

Coalition and Operation Dragoon: An Unwieldy but Effective Weapon

A Monograph

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2018

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 25-05-2018		2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) JUN 2017 – MAY 2018	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Coalition and Operation Dragoon: An Unwieldy but Effective Weapon				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Major Christopher J. Shepherd				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship, Advanced Military Studies Program				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT Coalition warfare will continue as a critical element of US military interactions, emphasized in both the 2017 National Security Strategy and the US Army's future operational concept, multi-domain battle. Operation Dragoon provides a valuable case study for how Seventh Army rapidly integrated a disparate Franco-American coalition despite strategic disagreements. Clearing southern France while collapsing German resistance, Dragoon's main objectives, the ports of Toulon and Marseille, doubled the Allied supply chain in France and provided critical throughput for US divisions. Seventh Army achieved rapid integration through operational planning in strategic ambiguity, commander patience and understanding balancing national capabilities with constraints, creation of important organizational structures, and centralized logistics. Dragoon suggests methods for increasing pre-conflict habitualization, enabling future hasty coalition integration absent a period of forming and normalization provided by traditional alliance structures.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Coalition, Operation Dragoon, Operation Anvil, Force 163, Seventh Army, Southern France, Riviera, Alexander "Sandy" Patch, Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, Operational Integration, JP 3-16, Multinational Operations					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			Major Christopher J. Shepherd
(U)	(U)	(U)	(U)	65	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)

Monograph Approval Page

Name of Candidate: MAJ Christopher J. Shepherd

Monograph Title: Coalition and Operation Dragoon: An Unwieldy but Effective Weapon

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Abstract

Coalition and Operation Dragoon: An Unwieldy but Effective Weapon, by MAJ Christopher J. Shepherd, US Army, 65 pages.

Coalition warfare will continue as a critical element of US military interactions, emphasized in both the 2017 National Security Strategy and the US Army's future operational concept, multi-domain battle. Operation Dragoon provides a valuable case study for how Seventh Army rapidly integrated a disparate Franco-American coalition despite strategic disagreements. Clearing southern France while collapsing German resistance, Dragoon's main objectives, the ports of Toulon and Marseille, doubled the Allied supply chain in France and provided critical throughput for US divisions. Seventh Army achieved this through effective negotiations bridging operational and strategic considerations, personal relationships and structural agreements, balancing national capabilities with constraints, multi-echelon organizational design, and centralized supply arrangements. Dragoon suggests methods for increasing pre-conflict habituation, enabling future hasty coalition integration absent a period of forming and normalization provided by traditional alliance structures.

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Acknowledgements

During this endeavor, I wish to thank my monograph director, Dr. Dan Fullerton, for his guidance, my seminar leader, LtCol Eric Adams, for his mentorship and leadership, and my fellow syndicate-mates, for their diligence and commentary reading my earlier drafts. I also want to thank my fellow seminar-mates in Seminar 4, who have not only tolerated my idiosyncrasies throughout the year, but have taught me much and become my friends. I also want to thank the many leaders, peers, and Soldiers I have served with over the last fifteen years. I hope I have given them half of what they have given me. Finally, I want to thank my incredibly wife and best friend, Tracey, and my two amazing daughters. Their love, patience, and understanding are more than I deserve.

Acronyms

ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
AFHQ	Allied Forces Headquarters
AFSBn	Army Field Support Battalion
ALO	Air Liaison Officer
BEB	Brigade Engineer Battalion
BG	Brigadier General
CC	Combat Command
CCS	Combined Chiefs of Staff
DB	French Armored Division
DIA	Algerian Division
DIC	Colonial Division
DMI	Free French Division
FATF	First Airborne Task Force
FFI	French Forces of the Interior
FOB	Forward Observers Bombardment
ID	Infantry Division
ITC	Invasion Training Center
JP	Joint Publication
JRC	Joint Rearmament Committee
LNO	Liaison Officer
LTG	Lieutenant General
MDB	Multi-domain Battle
MG	Major General
MNF	Multinational Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NATOUSA	North African Theater of Operations, United States of America
PACOM	Pacific Command
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force
SIAM	Signal Information and Monitoring
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SOS	Services of Supply
SOSNATOUSA	Services of Supply, North African Theater of Operations, USA
SPOC	Special Projects Operations Center
SSF	Special Service Force
TF	Task Force

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I. Introduction: No Two Swords Alike

The nation has passed from its traditional suspicion and fear of 'entangling alliances' to a policy that heavily stakes its security and interests on the co-operation of other powers.

—Major General R.W. Stephens, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare*

Coalition warfare is fraught with both challenges and opportunities. For those engaged in a brutal death struggle, the former sometimes overwhelms operational planners, commanders, and soldiers on the ground alike. As furious ground, aerial, and naval combat raged across the once lazy Riviera coastline of southern France on August 15, 1944, the second lift for the combined British-American airborne forces disgorged members of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion to the fully alert German Nineteenth Army. US Corporal Mel Clark landed relatively softly in a vineyard, wiggled from his chute, and began orienting himself to the terrain. Suddenly, he heard a rustling sound. Heart racing, Corporal Clark harshly whispered the battalion sign, “Liberty.” Clark knew that on forgetting the countersign, “France,” soldiers should respond with “Billy the Kid.” After repeating the challenge and still hearing nothing, sweaty palms clenching his rifle, Clark prepared to fire at the approaching figure. Just then, an exasperated thick British accent replied, “Jesse James, Tom Mix...oh, some bloody American cowboy!” At the sharp end of the bayonet, in the southern pincer of General Eisenhower’s broad front campaign to liberate France, Corporal Clark demonstrates a light-hearted, yet nearly fatal, complication for coalition warfare.¹

For the planners and commanders of Operation Dragoon, the complications of coalition warfare manifested themselves continuously, and in often bitterly divisive contests of wills among supposed allies.² The Dragoon landings, hailed by the VI Corps campaign reports as “a model of command and staff coordination,” clearly referred to the joint American forces rather

¹ This exchange is recounted from first hand interviews in William B. Breuer, *Operation Dragoon: The Allied Invasion of the South of France* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1987) 192.

² The liberation of Southern France was known as Operation Anvil until early August 1945, when the name changed to Operation Dragoon over compromise concerns. This paper follows the same timeline when referring to the name. Planning and discussion involving the campaign prior to the beginning of August 1945 will refer to Anvil, while those after this point, during, and post campaign refer to Dragoon.

than the combined coalition forces necessary to achieve unity and success in the campaign for the liberation of France. Further removed from Corporal Clark, operational complications in coalitions are no less blatant, and even more disruptive.³

The campaign to liberate Western Europe from Nazi occupation dominates history books and popular memory. Particularly, the strategic collaboration, discourse, and conflicts among the Allies, and the successful invasion along the beaches of Normandy in June 1944, command attention for their scope and success. However, the second invasion of Western Europe two months after Normandy, along the Southern Riviera, is less known and sometimes subordinated among many discussions regarding the Allied victory in Europe. Yet this second invasion was just as critical to ultimate success in the liberation campaign. Operation Dragoon, conceived as a simultaneous invasion with Operation Overlord, became a sequel to its more famous predecessor due to lack of shipping resources. Strategic discord over where the second invasion took place, right up until the final week before execution, became a contributing factor to the delay. Dragoon's objectives, the vital ports of Marseilles and Toulon, formed the critical basing for logistical volume that enabled the Allies' endurance through France and into Germany.⁴

Further overlooked, is how Seventh Army and Lieutenant General (LTG) Alexander M. Patch succeeded in rapidly building and integrating a joint coalition task force, wading through international concerns, and leveraging the power of this coalition against a German prepared and

³ The quote is from Headquarters, VI Corps, US Army, "Battle Experiences: Coordination of Various Arms" (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1945); US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-16, *Multinational Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013) GL-5; US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013) GL-8. JP 3-16 distinguishes the term "combined" as "identifying two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies operating together" versus the term "joint" defined in JP 1 as that which "connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate."

⁴ US Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1-02: *Terms and Military Symbols* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016) 1-91. Use of the term "endurance" throughout this paper relates to the Army's definition of the sustainment warfighting function which is the "related tasks and systems that provide support and services to ensure freedom of action, extend operational reach, and prolong endurance."

alert defense, cementing the Nazi retreat from France. In contrast to the coalition warfare executed prior to Dragoon, there was not a homogenous force forged in multiple previous operations, nor did they have months to plan, prepare, and train together. Dragoon cobbled together disparate units from across two different theaters while assuming risk in other campaigns.

To do so, Operation Dragoon required rapid integration of dispersed joint and coalition forces against a common objective. Overcoming all constraints, Seventh Army succeeded in this hasty coalition integration during Operation Dragoon through personality-based, effective management of strategic and operational negotiations balancing national constraints with capabilities, organizational considerations within the army staff and across the combined subordinate commands based on relevant capabilities, and centralized supply arrangements. While current multinational operations' doctrine includes many considerations, the most important generating Seventh Army's success in Dragoon were personality considerations, effective negotiations, strategic context establishing norms and structures, integration of capabilities, and centralized logistics. Though not specifically included in joint doctrine for multinational operations, but especially critical, is the staff's structure and design, and dedication of a flexible task force managing reception, staging, and onward movement.

