

SHAEF Command Post, moved to the Portsmouth area. The operations staff at AEAF had still perforce, to remain at Stanmore and Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force Main together with AEAF planners, who formed part of the combined planning staff of Supreme Headquarters, continued to work at Bushy Park. Later, a further echelon of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force Main, i.e., Forward SHAEF, which included the operations staff and planners of Supreme Headquarters with its AEAF complement moved also to the Portsmouth area. This arrangement obviously simplified the co-ordination of Army and Naval operations and plans at the Commanders-in-Chief level, but my own difficulties were proportionally aggravated as a result of these moves of Main Headquarters.

546. Only when the various Headquarters were set up at Julouville in Normandy, did the co-ordination of operations and planning become smooth and easy, although the value derived from all the principals being so closely related geographically was unfortunately to some extent negated by lack of adequate communications between Main Headquarters and Operational Commands.

547. In my view one of the major lessons learned from "Overlord" is that the staffs of the Supreme Commander and of the Air, Naval and Land Commanders-in-Chief if created, should be located very close together during both the planning and the execution stages,

and this principle should be held to be inviolate; in order to achieve this the Services must be prepared to make sacrifices.

548. The communication aspect is all important and particularly must communication facilities be adequate for the conduct of air operations which will almost invariably have to commence weeks and possibly months before those of Land and possibly Naval operations. The latter factor is, I suggest, one which must have the fullest possible consideration when determining the location of the Headquarters of the Commanders-in-Chief. Even at the lower Staff levels it is essential for sound planning and development of operations that the staffs of the three Services should be within easy transportation distance of each other, and I will go so far as to recommend within walking distance of each other.

549. Finally, on the more tactical plane, it is essential to have in the field an operational co-ordinating organisation, similar to A.E.A.F. Advanced Headquarters (which was fully mobile), which can keep in touch at one end and at the same time with army headquarters and headquarters of air formations in the forward areas and with the main operational air headquarters in rear. Particularly is this required for the planning of operations in which heavy bombers are used in a tactical role. Only in this way can the bomber forces involved be adjusted smoothly to such alterations in the plan as may be dictated, often at very short notice, by changes in weather and/or in the ground situation.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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