America At D-Day A Day Of Rememberance Essay, Research Paper

AMERICA AT D-DAY: A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

I am very interested in World War II. So I choose a book that was

written about the Normandy Invasion. More commonly know as D-Day or

Deliverance day. The title of the book is America at D-Day. It was written

by Richard Goldstein. The book has 287 pages and also has 90 different

pictures from the invasion of Normandy. The reason the author wrote this

book was to show exactly what happened at D-Day.

The author starts off by describing the preparation for D-Day in great

detail. The code name given to the Normandy Invasion was Operation

Overlord. It was planned mainly by General Dwight David Eisenhower.

Prior to World War II Eisenhower never had any actual combat experience.

Eisenhower was a training officer during World War I. Then in 1942

Eisenhower was given command of the Allied invasion of North Africa.

Eisenhower is not the type of man who has a huge ego and he does not give

blood-and-guts speeches, but he does know how to manager people who have

super egos. General Eisenhower had the ability to work generals–along

with airmen, Navy men, and lesser soldiers by the millions–in effective

harmony in carrying out large-scale operations (Goldstein 8). That is one of

the reasons why Eisenhower was chosen to lead Operation Overlord.

Operation Overlord was a well kept secret. The Allies went through a

lot to make sure that the Germans only heard what the Allies wanted him to

hear and see. The Allies built mock armies on the south eastern corner of

England. That was the location that was the shortest distance between

England and France. The Germans were sure that if there was an amphibious

invasion that it would come from the south eastern corner of England. The

allies put up cardboard airplanes and tanks that fooled the pictures taken by

the German spy planes. The Allied intelligence reports showed that Hitler

and his leaders were falling for the plan. The Germans built up there troops

in the area of France where the English Channel was the narrowest.

The plan was to catch the Germans off guard and hit them hard and

fast. The Allies split the beach of Normandy into five different parts. The

British forces were to attack 3 of the beaches. The beaches were code named

Gold beach, Juno beach, and Sword beach. The American forces had to

cover the other two beaches, they were code named Utah beach and Omaha

beach. The Americans were also going to drop their paratroopers behind the

German front lines on the Cherbourg Peninsula.

The American paratroopers were from the 82nd Airborne Division and

from the 101st Airborne Division. The paratroopers were to cut off any

supply line to the front lines and prevent any reinforcements from reaching

the beaches of Normandy. The order was given on the night of June 5, 1944

to launch the paratroopers. The paratroopers were sent in first so that they

could drop under the cover of the night. The paratroopers were plagued with

cloudy skies and some anti-aircraft fire. Some of the paratroopers were shot

down while they dropped from the skies. Most of the paratroopers that did

survive the jump missed their intended drop zones. During the first hours of

the assault their was confusion among the soldiers, but then the troops started

to form up into small bands together and started to complete their missions.

The paratroopers mission was for the most part a success. They gained

considerable ground and destroyed vital supply lines for the Germans.

However, the assault on the beaches were plagued by a lot more

problems. The major problem was the choppy seas and the strong current. It

made many of the allied forces land off of target. Even though they landed

off course they were still able come together. The Germans also put many

obstacles in the way of the landing crafts. The Germans laid mines on top of

logs that stuck out of the beach. When the ships struck those logs it would

set off the mines, causing the ships to explode. The heaviest casualties did

not come from the mines or the sinking of the ships, the casualties came from

the heavy machine gun fire that was raining down on the troops from the

cliffs above. The American troops were exposed to that machine gun fire

until they got to the sea wall that could cover them from the blazing bullets.

The assault on Omaha beach suffered the heaviest loses. The reason why is

because the Germans had an extra division of troops there that were not

picked up by the American surveillance photos.

In the end the perseverance of the American troops held true. Even

through the toughest circumstance they still fought onward and in the end

won the battle. The American troops eventually took all the beaches of

Normandy. The individual courage of certain men were one reason why this

invasion was a success. During all of the chaos in the first hours of D-Day

the troops looked for leaders to follow, and they found them in such men as

Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. and Brigadier General Norman

Cota. If it were not for the individual courage of so many men then the

invasion might have failed. However, the mission was a success.

Richard Goldstein, the author of the book, does a very good job of

describing the invasion in great detail. Goldstein makes it seem like you are

right there on the beaches. He interviewed many of the troops that survived

the invasion and got first hand account of the events that took place on the

beaches that day. During the invasion some reports accompanied the troops

as they made the assault on the beaches. Goldstein researched all of these

newspaper articles and magazine articles. He also does a good job of

documenting where he got his information from.

Goldstein covers every aspect of the invasion in explicit detail. He

covered the preparation for the invasion, the actual invasion, and the

aftermath of the invasion. He leaves nothing to the imagination. This book

shows all of hardships of the invasion and all of the gains from the invasion.

The pictures that are in this book help put pictures in the head of the reader

and gives the reader something that they can actually visualize. After reading

this book I know a lot more about D-Day then I did before.

WORK CITED

Goldstein, Richard. America at D-Day:A Book of Remembrance. Dell

Publishing, New York, 1994.