Operation Dragoon provides an historical case study in which time did not allow for a lengthy integration and habituation process prior to execution. This distinguishes it from Operation Overlord and many other US-led coalitions. Many disparities, not present between the coalition forces during Overlord, existed between the US and French forces, including national interests, preferred approaches, language, and intelligence and administration capabilities.⁵ Once forces were assigned, Patch had as few as five weeks for establishing a mutually-understood plan

⁵ Less than two years prior to Dragoon, some of the same French personnel and units involved in the campaign fought against the US amphibious assault in Northern Africa for Operation Torch.

entailing breathtaking complexity, while maintaining the simplicity required for integration. Competing interests also created an awkward command arrangement of a French army under Seventh Army. Dragoon demonstrates an ad hoc coalition's integration from two different theaters spanning different operational agendas. Given the reduced familiarity between the US and French forces, the rapid integration due to late allocation of forces, language barriers, and competing interests, the Franco-American coalition's success provides a more accurate case study for application toward present operational environment complications and pre-conflict partnership integration.

There are few instances of unilateral US military action in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The Army's current operating concept "emphasizes the integration" of joint and multinational partners. It further states that, "Joint combined arms operations allow the Army to respond quickly and conduct operations of significant scale and duration to accomplish the mission across the range of military operations." The multi-domain battle (MDB) concept for the US Army's view of the future war paradigm describes "how future ground combat forces working as part of joint, interorganizational and multinational teams will provide commanders the multiple options across all domains." Given the shifting nature of national interests, rarely will the US interest align completely with current formalized alliance structures such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Even current NATO operations in Afghanistan demonstrate coalition challenges in national caveats and differing perspectives despite over half a century of formalizing structures.⁶

⁶ US Department of the Army, TRADOC Pamphlet (Pam) 525-3-1, *The U.S. Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World, 2020-2040* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 25; General David G. Perkins, "Multi Domain Battle: Joint Combined Arms Concept for the 21st Century," Association of the United States Army, 2016, accessed December 2, 2017, <https://www.ausa.org/articles/multi-domain-battle-joint-combined-arms>.

As transnational interests morph and increasing non-state actors intervene across boundaries, future US wars will undertake ad hoc coalitions without traditional alliance structures. In this paradigm, future campaigns will lack the time for lengthy habitualization, increasing the friction of operational integration. The Army Operating Concept's central idea acknowledges that "forces tailored rapidly to the mission exercise mission command and integrate joint, interorganizational, and multinational capabilities."⁷ The United States cannot decide its future coalition partners in advance of a future conflict. Given this problem frame, the US Army requires the capability to plan, organize, and integrate coalition forces rapidly through unity of effort into a coherent structure for operations. These form clear concerns for US joint military planners.⁸

This monograph explores Operation Dragoon's planning and execution through the lens of the operational considerations for coalition warfare. Specifically, it examines intelligence and information sharing, special operations, joint fires, multinational communication integration, public affairs, and multinational logistics. The paper further contends that organization at potential friction points, and anticipation of branches resulting from coalition assumptions, also form important considerations for coalition integration. These operational considerations are inherent in the primary importance of personalities, effective negotiations, multi-echelon capability-based organization, and centralized supply arrangements.⁹

Coalition warfare is nothing new.¹⁰ Prior to Dragoon, the United States developed the capability over two and a half years working within the Allied framework for coalition warfare.

⁷ US Army, TRADOC Pam 525-3-1, 17.

⁸ US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017) I-18-I-19. JP 5 defines "unity of effort" in multinational operations as "emphasizing common objectives and shared interests as well as mutual support and respect."

⁹ US Joint Staff, JP 3-16, (2013), I-1 defines coalitions as "an arrangement between two or more nations for common action," further offering that they are typically ad hoc and often have different objectives between the participating nations.

¹⁰ Alexander the Great practiced the blending of multiple nations in the fourth century BCE as he marched across what is now Afghanistan and India. His army became increasingly less homogeneously

Until recently, no codified doctrine used across all armies in the coalition existed. While US joint and NATO doctrine now defines coalitions, and prescribes a common language, this will not exist in future wars with ad hoc coalitions and competing interests.

In an environment where future ad hoc coalition warfare is a near-certainty, there exists a dearth of study bridging the gap from formal to ad hoc multinational force structures focused on one of the most successful US-led operational coalitions in history. Most sources fall within three broad categories. The most extensive coverage deals with the strategic debates over the existence, timing, and location for the invasion of southern France. Political considerations and strategic debates on the war's successful conclusion led to discord on whether the invasion would take place in southern France or through the Ljubljana Gap toward Vienna from Italy.

Maurice Matloff's "The Anvil Decision," is foundational in this area, providing a comprehensive treatment of these strategic debates.¹¹ The Fifth Army Commander in Italy, LTG Mark Clark, joined the British in support for the Adriatic option in his memoirs, *Calculated Risk*, notably due to the use of forces under his command.¹² While Matloff blends political and strategic debates over aims, Clark focuses on the strategic and operational debates over forces.¹³ Gordon A. Harrison's work for the Center for Military History, *Cross Channel Attack*, also ably covers this debate, notably British arguments for complete cancellation.¹⁴

Greek, and more balanced between multiple conquered peoples. Pope Urban II launched the first of centuries of coalition wars against Muslim lands in 1095 CE. George Washington continuously faced the challenges of coalition warfare as he sought to combine multiple sovereign states with varying interests into a homogenous US Army at a time when even the word liberty for which they fought was a highly subjective term. Napoleon's Grand Armee in Russia in 1812 combined the Kingdom of Italy, Duchy of Warsaw, and the Confederation of the Rhine, among others.

¹¹ Maurice Matloff, "The Anvil Decision: Crossroads of Strategy," in *Command Decisions*, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1960). Matloff also highlights the intense lobbying occurring between British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and US President Franklin Roosevelt.

¹² General Mark W. Clark, *Calculated Risk* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950).

¹³ Matloff, "The Anvil Decision."

¹⁴ Gordon A. Harrison, *Cross Channel Attack* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2004).

In Steven Zaloga's *Operation Dragoon 1944*, the prominent WWII historian details deep divides between American and British strategic planners over this decision.¹⁵ Meanwhile, Stephen Sussna's *Defeat and Triumph*, offers a perspective of how Dragoon helped spark a rebirth of French pride, against a backdrop of reasoning for both sides in the debate. Though not explicit, his work highlights the strategic opportunities stemming from coalition operations.¹⁶

The second category acknowledges important contributions by the individual soldiers and units. In terms of the broader European Theater impact, no work provides more detail on Dragoon's role than Rick Atkinson's *The Guns at Last Light*. Atkinson describes coalition difficulties stemming from personality conflicts, especially regarding the employment of the French mechanized force landing with US VI Corps. He argues that French employment provided positive contributions to the war effort given Marshall de Gaulle's constraints for French not fighting north of the Arno River in Italy.¹⁷

Important works such as Jean-Louis Gassend's *Operation Dragoon: Autopsy of a Battle* and Jacques Robichon's *The Second D-Day*, discuss the tactical engagements in terrific depth through multiple eyewitness accounts offering counterpoint to studies downplaying the intensity of combat in the Riviera Campaign.¹⁸ Others, such as Anthony Tucker-Jones in *Operation Dragoon: The Liberation of Southern France 1944*, explain how the operation enabled the direction and duration of the war and the logistical effort required, arguing for the campaign's

¹⁵ Steven Zaloga, *Operation Dragoon 1944: France's Other D Day* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2009).

¹⁶ Stephen Sussna, *Defeat and Triumph: The Story of a Controversial Allied Invasion and French Rebirth* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Publishing, 2008). Sussna participated in Operation Dragoon on board LST 1012, and so combines personal experience with years of reflection, analysis, and research.

¹⁷ Rick Atkinson, *The Guns at Last Light: The War in Western Europe, 1944-1945* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2013), 192-193. Despite a tendency in many sources, most using post-war records written and dominated by Churchill, Atkinson suggests that no evidence exists for post-war political concerns regarding the Soviets manifesting during the strategic debate on a second European front.

¹⁸ Jean-Loup Gassend, *Operation Dragoon, Autopsy of a Battle: The Allied Liberation of the French Riviera, August-September 1944* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 2014); Jacques Robichon, *The Second D-Day* (New York: Walker and Company, 1962).

major role in the Allied victory. Meanwhile, Paul Gaujac's *Dragoon, August 15, 1944: The Other Invasion of France*, argues that the terrific planning based on previous experience enabled precise execution and Seventh Army's success.¹⁹

The final category covers coalition complications and friction, and is by far the least extensive coverage. As part of the Naval Staff Histories of the Second World War, *Operation Dragoon: The Invasion of the South of France*, covers the campaign's role enabling the logistics base necessary to sustain the Allies in France. This account also covers in predominantly laudatory prose the combined nature of the naval forces in support of Dragoon.²⁰ In William Breur's *Operation Dragoon: The Allied Invasion of the South of France*, the author explains the crucial role that coalition intelligence, including partisan efforts, and combined deception operations, played in enabling the successful landings. Breur only briefly covers the French role in seizing Dragoon's primary objectives.²¹ Finally, Harry Yeide and Mark Stout's terrific account of the campaign in *First to the Rhine*, comes closest to covering coalition operations in depth. The authors discuss many problems in multinational campaigns, though without broader operational context for success in the ad hoc arrangement of forces.²²

Many of these important works skip over the amazing feat of organizing and integrating a coalition which achieved one of the most successful amphibious invasions in history. Despite multiple coalition efforts prior, this was one of the few which included a coalition using other

¹⁹ Anthony Tucker-Jones, *Operation Dragoon: The Liberation of Southern France, 1944* (Barnsley, England: Pen and Sword, 2010); Paul Gaujac, *Dragoon, August 15, 1944: The Other Invasion of France* (Paris: Histoire and Collections, 2004).

