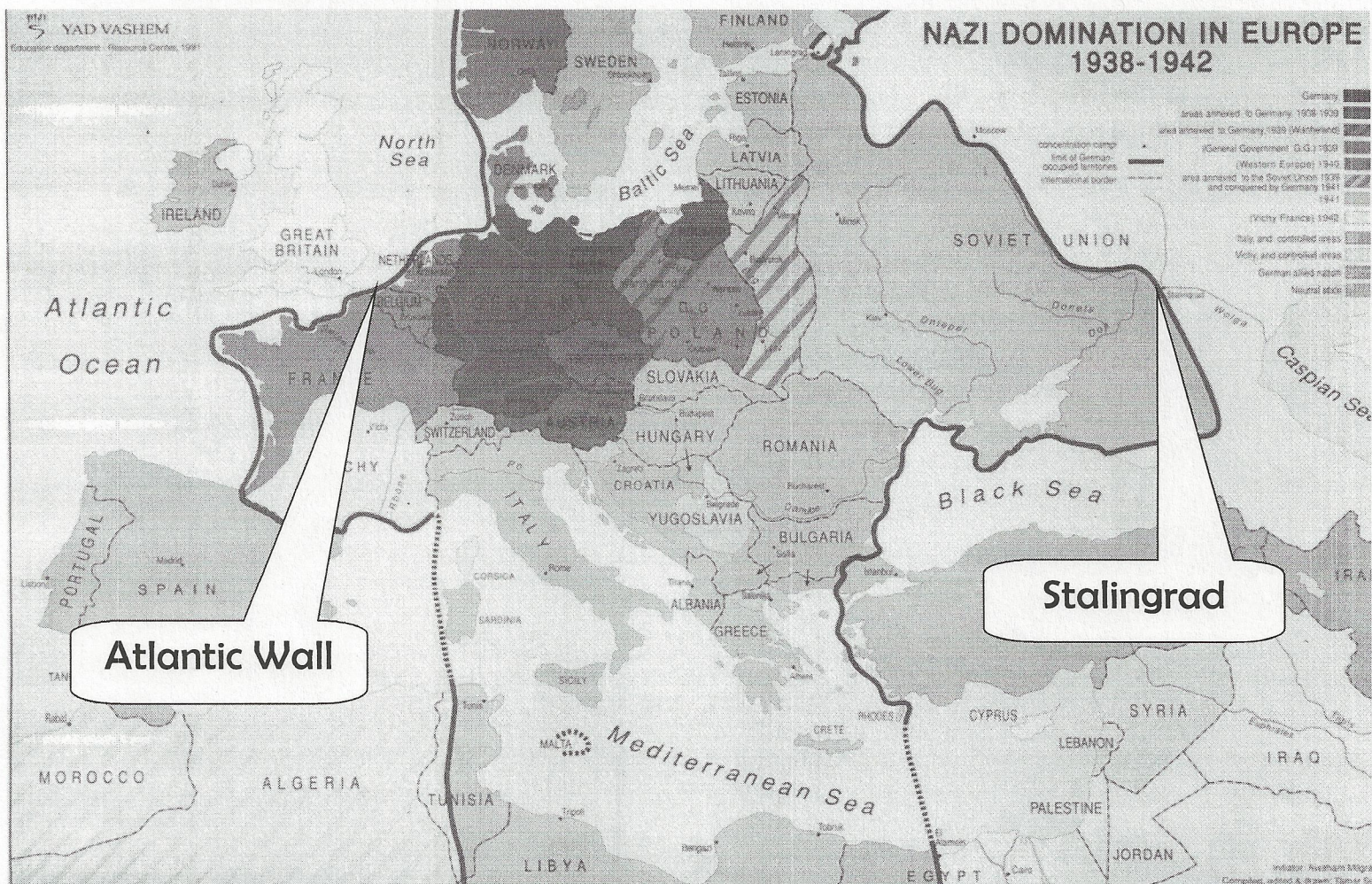


# The Atlantic Wall of Nazi Germany

Early in the war, Hitler ordered construction of defenses along the English Channel and Atlantic coasts of Western Europe. By the spring of 1944, more than 10,000 fortified positions were in operation along the "Atlantic Wall." The Atlantic Wall stretched along the 3,000-mile coastline of France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and the entire coast of Norway. But the most heavily defended area was along the Channel, where Hitler expected the Allied invasion. Hitler envisioned the Atlantic Wall as an unbreakable barrier, fortified with enough artillery and manpower to foil even a massive invasion attempt.

Plans called for 15,000 concrete bunkers, ranging in size from small pillboxes to great fortresses. Three hundred thousand troops would man these defenses. *Organization Todt*, the elite construction group of the Nazi Party, would build the fortifications.

The workforce consisted of over 500,000 men, many of them prisoners of civilians from German-occupied nations, who were used as slave labor. As further protection against invasion, General Rommel ordered the placement hundreds of thousands of mined beach obstacles along the French coast. Simple yet deadly, these obstacles were positioned along entire beachfronts. At high tide many of them were virtually invisible. These obstacles created a dilemma for Allied invasion planners. If their attack came during high tide many landing craft would hit mines. But if it took place during low tide, troops would have to cross a wider portion of beach while under enemy fire.





