Sebastian Rincon

Dr. Fuller

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***D-Day***

WWII was a war which had from 70-85 million fatalities, leaving it to a very gruesome war. It lasted around 6 years, and had many battles which are still talked about in modern day. One of the most important battles of WWII, which ultimately impacted the war as a whole is the Normandy Landings, which occurred on D-Day. D-Day is arguably one of the most memorable days in mankind, as it sparked the end of WWII. On June 6th, 1944, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other Allied countries would deploy troops to invade the beaches of Normandy in northern France, which at the time was occupied by the armies of Nazi Germany at the time. As a result of this invasion, there were over 156,000 Allied Soldiers on the Normandy Beaches by the end of the day, but of those 156,000, around 4,000 were killed by Nazi Soldiers defending the beaches. The D-Day invasion was at the time, the largest land, air, and naval operation in history, as within a few days, 326,000 troops, 50,000 vehicles, and 100,000 tons of equipment had landed in France. Roughly two months after D-Day, in August 1944, all of Northern France had been liberated, and shortly after the Allies deemed victory over Nazi Germany in Spring of 1945. D-Day was seen as the “beginning of the end” of WWII, as it showed Nazi forces how determined the Allies were to put an end to this war and the extent they would go for it, eventually leading to the surrendering of Nazi Germany (History.com, 2009).

D-Day was not a plan that was simply just brought up one day and executed the next. The planning for D-Day began in July 1943, when Lieutenant-General Frederick Morgan submitted plans for the invasion. However, it wasn’t until after the Tehran Conference in late 1943 that detailed preparations began for Operation Overload (IWM). It also turns out that D-Day was destined to happen the day before, June 5th 1944, but due to unforeseen weather conditions, it got delayed. What some people don’t realize, however, is that D-Day is not only based on the Battle of Normandy. After the Allies had captured these beaches, Caen, which was a few miles inland, would turn out to be the epicenter for a two-month-long battle where German reserves would hold their lines until they could no longer do so. As well as Caen, there was a bocage, a countryside of Holloways which was sunk between hedgerows which formed a maze of tracks, small fields, and tiny hamlets that stretched over miles in all directions. This would be where we would see the German Wehrmacht, who were equipped with fine weapons, dig in deep and allow the Normandy Campaign to become a gruesome bloodletting. The plan the Allies had developed to conquer the German soldiers was to focus on the extreme concentration of firepower, armor and assault troops, which allowed them to open up narrow gaps where tanks could go through into the open country beyond. Their plan of action was to focus on a soft point in the enemy’s line and use their concentration of forces against it. Following that, they would smash through it with a blow that crushed the front-line defenses, which allowed for the mechanized columns to be spilled through the gap, not leaving enough time for the enemy to recover his senses. This plan of attack proved successful, and was given the code name “Cobra”, which was developed by Lieutenant General Omar N Bradley V (Military History Matters, 2019).

Overall, D-Day was an event that truly changed the course of history as we know it. The success of this battle marked a crucial turning point for World War II, which paved the way for the liberation of France and other European nations under the control of the oppressive regime of Nazi Germany. If the outcome were any different, who knows how the story would be getting told in the modern day and how differently history would be shaped as a result of it. Alongside the triumphant victory from the Allies of D-Day, we were able to see how it symbolized international cooperation between Allied Forces and showed how having a plan of action, courage, and determination, can lead to victory regardless of the odds against you. Not only did this triumph begin to put an end to WWII, but to Nazi Germany as a whole, as it established a foundation to rebuild Europe, which began the United Nations in an effort to ensure world peace. This battle will continue to represent how important it is to fight for the cost of having freedom and the indomitable human spirit which will fight against the odds placed before it and not back down.

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