²⁰ Andrew Stewart, *Operation Dragoon: The Invasion of the South of France, 15 August 1944 (Naval Staff Histories of the Second World War)* (West Midlands, England: Helion & Company, 2015). Stewart notably highlights the importance the navy played in both opening and maintaining the ports.

²¹ Breuer, *Operation Dragoon*. The author's only coverage of the French seizure of the port cities comes in the Epilogue.

²² Harry Yeide and Mark Stout, *First to the Rhine: The 6th Army Group in World War II* (Saint Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2007).

than British and Canadian forces, made more potent by the invasion of French soil. Further, the Free French Resistance laid important groundwork for the campaign, requiring extensive collaboration and cooperation. Finally, Seventh Army completed the planning and preparation in a shortened time span due to the strategic debates and ongoing operations. It is here which a study of the required planning enabling this rapid assembly and integration of a coalition provides important lessons for future operations.

The monograph includes six sections. Following the introduction, the paper explores the strategic context for Operation Dragoon, focused on elements that effected operational planning and key personalities. The third section focuses on Seventh Army's planning, sub-divided between initial planning and organization, and negotiations over the final plan. The fourth section covers the operation through the pursuit up the Rhone Valley, culminating in the link-up with forces from Normandy. It explores command relationships, organizational structures, and decision-making through coalition considerations. The fifth section analyzes the key coalition elements which led to success, through the lens of current joint doctrine's coalition operational considerations. Although leveraging doctrine, emphasis is placed on the absence of a common doctrinal framework which provides corollaries for current operational planners. The conclusion suggests the importance for future operational planners on integration prior to conflict outbreak.

II. Arguing the Sword's Design: Personalities, Strategy, and Supply Debates

The combined forces integrated into Seventh Army's multi-echelon coalition for Operation Dragoon took shape amidst ambiguous planning circumstances, strategic debates over utility and objectives, and a lack of assigned forces. Despite this, by the invasion date, Seventh Army integrated the French Armee B, the American VI Corps, the Anglo-Canadian-American First Special Service Force (1st SSF), a provisional airborne division, the Anglo-American First Airborne Task Force (FATF), and the French Group of Commandos and French Naval Assault Group, with additional responsibility for coordination of the partisan forces, the French Forces of the Interior (FFI). The French Army, consisting of I and II French Corps, was itself a coalition of

Frenchmen from the mainland and colonial troops from North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. Even Marshal Jean de Lattre de Tassigny called it “a melting pot... able to bring so rich an alloy to so high a degree of fusion.”²³

The planning for Anvil occurred amidst one of the largest strategic disagreements at the national level throughout the war. This heightened the ambiguity present for Seventh Army planners. Planners developed the concept of invading southern France as a simultaneous operation with Overlord. Anvil’s purpose briefed to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, shortly after his designation as the Supreme Allied Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) in December 1943, diverted German manpower from Normandy. The concept stemmed from the principal agreement at the Sextant Conferences in Cairo and Tehran the previous month. However, the British never liked the idea of shifting manpower from Italy, and preferred a continued attack through the Ljubljana Gap toward Vienna.²⁴

The strategic debates on Anvil’s location, operational timing, and size of the force continued throughout planning. On January 23, 1944, Eisenhower formally directed enlarging the Overlord assault area, acknowledging its primacy for planning, and beginning discussion over postponing Anvil. Enlargement meant shipping could not support both operations simultaneously, though Eisenhower still believed in Anvil’s necessity. Eisenhower directed only cancelling Anvil as a last resort due to the Russian agreement and problems resulting from the American and French divisions remaining “idle in the Mediterranean.” Eisenhower wanted a recommendation

²³ Marshal Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, *The History of the French First Army*, trans. Malcolm Barnes (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1952), 30.

²⁴ U.S. Secretary Office of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, “Sextant Conference: November-December 1943, Papers and Minutes of Meetings Sextant and Eureka Conferences,” in *World War II: Inter-Allied Conferences* (1943; repr., Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 2003), 285-292. The agreements occurred between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill in Cairo, and two days later in Tehran with Stalin. In addition to the perceived negative impacts to Allied operations in Italy from the diversion of manpower required for southern France, the British also desired securing their interests in the Balkans while preventing ceding this area to Soviet advances.

from his staff on Anvil's future before February 1, 1944, only reducing Anvil to a deception if "convinced that Overlord could not otherwise be successfully mounted."²⁵

Throughout February, SHAEF planners believed the shortage of ship and aircraft transports prevented successfully mounting both operations simultaneously. Despite this, Seventh Army logistical planners developed multiple creative solutions, generating requisitions for May execution based on assumptions. The situation in Italy also created difficulties for Anvil's force generation as Hitler committed his troops to fight south of Rome. Eisenhower postponed a decision until April 1st.²⁶

This left an ambiguous situation for Anvil planners, who developed multiple courses of action for a one, two, or three division assault, along with alternative diversionary courses of action. With no decisions made on troop lists or staging arrangements, and the shortening time for supply requisition, this required firm prioritization of necessary arrangements and multiple assumptions. Not until April 18th did SHAEF and the Mediterranean Theater of Operations' Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ) reach the official decision postponing Anvil to enable shipping for Overlord. This provided slightly more time for preparations but failed resolution of Anvil's scale, scope, or force allocations.²⁷

The amorphous planning environment continued through June. Eisenhower never stopped believing Anvil's necessity as both a diversion and provision of critical ports. With the Allied occupation of Rome on June 4th, British General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, commanding

²⁵ Debates over operational timing and force size largely occurred between Eisenhower and British General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, commanding the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. See Forrest C. Pogue, *The Supreme Command, The European Theater of Operations* (1954; repr., Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1996), 111; the quotes and Eisenhower's belief in Anvil's necessity come from Headquarters, European Theater of Operation, The General Board, *Strategy of the Campaign in Western Europe, 1944-1945*, Study Number 1, File 385/1 (European Theater of Operations: Department of the Army, 1945), 20. The final decision rested with the Combined Chiefs of Staff, but Eisenhower wanted his staff to provide a recommendation that allowed retaining Anvil.

²⁶ Pogue, *The Supreme Command*, 111-115. Shortages included Landing Ship-Tank (LST), Landing Craft-Tank (LCT) and troop transport aircraft.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 111-115.

AFHQ, set Anvil's date for August 15, 1944, though forces remained unassigned. Only on June 11th did the Allies achieve concurrence across national coalitions for forces and timing.²⁸

This still left the location unresolved. At the end of June, with Overlord ongoing, the strategic debate shifted to national leadership for final resolution. President Roosevelt argued southern France made the best use of French troops fighting for their homeland and concentrated allied forces in the decisive theater for achieving German unconditional surrender. The President added that without Anvil, they must reopen the entire question of French troops. Despite telephone concurrence by the Prime Minister on July 1st, the debate continued until August.²⁹

The July concurrence enabled Eisenhower, as the eventual commander for the Anvil forces, to discuss overall objectives with Wilson. Eisenhower laid out four main objectives: containing and destroying forces otherwise opposing Overlord; securing a major port in southern France for additional forces; advance northward to threaten enemy flanks and lines of communication; and develop Allied lines of communication to support Anvil forces and reinforcements. Initial objectives were Marseille with an advance up the Rhone Valley toward Lyon. AFHQ controlled Anvil forces and FFI in southern France using SHAEF directives until link-up with Overlord forces, when control would shift to SHAEF for all forces in France. Finally, on August 11th, the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) cabled approval of the plan, four days prior to execution. The official US campaign history acknowledges that without a steady

²⁸ Pogue, *The Supreme Command*, 218-220. At this same conference, the Combined Chiefs of Staff directed Wilson to submit plans for operations at the port of Sete and Istria while Eisenhower submitted plans for the Bay of Biscay. However, Eisenhower saw no benefit to an operation through the Bordeaux region, and viewed Sete as a strong option for relatively easy port opening following operations. Both of these options assumed landing somewhere in southern France.

²⁹ Maurice Matloff, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-1944* (1959; repr., Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1996), 472. Allied leadership agreed to unconditional surrender at Sextant. The British continued advocating for the Adriatic option. General Marshall argued that only the southern French ports enabled the introduction of the over forty American divisions still in the United States. Eisenhower also continued insisting on the need for a diversion of Germans from Normandy in southern France, and that French resistance provided assistance not available in the Adriatic. Only then did Wilson concede that southern France made the most sense if ports were the primary concern. However, this did not resolve the debate at the national level.

command drive for combined planning throughout this difficult strategic environment, it is doubtful Anvil could have occurred in the reduced timeline prior to August 15th.³⁰

Strategic decisions also surrounded supply and administration for French forces enabling Seventh Army's operational control. Early in the conflict, President Roosevelt extended the Lend-Lease Act benefits to General de Gaulle's Free French forces. After Operation Torch, Roosevelt added the French forces under Allied direction in North Africa. The Allies divided responsibilities, with the British providing material to de Gaulle's Free French, while the United States assumed responsibility for the North African French forces. The Americans' ambitious program supplied weapons, material, and training assistance to a partner force enabling coalition warfare.