RESOURCES	Available Military	Intelligence Reports on German Strengths
Total Ground Troops	1 million	700 000
Tanks	5500	1400
Artillery	4800	3200
Bombers	RAF 624 USAAF 1922	400
Fighters	RAF 2172 USAAF 1311	420
Ships	Assault craft 4,000 Merchant craft 1,600	n/a

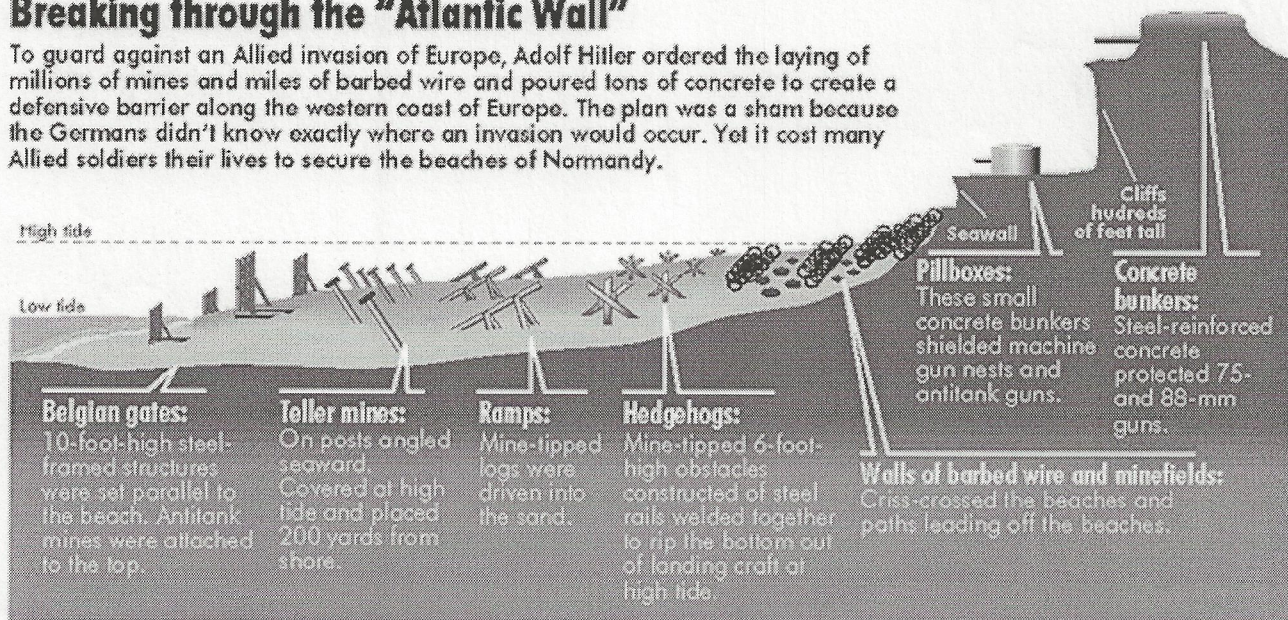
Allied Troops available to you:



- 4 British divisions of ground troops
  - 1 British division of parachute troops (troops that can be parachuted behind enemy lines)
  - 1 Canadian division of Ground troops
  - 3 American divisions
  - 2 American division of parachute troops
- (a division is approximately 20,000 troops)

## Breaking through the "Atlantic Wall"

To guard against an Allied invasion of Europe, Adolf Hitler ordered the laying of millions of mines and miles of barbed wire and poured tons of concrete to create a defensive barrier along the western coast of Europe. The plan was a sham because the Germans didn't know exactly where an invasion would occur. Yet it cost many Allied soldiers their lives to secure the beaches of Normandy.



*The northern coast of France is heavily fortified – your troops will be facing defenses such as those shown above.*



When designing your plan, keep in mind that points will be awarded for:

- How are you going to hide or disguise the attack. **Rommel, the German commander in France, knows that you will be coming and has built up coastal defenses.**
- How to neutralize German defenses both along the coast, and inland.
- How will you assure that supplies can get to your ground troops.
- How this plan fits into the long-term goal of ending the Second World War.

Your plan will have three stages:

1. List and describe all the actions your soldiers will do in the preparation for the invasion.
2. List and describe your actual invasion of Northern France. **Remember Dieppe! Your Canadian troops will remember the lessons of the failed invasion of 1942.**
3. List and describe where you want your soldiers to go after they are in Northern France, and how you will keep them supplied throughout their campaign.

\*\* Use the map on the front of this sheet to show your soldier's movements.

## Marking Sheet

Level One - 0-1 Point	Level Two - 2 Points	Level Three - 3 Points	Level Four - 4-5 points
problem not addressed	solution attempted, but inadequate for success	Fairly good solution, but some missing details or a high degree of risk	Excellent answer - realistic - all elements covered well.
Aspect		Points Earned	
How are you going to hide or disguise the attack.			
How to neutralize German defenses both along the coast, and inland.			
How will you assure that supplies can get to your ground troops.			
How this plan fits into the long-term goal of ending the Second World War.			
<b>Total Points</b>			