In December 1942, Eisenhower established the Joint Rearmament Committee (JRC) within AFHQ to ease burdens on liaison sections. Responsibility for French rearmament direction remained with the Allied theater commander. General Wilson succeeded Eisenhower at AFHQ in January 1944. Direct responsibility for the JRC then fell to LTG Jacob Devers, assuming command for US forces in the North African Theater of Operations (NATOUSA) and Wilson's deputy at AFHQ.³¹

However, these arrangements did not directly translate into effective utilization of supplies. In late 1942, the commander for the North African French forces, General Henri Giraud, over-optimistically believed he could field a force of 250,000-300,000 men built around already existing troops, colonial troops rallying to the cause, Frenchmen escaping from France, and

³⁰ The objectives and final approval are found in Pogue, *The Supreme Command*, 223, 226; additional details on final approval are found in Jeffrey J. Clarke and Robert Ross Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1993), 34.

³¹ Marcel Vigneras, *Rearming the French* (1959; repr., Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1987), 271-273. The JRC, composed of four Americans, four Frenchmen, and one British, centralized all equipment requests for the French, coordinated French training and organization, and coordinated between the French authorities, the Lend-Lease Administration, and other agencies concerned with French rearmament. In February 1943, Eisenhower commanded the AFHQ in Algiers, the European Theater of Operations of the US Army (ETOUSA), and the North African Theater of Operations of the US Army (NATOUSA).

French nationals residing in foreign countries. This estimate did not account for the high percentage of technical experts required by a modern army for supply, maintenance, and general support, creating severe limitations for the duration of the war. While the rearmament program commenced throughout 1943, debates surrounded tactical organization of French forces for receipt of supplies, and over shipping which ultimately reduced additional US forces for employment in either theater. However, the strategic arrangements consolidated supply and support requests for Anvil planning through Services of Supply (SOS) NATOUSA, providing a common resourcing framework.³²

Across the joint force, Seventh Army coordinated through US Admiral Henry K. Hewitt's Western Naval Task Force, itself a coalition of American, French, British, and Greek battleships and warships. The XII Tactical Air Command, under Brigadier General (BG) Gordon P. Seville, provided a coalition of American, British, and French aircraft and crews. Combined intelligence sharing was enabled by continuous FFI coordination. Bringing this organization together for the assault under AFHQ effective management of personalities and negotiations. The main personalities included LTG Alexander M. Patch, commander of the US Seventh Army, Major General (MG) Lucian Truscott, commander of the US VI Corps, and General Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, commander of the French Armee B.

A gregarious personality and egotistical attitude toward the press and public do not go well with coalition command already challenged by an abundance of politics. In his synthesis of coalitions throughout history, Paul Kennedy wrote that coalitions require "substantial doses of tolerance, understanding, and flexibility," characteristics anathema to a flamboyant Patton.³³ However, they were abundant within LTG "Sandy" Patch.

³² Vignerat, *Rearming the French*, 23-27.

³³ Keith Neilson and Roy A. Prete, eds., *Coalition Warfare: An Uneasy Accord* (Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurer University Press, 1983), 15.

Patch's biographer described him as "modest and unassuming," without the arrogance found in some of his contemporaries. He learned to control his violent temper during his youth, and translated this fire into aggressiveness in battle, with an even-keeled nature eager to avoid wasteful consumption of lives.³⁴ Patch remains one of the least remembered Army commanders from WWII, perhaps a combination of his lack of personal promotion with his early death after the war. When handed the *Time* magazine cover article about himself and the successful Dragoon landings on August 28, 1944, he did not even bother reading the article.³⁵ De Lattre wrote that he regarded Patch "as a man of outstanding integrity, a courageous and competent leader, and an unselfish comrade-in-arms."³⁶ This temperament provided capacity for managing unwieldy coalitions. Despite previous experience with ad hoc organizations, when Patch assumed command of Seventh Army in March 1944, it was his first coalition effort, working across national militaries to develop combined objectives and purpose.³⁷

Truscott shared Patch's aversion to the press, generally avoiding publicity, lacking in flamboyance, and well-respected by the Soldiers he led.³⁸ LTG Clark described Truscott as "a quiet, competent and courageous officer with great battle experience...[who] inspired

³⁴ William K. Wyant, *Sandy Patch: A Biography of Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch* (New York: Praeger, 1991), 12.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁶ Lucian K. Truscott, *Command Missions: A Personal Story* (New York: Dutton, 1954), 383.

³⁷ Patch's formative experience with creating an ad hoc task organization occurred with the Americal Division on the island of New Caledonia. The Americal Division remains the only US division formed outside the territorial United States, and later became the 23rd Infantry Division. Patch then formed Task Force 6184, another division-sized organization, and as a Corps Commander assumed command for the land forces fighting on Guadalcanal, including working successfully across domains with the Navy, Air Corps, and Marines in 1942-43. He received high praise from General Marshall for his handling of this difficult fight. However, over a perceived lack of discretion with information surrounding the death of Japanese Admiral Yamamoto, the Army transferred Patch to a state-side command of IV Corps, first at Fort Lewis, then over the California-Arizona Maneuver Area. With the moves, which included Eisenhower's assumption of command of SHAEF, Patch found himself and IV Corps headed to the Mediterranean. See Breur, *Operation Dragoon*, 64, and Wyant, *Sandy Patch*, 38-44, 58-60, 70-80.

³⁸ Brendan Phibbs, *The Other Side of Time: A Combat Surgeon in World War II* (Boston: Little Brown & Co, 1987), 201. Phibbs served as Seventh Army's Surgeon, arriving just after the Dragoon Campaign and serving in that capacity until the end of the war.

confidence.”³⁹ From early in WWII, Truscott’s assignments skewed toward coalition efforts, and he developed an understanding of working across national interests.⁴⁰

Applying experience observing early combined operations, when Truscott assumed command of VI Corps during the Anzio assault, he coordinated closely with the British, inviting them nightly to his quarters and visiting each of their units repeatedly.⁴¹ This included multiple forays under fire with the British division commander, gaining his trust. When Clark assigned VI Corps to Seventh Army for Anvil, Truscott now worked in a coalition with less familiar customs. Despite disputes with de Lattre, Truscott’s earlier understanding of working within a coalition would serve him well for Dragoon.

Marshall Jean de Lattre de Tassigny shared other French commanders’ penchants for drama and individual prestige through self-promotion. His biographer described his life as a “spectacular gallop.”⁴² Choosing to remain with his family, de Lattre joined the forces under the Vichy regime, but devoted himself to establishing and running training centers in Opme and Tunis to instill “strong character...passion...and determination” in the French forces. These

³⁹ Clark, *Calculated Risk*, 306.

⁴⁰ Ibid.; Wilson A. Heefner, *Dogface Soldier: The Life of General Lucian K. Truscott, Jr.* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010), 12-13, 39-71, 97-124, 163. Despite never completing high school, Major General Truscott began his military career in 1917, commissioned as a cavalry officer with the American entry into World War I. He remained with the Army through the interwar period and began WWII as a Colonel. Truscott’s early assignments during WWII included studying British Commandos for the development of the unit which became the 1st Ranger Battalion under William Darby, serving on Lord Louis Mountbatten’s Allied Combined Staff in 1942, and serving as the primary US observer to the Canadian Dieppe Raid. After commanding a task force under General Patton in Operation Torch, followed by command of the 3rd Infantry Division through tough fighting in Sicily and Italy, Truscott received command of the VI Corps when the previous commander, John Lucas, lost the trust and confidence of both LTG Clark, commanding the US Fifth Army, and General Wilson at AFHQ. Assuming command in the midst of the Anzio fighting, Truscott visited every unit on the beachhead within twenty-four hours to gain full appreciation of the situation.

⁴¹ Truscott, *Command Decisions*, 329; Clark, *Calculated Risk*, 287. For the Anzio landings, VI Corps consisted of the US 3rd Infantry Division and British 1st Division among smaller forces. Lucas’ command style and leadership drew contempt from the British serving under his command.

⁴² Major-General Guy Salisbury-Jones, *So Full A Glory: A Biography of Marshall de Lattre de Tassigny* (New York: Praeger, 1955), xi. De Lattre was an adventurous youth who grew into a larger-than-life personality as a commander. He fought in World War I, and was wounded five times before the armistice. As a young division commander during the Battle of France, he fought until the armistice in June 1940.

served the French forces well as they prepared for the campaign to liberate southern France. Following de Lattre's imprisonment by the Germans and escape to join de Gaulle in England, de Lattre assumed command of Armee B in North Africa in December 1943.⁴³

As Armee B began working with the American planning staff for Anvil, de Lattre quickly understood his boundaries within an American-dominated framework. He wrote that his first interactions left him few illusions, when he stated, "Our Allies remained intractable in their views, and if we tried any longer to make our own prevail, then the whole of our rearmament might be compromised."⁴⁴ This highlights a different approach from the British, who operated largely as co-equals, or de Gaulle, who exaggerated his influence. As Paul Kennedy notes in his work on coalition warfare, the United States, Britain, and Canada after WWI saw coalitions as entrapping. By contrast, France saw coalitions as the difference between defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and victory in 1918. De Lattre viewed coalitions as essential to success, while noting from the beginning how quickly he grew to trust Patch. Despite disputes and differing national interests, the three commanders' successful coalition management is a testament to their capacity for understanding and effective negotiations.⁴⁵

⁴³ Salisbury-Jones, *So Full A Glory*, 101. De Lattre first established a training camp in Opme, France. In July 1941, de Lattre assumed command of the French Vichy forces in Tunis where he established a second training camp. However, German patience with de Lattre ran out over his contempt and outward intent to prevent Axis supplies through Tunis, and the Germans recalled him to France. With the Allied invasion of North Africa imminent, and the Germans crossing the demarcation line and occupying all of France, a fellow Frenchman turned de Lattre over to the Germans when de Lattre attempted to defect. After a daring escape from prison, de Lattre resurrected his fortunes and career by making it to England and serving with Charles de Gaulle and the Free French.

⁴⁴ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 27.

⁴⁵ Neilson and Prete, *Coalition Warfare*, 10-13.

III. Coalition Planning

I recognize the patience and perseverance demonstrated by all members of the staff in following through with the planning despite obstacles and delays resulting from factors beyond their control, and upon which the progress of the planning was dependent.

—Lieutenant General Alexander M. “Sandy” Patch, *Seventh Army Report of Operations*

IIIa. Forging the Sword: Organization, Control, Integration, and Training

In late December 1943, Seventh Army Headquarters near Palermo, Sicily, was a runt of an organization. When the commander, LTG Patton, shifted to the United Kingdom for Operation Overlord, he took the last of those forces not already committed to the fight in Italy. This left the nominal army headquarters just a small planning staff, and no assigned forces. The CCS subordinated this staff under LTG Clark’s Fifth Army, who remained absorbed with operations in Italy. Focusing on command post exercises, this staff received a directive from AFHQ on December 19, 1943, requiring an estimate for potential operations on the scale of Husky. General guidance provided the southern coast of France as the objective around May 1944, establishing a Mediterranean bridgehead, and exploiting north towards Lyon and Vichy France. Adding a layer of complexity, AFHQ directed organization of a combined Franco-American force for the operation, code-named Anvil.⁴⁶

With the odd headquarters, strategic ambiguity, and limited details and decisions, the small staff began planning, led by LTG Clark’s deputy, BG Benjamin F. Caffey. Caffey shifted the staff to Algiers in January 1943. Based on Husky’s joint amphibious lessons, the small element immediately integrated navy and air corps representatives. As deception, an even smaller contingent remained near Palermo, and the Algiers planning staff became known as Force 163.

⁴⁶ Alexander M. Patch, *Report of Operations: The Seventh United States Army in France and Germany, 1944-1945* (1946 Repr., Nashville: The Battery Press, Inc., 1988), 1-3. Operation Husky was the amphibious assault undertaken by Seventh Army earlier that year.

Simultaneously, a Rear Force 163 established in Oran, co-located with SOSNATOUSA and naval supply units, ensuring centralization with the JRC for initial requisitions.

The first two months of planning occurred in a vacuum. However, the dearth of information enabled increased creativity and multiple plans. Planners developed concepts for one, two, and three division assaults, building up to as many as ten. All plans assumed a French preponderance of forces, while keeping a US-only assault. Although de Lattre initially argued for Frenchmen as the first troops returning to French soil, he recognized the shipping and transports belonged to the United States, and the strategic and psychological values for a French army seizing the vital city-ports of Toulon and Marseille. Planning provided the necessary weight for Eisenhower's arguments supporting Anvil, and subsequently Wilson's support with his Prime Minister in the final weeks before D-Day. Additionally, logisticians based required supply requisitions in January on assumptions possible through the JRC's centralized supply agreements. With French units unknown, planners requisitioned French translators as early as February, enabling dissemination of initial concepts to the small French contingent around de Lattre. Unfortunately, without the troop lists, they lacked capabilities for running training programs, or determining staging areas, convoy routes, and basing.⁴⁷

On March 2, Seventh Army Headquarters received a jolt of energy from MG Patch's assumption of command. He quickly transitioned to a combined planning effort, achieving full integration in April. Understanding the particular nuanced complexity of French integration enabled planning accounting for unique political differences. Patch consistently focused negotiations with the French on an understanding for the morale boost provided by reuniting with

⁴⁷ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 19; De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 54; Eisenhower's and Wilson's use of the plans are found in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 6. In February, BG Caffey left, replaced by BG Garrison H. Davidson, formerly the Seventh Army Chief of Engineers.

the French homeland. Augmented by the IV Corps staff arriving with Patch, Force 163 now had the capacity for integrated staff planning with the French.⁴⁸

Planners acknowledged early that complete integration of the staff on a one-for-one basis, as with most Anglo-American staffs, would not work with the French. The lack of bilingual French officers, and the technical and professional experience of those available combined with French Armee B staff's own personnel requirements, informed this analysis. LTG Devers adds that US planners sufficiently understood French organization, doctrine, and administration through helping establish the French structure. Conversely, they lacked the time required to fully teach the French US staff procedures, organization, or supply and evacuation procedures. Importantly, experience demonstrated a complete one-for-one integration created redundancies and actually reduced combined planning capabilities.⁴⁹

In March, de Lattre established a French liaison cell with Force 163 under the leadership of Colonel Jean L. Petit. As the French arrived, Force 163 incorporated them into the "appropriate staff sections."⁵⁰ By April, published staff organizational charts show ad hoc arrangements of French personnel and multiple French linguists and translators. To expedite integration, Patch provided augmentation from his own staff to Armee B, enabling de Lattre to send additional planners.⁵¹ The staff eliminated functional redundancy and classification constraints, preventing

⁴⁸ The full integration in April is somewhat contrary to de Lattre's insistence that his planners were integrated with the Force 163 staff from the outset in de Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 49; details on combined staff integration are referenced in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 11; further details on first joint, then combined, integration are in Clarke and Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine*, 31-33; Patch's focus on French morale is in Truscott, *Command Missions*, 386, Patch, *Report of Operations*, 11, and de Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 54.

⁴⁹ Jacob L. Devers, "Operation Dragoon: The Invasion of Southern France." *Military Affairs*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Summer, 1946): 15, accessed July 25, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1983451>.

⁵⁰ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 11. Colonel Petit had earlier opposed US forces with the Vichy French during the Torch landings.

⁵¹ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 49.

compartmentalization, while making every effort to translate all publications into French for dissemination to the French staff and Armee B.⁵²

Beyond staff structure, integration of a French army into a US army challenged planners. Given the primacy of national over coalition concerns, even agreements were subject to interpretation. For the French, it involved “military and political prestige of the highest order,” requiring planners account for these ad hoc political decisions.⁵³ Discussions included operational control between the two armies, and strategic relationships with AFHQ, the CCS, and the French General Staff of National Defense. All required structural and cooperative agreements balancing national and coalition interests and objectives.

Wilson, Devers, de Gaulle, Patch, and de Lattre reached an initial agreement for the Anvil chain of command at a conference in mid-April. During the assault, de Lattre landed as the commander for II Corps, with the corps commander serving as his deputy. The headquarters staff merged both the corps and army staff. Once I French Corps landed, de Lattre assumed army command, though subordinate to Seventh Army. De Gaulle meanwhile insisted the Americans recognize de Lattre as an army commander with all prerogatives afforded. This compromise kept civil affairs, troop and supply priorities, and major tactical decisions in American hands while maintaining French pride. However, a series of letters between AFHQ and the French General Staff indicate that misperceptions over details in this broad arrangement continued through June.⁵⁴

⁵² Headquarters, Force 163, “Annex No. 6 to G-2 Outline Plan: Operation Anvil, G-2 Administrative Plan,” April 17, 1944; Headquarters, Force 163, “Annex No. 3 to G-2 Outline Plan: Operation Anvil,” June 14, 1944.

⁵³ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 17-18.

⁵⁴ Letter from LTG J.A.H. Gammell, Chief of Staff for AFHQ to General Antoine Bethouart, Chief of Staff for the French Committee of National Defense, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, May 25, 1944. AFHQ sought to remove misperceptions regarding chain of command for the French Army Headquarters, laying out what was later enacted. After serving as Chief of Staff for the French Committee of National Defense, General Bethouart became Chief of Staff for Armee B under de Lattre in August, and subsequently commanded the French I Corps in September. A letter from General Bethouart to AFHQ, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 6, 1944, acknowledged that Armee B, including all French formations designated for Anvil under the command of

To match the SHAEF command structure, AFHQ established the 6th Army Group as a liaison between AFHQ and Seventh Army under LTG Devers, becoming operational once command transferred to SHAEF. This left Seventh Army with both the administrative and logistical functions of an army and the tactical and strategic command functions of an army group. Though not entirely satisfactory, it is a testament to coalition balance and adherence to the US organizing principle for unity of effort between administration and tactics.⁵⁵

Supply and equipping encompassed another area of concern for the coalition. The material similarities through the JRC strategic arrangement enabled early assumptions, but the late assignment of forces hindered confirmation. AFHQ finally designated French units for Anvil on April 7, directing their equipping “in accordance with the policy of employing French units in combat operations as components of an American force.”⁵⁶ Despite lacking operational control over French forces until July, this enabled continued planning, requisition allocation, and adjustments based on known assumptions.⁵⁷

The final month of planning occurred in a rush of final preparations as strategic decisions, Eisenhower’s communicated objectives, force assignment, supply, and unit integration

de Lattre would be under the command of Force 163 effective July 7, 1944; an internal memorandum from General Wilson to AFHQ, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 9, 1944, informed the staff of the agreement on command relationships with the French General Staff of National Defense. Many of the documents were bundled in a collection declassified at one time and maintained at the Ike Skeleton Combined Arms Research Library in Fort Leavenworth, KS, Reference Number N-11685-B. These documents are referred to in these footnotes generally as, “Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence.”

⁵⁵ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 17-18. This provides the outcome of the command discussions. Clarke and Smith recount the discussions between Generals Wilson and de Gaulle over the subordination of de Lattre to Patch, with the agreement stemming from acknowledgement of US expertise in amphibious landings. They also discuss the dual role of Seventh Army as an army group and an army. The final agreement placing Armee B under Force 163 remained true to the wording of Bethouart’s letter to AFHQ from May 25, 1944, with Patch responsible for continued planning and conduct of operations and command of all forces conducting Anvil, and once both French Corps were ashore, Seventh Army assuming tactical and strategic command functions of an army group, while retaining administrative and logistical functions of an army headquarters, for the entire Anvil force.

⁵⁶ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 21.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 66.

and training occurred in a rush enabled by the initial structural agreements. During this final month, General Patch consolidated his command headquarters in Naples from Algiers, Oran, Corsica, and locations across Italy. During this critical time of last minute planning and preparation, the commanders and staffs possessed immediate and complete access to Patch's headquarters. De Lattre noted constant communication with Patch over meals, and in meetings and conferences, increasing coordination.⁵⁸

The lack of official command relationships prior to July caused enormous burdens on the staff, especially in terms of the G4 and SOS. On July 7, AFHQ officially assigned all French forces for Anvil to Seventh Army. However, as late as early August 1944, the naming conventions of the French force during the operation remained in dispute.⁵⁹ The directive also assigned 2nd British Parachute Brigade to Seventh Army. A month prior to the landings, the coalition administration operated under a unified army commander for the first time.⁶⁰

However, this awkward command arrangement allowed no discussion with the French supply agencies until late July. The integrated G-4 staff filled a crucial gap during this period. On June 23, AFHQ further centralized logistical planning by designating SOSNATOUSA responsible for all US activities "incident to the mounting of United States and French forces" for Anvil.⁶¹ This enabled official logistical coordination between headquarters. Two weeks later, Seventh Army received the dedicated resources of the supply services. This included stocks from

⁵⁸ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 53. Patch, *Report of Operations*, 49-50.

⁵⁹ The Americans preferred II Corps until both French corps landed to revert to Armee B, but throughout the planning documents, both names continued in use. The codification came only after de Gaulle and Wilson reached an agreement.

⁶⁰ Letter from the Seventh Army G3, Colonel Richard T. Guthrie, to the French Mission, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, August 4, 1944. Colonel Guthrie attempted to clarify the French naming conventions during the initial landings as II Corps versus Armee B. Patch, *Report of Operations*, 17-18.

⁶¹ General Wilson, "Directive: Amphibious Operations," Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, Allied Force Headquarters, June 23, 1944.

the JRC, with deficiencies made up from American stocks through SOSNATOUSA charged to the French lend-lease account.⁶²

The Seventh Army G-4 identified severe shortages of authorized equipment in French units, attributing this to the French policy of waiting to issue complete sets to units, only as needed, or simple lack of arrival of promised equipment.⁶³ The French also formed most of the service units from combat units. This shortage belied the French perception of their combat readiness. Armee B consistently only requested assistance from the medical and ordnance services, for which Seventh Army provided augmentation.⁶⁴

The discrepancies from inspection results highlight combat power dichotomy between coalition partners infused with national pride, while highlighting disparities between tactical training of combat forces with technical training of support forces. JRC reports consistently praised the former, while French placed less emphasis on the latter. The French did gain technical expertise once AFHQ released the French forces in Italy to Armee B. The French Expeditionary Corps' headquarters staff filled out gaps in Armee B's staff, and de Lattre highlighted the expertise gained from the corps' technical bureau and the administrative staff of the service units. Through the final month, Armee B's supply staff now accompanied Seventh Army's inspections,

⁶² Patch, *Report of Operations*, 66.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 66. Inspections showed only thirty of 133 units had more than thirty percent of authorized equipment.

⁶⁴ The French policy is found in Memo from Headquarters, Force 163 to Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean Theater of Operations, "Operational Control of French Units Earmarked for Anvil," Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, AG 370 E, June 21, 44; Headquarters, Seventh Army Memorandum, "Blood Transfusion Service for French Units," Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, AG 742-M, Reference Number X1355, July 31, 1944. Blood service provides a notable example of this coordinated coalition assistance. A French Transfusion Service at Algiers maintained responsibility for collecting and shipping the blood to Naples, labeled with the French tri-color. Here the US Near Shore Control Party combined these units with US blood service with the US Navy responsible for shipment into the target area. Combined efforts of US and French Surgeons on shore transported the blood forward to French medical units for issue to Armee B.

and completed load plans with Near Shore Control Parties at ports of embarkation mentored by Seventh Army staff.⁶⁵

Separate basing for follow-on supply provision increased the effectiveness of centralized logistics. While Near Shore Control at Naples maintained overall responsibility, Armee B established their own supply bases in Africa and Italy, validating transportation and shipping into the target area through their US counterparts. Liaison efforts at both French and US supply bases formed critical linkages for this effort. French liaison forces augmented the Near Shore Control Groups at the French ports of embarkation, with local French task force commanders managing this build-up closely. Following embarkation, Near Shore Control Headquarters in Naples, augmented with French personnel, continued administration and supply management based on reported consumption data.⁶⁶

Task organization becomes harder the lower coalitions attempt integration. Patch attached the mechanized French CC Sudre to Truscott's VI Corps for the Dragoon landings. American armor remained in short supply for the Anvil force and mobility for exploitation posed a concern. While de Lattre accepted this compromise, international political concerns dictated its use, necessitating branch planning. After an invited visit by Truscott to Sudre's headquarters in early July, Patch received a formal protest by de Lattre, demanding all future interactions and orders go through de Lattre for approval. Additionally, in a July planning conference, de Lattre

⁶⁵ Headquarters, Seventh Army, Memorandum from Assistant Chief of Staff, G4 to Assistant Chief of Staff, G3, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 27, 1944. The memorandum addressed readiness of French units based on equipping and training inspections from the G4 and SOSNATOUSA. Information on the French Expeditionary Corps from de Lattre, 57. The French Expeditionary Corps previously fought under LTG Mark Clark's Fifth Army in Italy, formalized by the Allied French rearmament decisions the previous summer. The first French forces arrived in Italy in November 1943, and the corps was heavily involved in the fighting from the Battle of Monte Cassino in January 1944 until withdrawn from Italy for Anvil preparations in June 1944.

⁶⁶ General Charles de Gaulle, "General Order: Presidency of the Provisional (sic) Government of the French Republic," translated, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, General Staff of National Defense, No. 611/DN/3.TS, July 4, 1944; Patch, *Report of Operations*, 63-64; Headquarters, VI Corps, "Notes." By the time Toulon and Marseille became operational, close to one hundred tons of supplies had moved across the three landing beaches

insisted that CC Sudre return to his force no later than D+3. Although the official plan did not change, Truscott realized political direction would dominate decisions on French soil and directed preparations for creating an ad hoc American force. This became Task Force Butler, which allowed reduction in tensions across the coalition commanders.⁶⁷

Other integration and command and control concerns also generated ad hoc structural agreements in the final month. The Special Projects Operations Center (SPOC) fell under AFHQ and consisted of French, British, and American commandos directing the thirty partisan commando teams in southern France. Although SPOC nominally took direction from Seventh Army for information or sabotage efforts, Patch coordinated codification of this relationship by establishing the Provisional Number 4 Special Forces Group within his headquarters in June. By July, this entity contained sixty-six French speaking British and Americans who oversaw an estimated fifteen to twenty thousand trained and armed FFI operating in southern France. They ensured coordination with operational objectives, and an integrated staff planning effort for host nation partisan warfare.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 52-53; Truscott, *Command Missions*, 401-403; Miller, Robert A. *August 1944: The Campaign for France* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988), 114-115. The Seventh Army official report discusses the debate over attachment of CC Sudre as a reluctant concession from de Lattre only through Patch's insistence, but that de Lattre continued to insist on the Combat Command's return to French control no later than D+3. The official report provides no resolution, but notes that the decision was referred up to AFHQ. Truscott dedicated several pages in his memoirs detailing how these exchanges with de Lattre convinced him that he could not rely on CC Sudre for long after the French landed, and convinced him of the necessity to improvise another solution for armored mobility to exploit the landings. Miller also gives extensive treatment of this dispute between de Lattre and Truscott, and the decision and formation of Task Force Butler.

⁶⁸ Yeide and Stout, *First to the Rhine*, 20; Arthur Layton Funk, *Hidden Ally: The French Resistance, Special Operations, and the Landings in Southern France, 1944* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992) 74-79. In addition to the fifteen to twenty thousand armed FFI, there were an additional thirty to forty thousand more mobilized but unarmed. Funk details an unclear policy from the chain of command, Wilson to Patch, with SPOC in the AFHQ G-3 and a liaison to Seventh Army. It was Patch's intent to resolve this tension with the creation of the Provisional Number 4 Special Forces Group. General Wilson requested the authority for direct tasking of the FFI immediately after Overlord, and once Anvil was approved, but did not receive official approval until July 15. However, Patch's provisional group resolved tensions of coordination between AFHQ and Force 163. Direct coordination included approval of FFI operational plans through Patch and direction of priority target lists and delivery of advance supplies for FFI operations and caches for the FATF and assault forces expanding the lodgment. These arrangements are in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 68-69. Far from an unorganized rabble, the Seventh Army saw the FFI as a necessary shaping effort affording support to Allied operations. As the invasion date approached, the

Communication and control dilemmas also required resolution. Controlling the passage of French forces produced an agreement providing Armee B with the necessary communication systems, a US Signal Information and Monitoring (SIAM) Platoon, and a mix of US and French radio operators from Seventh Army aboard de Lattre's command ship. Patch's signal officer ensured the requisite training and equipment, and the SIAM Platoon demonstrates the close relationship on intelligence collection and sharing. Patch also provided a liaison detachment with de Lattre's command staff.⁶⁹

Seventh Army's Field Order at the end of July codified command post locations for army and the two corps, and provided an axis of signal communications for the French main effort seizing Toulon. Both corps shared a common operational net to Seventh Army, with separate nets for internal communications. Cipher encryption remained common between French and US units, though separate cryptography among internal units. Finally, the order attached US signal and collection units to French forces down to the Division level.⁷⁰

Integrated fire support also proved crucial. Shore Fire Control Parties working with Naval Gunfire LNOs ensured proper coordination between ground forces and naval gunfire. Coordination with British forces included British Forward Observers Bombardment (FOB) attached to each Shore Fire Control Party. Planning for Anvil incorporated this concept,

FFI already nominally controlled the area between the Aix-en-Provence and the Rhone River east of Grenoble in the high Alps.

⁶⁹ Armee B Memo to Seventh Army Commanding General, Subject: Operation Anvil- Command Liaison and Information during Voyages, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 30, 1944. This requested the communication platforms and personnel, and General Patch agreed to the request in a memo dated August 3, 1944. De Lattre's command ship was a Polish ship, M.S. Batory.

⁷⁰ Patch, "Field Order #1. The axis of II Corps signal communications was Cogolin-La Londe-Toulon. Each French Corps received a Signals Construction Battalion and a Communications Battalion. Each French Division received a Signal Repair Detachment and a Storage and Issue Section from Signal Depot Companies, while the Corps G-2s received SIAM Platoons, combined with various other photographic detachments.

augmenting French divisions and commandos with FOBs and Shore Fire Control Parties, training combined with their supported units.⁷¹

De Lattre was convinced in the necessity of naval artillery's neutralization of the heavy guns surrounding the landward defenses of Toulon. The naval force needed to approach within range of the extensive seaward defenses to affect the landward guns. Patch agreed with de Lattre, developing a combined arms solution crucial in securing Anvil's main objective. They integrated US air forces and navy simultaneously with French land forces during the port assaults, possible through the organizational combined integration for fire support and the signal plan.⁷²

One area the United States could not affect was the French personnel shortage throughout planning. The wide variance in personnel in the French coalition further hampered recruitment. Both US and French planners relied on the assumption that the French could recruit locally, with substantial support from the FFI.⁷³

Liaison officers (LNOs) became a crucial concern in this final month. Across echelons and potential friction points, Seventh Army created tactical and operational liaison across participating forces. French sub-headquarters provided LNOs to Seventh Army, and British and American LNOs established duty positions at Armees B Headquarters, I and II French Corps Headquarters, and with every French division. VI Corps exchanged LNOs with Combat Command (CC) Sudre, and between subordinate divisions. Deliberate LNO arrangements in Field Order Number 1 facilitated "landing, assembly, and organization" of II Corps and their passage

⁷¹ Memorandum from US Naval Forces Northwest African Waters to Captain R.A.J. English, USN, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, memo undated. The subject was the employment of British Forward Observers Bombardment (FOB) determined through the combined joint conference. The combined agreement attached the FOBs at the battalion level and used US Shore Fire Control Party equipment. Seventh Army attached fifteen Shore Fire Control Parties to French Divisions, augmented by ten FOB parties, and two FOBs each attached to the FATF and the French Commandos.

⁷² De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 55.

⁷³ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 52. The French continued anticipating larger numbers rallying to the French banner, as seen earlier in their estimates during the strategic debates.

through VI Corps on the beaches, ensuring understanding and transparency for each of the coalition headquarters. The order also established liaison between the French and the 1st SSF for transferring control to a French garrison on the Ile of Cros following seizure, and with the Seventh Army Near Shore Control Section. The latter coordinated logistical lines of communication from staging ports through the islands as forward supply staging areas. Finally, French naval Chief of Staff, Andre Lemmonier, and French LNOs representing de Lattre joined Patch's and Truscott's command sections on Admiral Hewitt's flag ship.⁷⁴

A final organizational component, developed from an innovation for amphibious invasions, played a critical role in coalition coordination. The Allies created the Beach Control Group for smooth and centralized coordination of joint logistics, and effective organization and passage of forces on landing beaches.⁷⁵ For Anvil/Dragoon, these task forces organized under Patch's control through his G4. The myriad of functions included personnel trained in shore operations, unloading methods, traffic control, maintenance of craft and vehicles peculiar to amphibious operations, and logistics. Beach group commanders supervised requirements-based training for these task forces, and almost all service troops held previous campaign experience.

⁷⁴ Combat Command (CC) Sudre referred to Combat Command 1 from the French 1st Armored Division in the French II Corps, named after its commander, Brigadier General Sudre. Provision of VI Corps LNOs from Headquarters, VI Corps, "Notes on the Conduct of VI Corps Operational Planning for Operation Anvil/Dragoon," August 10, 1944; further direction of LNOs from Seventh Army in Headquarters, Seventh Army, "Operations Memorandum Number 8: Liaison with French Units," August 3, 1944; including quote in Alexander M. Patch, "Field Order #1 (Anvil)," (Headquarters, Seventh Army, AG 370-C, July 29, 1944), Ref No. X-1317. Patch and Truscott's command elements on Hewitt's flagship, the USN *Catoctin*, eased joint coordination while providing access to the latest in communication technology.

⁷⁵ The idea for these formations originated from the Allied experience in Operation Torch. The functions included the arrangement and control for the movement of all personnel and vehicles from the landing craft to inland assembly areas, movement of stores from ships' holds and craft to dumps in the beach maintenance areas, organization of the beach maintenance areas, protection efforts, vehicle recovery, medical evacuation, communications, prisoner of war holding and transportation, supply depots, and assembly areas for arriving personnel and vehicles. A good overview of general beach group organization without the combined augmentation added by Seventh Army is found in Joseph and David Rogers, *D-Day Beach Force: The Men Who Turned Chaos into Order* (Stroud: The History Press, 2012), 14.

During the preparation, “It was ‘organization’ rather than ‘training’ which was stressed.”⁷⁶ They now added the role for passage of French follow-on forces.

Seventh Army organized a beach group for each assault division, with responsibility for operation of depots on the beach and movement of three thousand tons of supplies per day from ships to these depots. Additional responsibilities included obstacle reduction, anti-aircraft protection, communications, prisoners of war, decontamination sites, medical, personnel administration, and traffic control. Each beach group additionally planned both expected and potential passage missions for French forces, creating branch plans and options for Patch and the coalition Procedures established by the NATOUSA Invasion Training Center (ITC) created common understanding among all coalition forces.⁷⁷

Due to the added complications inherent in the passage of a coalition force, beach groups established an agency within each unit for the rigid control of landing, assembling, and immediate movement from the beach areas for the French forces. The French II Corps provided personnel who accompanied the beach groups during the assault, organized from the French divisions passing over the planned beaches. Their purpose included selection and reconnaissance of routes for passing the French forces, selection of assembly areas, and posting guide signs in French for onward movement. The beach groups thus formed a centralized, integrating organization, for reception, staging, and onward movement.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 83, 66.

⁷⁷ Patch, “Field Order #1. The order tasked the Alpha Beach Group with passage of two French divisions, Delta Beach Group with a be-prepared-to task passing one French division, and the Camel Beach Group for the landing and passage of CC Sudre, with a be-prepared-to mission for advancement towards Toulon upon capture for initial repairs while the French maintain the garrison.

⁷⁸ For the recommendation and outline of the reception, staging, and onward movement augmentation to the Beach Groups, see Memorandum from Office of the Beach Control Group, through the Assistant Chief of Staff, G4, to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G3, “Landing of French Units,” Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, Reference Number 59, July 17, 1944; for the requested French personnel accompanying VI Corps on D-Day, see Seventh Army Memorandum from LTC John G. Berry to Colonel Edwin C. Eller with concurrence by the Seventh Army G3, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 28, 1944.

The final month quickly incorporated combined planning protocols to solidify integration. Despite the abbreviated period, the operational history notes training was adequate primarily because most of the American and French divisions and service units had combat experience. The first two French divisions landing served in Italy with the Expeditionary Corps, while the follow-on division made an amphibious assault onto the island of Elba in May 1944 under de Lattre's command. Other French units spent twelve months training in North Africa.⁷⁹

NATOUSA organized the training in North Africa under the ITC, which re-located to Salerno for specific focus on Anvil forces in the spring of 1944. On June 10, AFHQ placed the ITC under Seventh Army for direct supervision of combined joint training efforts. Many of these efforts included French forces, while the bulk of the amphibious invasion training focused on the US assault divisions and the French commandos. Dedicated efforts with the latter ensured integration of Naval Shore Fire Control Parties and air support control communications personnel attached from Seventh Army. Air Support Control ran training programs directed by the Seventh Army G3 Air Liaison Officers (ALO), including French, British, and American officers focused at the division and corps level. Training ensured all ALOs operated under the same protocols and understanding, enabled by the centralized communications net. Combined amphibious training events culminated with a full-scale rehearsal on the night of August 7-8.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 71-72, 85-86. The US 3rd and 45th Divisions also had extensive amphibious experience, having just conducted the landings at Salerno the previous September, while all three US divisions conducted full scale amphibious invasion rehearsals on beaches along the Italian coast. This monograph focuses specifically on combined aspects of training and integration, and thus less on the training conducted by the US assault divisions. Also in the report, the Seventh Army staff detail the rush for integrated training occurring with the Seventh Army Provisional Task Force, dubbed the First Airborne Task Force, which mainly operated as separate Brigades and Battalions rather than as a Division which was only organized as a unit on July 15, 1944. In the hasty integration, multiple airborne training centers at airports around Rome initiated training, and the Division commander established a school for glider training near Rome, run by the 550th Glider Infantry Battalion.

⁸⁰ Information on the Invasion Training Center is found in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 74-76; specifics on waterproofing and water training for requesting and instructions for the French slotting is found in Headquarters, SOSNATOUSA Memorandum to Seventh Army, "Waterproofing," Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, 400.258 (SSORD), July 12, 1944, and in Headquarters, Force 163 Memorandum, "Waterproofing Instruction," Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, AG 411.8-C, June 18, 1944; combined training between French Commandos and VI Corps is found in General Alexander M. Patch Directive through VI Corps to the

IIIb. Final Sharpening- Negotiations and Plans

Coalition planning takes the form of negotiations. Broad and ambiguous strategic directives account for multiple divergent political factors, except in terms of the unified objective. Planners weighed national pride, psychological factors, and unit and national capabilities, while negotiating objectives, supply, and other matters.⁸¹

Initial negotiations surrounded French involvement in the assault based on strategic considerations. Despite US experience, they lacked an armored force for exploitation, negotiating attachment of CC Sudre to VI Corps for the assault. French concerns over the difficulties involved in seizing Toulon and Marseille, coupled with the tense interactions between Truscott and de Lattre, created the basis for TF Butler as a branch plan.⁸² Patch soothed de Lattre by reminding him of the honor and morale stemming from securing the primary objectives for the invasion. De Lattre later reminisced this was the “lion’s share” of the operation. Though the intense combat at the ports confirmed de Lattre’s concerns, French insistence on CC Sudre’s return by D+3 prevented the opportunity for complete isolation of the German 19th Army.⁸³

In May 1944, de Lattre submitted his plans to Patch for the seizure of Toulon, Marseille, and follow-on operations. Noticeably different French and US assumptions required

Amphibious Training Center, “Amphibious Training Directive, French Groupe de Commandos,” Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 20, 1944; the combined full rehearsal with French Commandos is referenced in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 89; air support and centralized air nets are referenced in Headquarters, Force 163, “Report on Air Support Control in Fifth Army,” Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, March 23, 1944. General combined training focused on water-proofing, water training, patrolling, wire, radio, map, physical training, and weapon ranges.

⁸¹ Devers, “Major Problems,” 5.

⁸² Truscott, *Command Missions*, 407. Truscott gave command of this task force to his assistant Corps Commander, Brigadier General Fred W. Butler, from which the unit derived its name. TF Butler consisted of staff and communication teams from the VI Corps Headquarters, the Corps Cavalry Squadron, 117th Reconnaissance Squadron, one armored field artillery battalion, one tank battalion minus one armored company, one tank destroyer company, one motorized infantry battalion, an engineer battalion, and service troops necessary to support this force.

⁸³ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 54. French leadership balked at the use of French forces in Italy with the planned invasion of their homeland ongoing.

reconciliations. The French assumed lift capacity for many more forces than was available for the operation, and proposed landing on both sides of Toulon. This divided the forces, reduced air cover, naval fire support, beach group capacity, while landing where the enemy coastal defenses were heaviest.⁸⁴

Patch used a delicate touch in his correspondence with de Lattre, pointing out the differences in assumptions. In addition to the smaller French force allotted, American planners assumed a more robust German defense with operational mobility and reserves. The other distinct difference was the French concern with an early seizure of Toulon, while the Americans placed greater priority on securing the foothold at the beaches. The commanders' negotiated solution kept US assumptions of German coastal defenses and operational mobility, shipping availability, and the priority of securing the foothold. However, Patch compromised and extended the US invasion area west as the French plan suggested, though maintaining all forces east of Toulon. This adhered closer to the French timeline for Toulon's seizure and landed the French forces closer to the objective.⁸⁵

Additional negotiations surrounded the French requests for Moroccan Goumiers involved in the operation. With Patch's reluctance to allow their participation based on atrocities committed in Italy, de Lattre relied on ambiguity, directing his staff, "When we speak of 1,000 goumiers, we think of 2,000 and we embark 6,000."⁸⁶ Patch consented only when the French provided the movement from their limited shipping. Additional negotiations traded objectives, forces, and shipping arrangements.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 17.

⁸⁵ Letter Patch to de Lattre, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, May 29, 1944.

⁸⁶ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 55-56. De Lattre and the French felt them essential due to their experience maneuvering in mountainous terrain. Patch allowed the requested Goumiers and their mules for support in the target area by D+5.

⁸⁷ Memorandum from Colonel John S. Guthrie, Seventh Army G3, to Chief of French Mission, Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 23, 1944. Planners resolved French force concerns with agreements on the Special Service Force objectives at Levant and Port Cros, the French

The final plan left broad strategic objectives unchanged, though negotiations yielded seventeen different plans before Seventh Army published Field Order 1 in late July.⁸⁸ A beachhead east of Toulon provided the base for follow-on operations, seizing Toulon and Marseille for strategic logistical efforts. Dragoon forces would then exploit the penetration up the Rhone Valley to Lyon, linking up with forces advancing from Normandy. Assumptions placed Toulon's capture by D+15 - 20 and Marseille's capture by D+40 - 60. Beginning with D-Day, August 15, 1944, AFHQ gave Dragoon theater priority.

Seventh Army, supported by naval and air forces, divided the broad plan into six ground assault forces, six naval forces, and an air plan encompassing three phases prior to H-Hour targeting enemy movements, lines of communication, and coastal defense, and a fourth phase supporting the assault. FFI provided valuable assistance across all four phases. Between April 28 and August 10, the Mediterranean Allied Air Force dropped more than 12,500 tons of bombs on southern France.⁸⁹

Commandos at Cape Negre, and the French forfeiting an infantry regiment from the 3rd Algerian Division to allow enough shipping bringing their 2nd Armored Combat Command ashore for assistance in capturing the ports.

⁸⁸ Atkinson, *The Guns at Last Light*, 202. As indicated before, the operational name shifted from Anvil to Dragoon at the beginning of August, based on concerns regarding potential operational compromise.

⁸⁹ Details on the final plan are from a brief prepared for Patch by his staff found in Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence, July 10, 1944; details on the bombing are found in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 62-63. Phase I for XII Tactical Air Command occurred from D-35 to D-10, focused on impeding enemy movements into southeastern France from Carcassone Gap and from northern Italy, while maximizing damage to rail and highways in and west of Rhone. Phase II occurred from D-10 to D-2, and continued air attacks with special focus on Aries, Avignon, Aix, the Durance crossings, and routes from Genoble to southern France. Phase III occurred on D-1 until H-Hour. This maximized support for the airborne drops while focusing air attacks on the coastal batteries and coast defenses in the assault area. Finally, Phase IV occurred from D-Day forward with support to the daylight assault focused on coastal batteries and coastal defenses within limits of the aircraft, along with supporting requests for close air support.

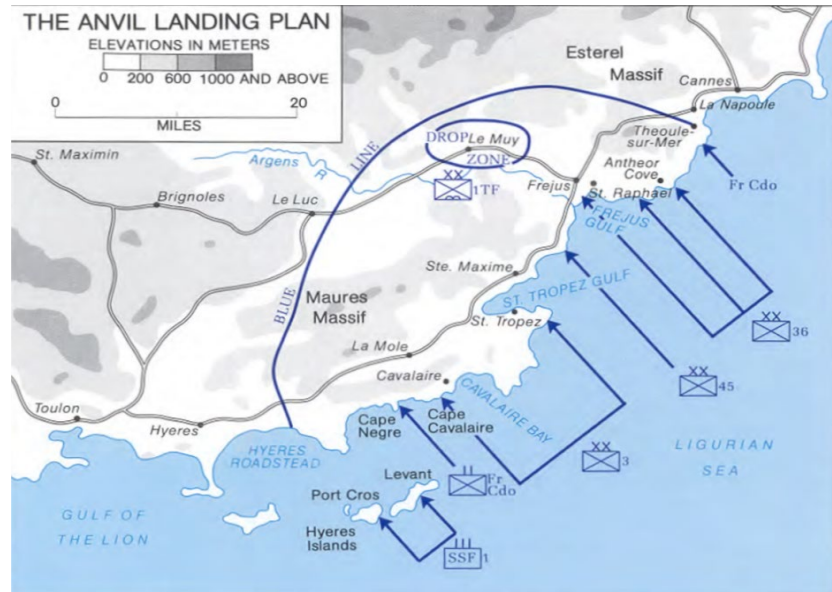


Figure 1. The Anvil/Dragoon Landing Plan. Jeffrey J. Clarke and Robert Ross Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1993), 76.

Eighth Fleet's plan oriented on establishing Seventh Army ashore and supporting their advance westward for the capture of Toulon and Marseille. They further supported the army's build-up and maintenance over the beaches until the ports' opening. Overall responsibility for the invasion transferred from Admiral Hewitt to Patch once Seventh Army established ashore.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ The Eighth Fleet subdivided into six task forces, each with a specific mission. Four of these corresponded to a landing force, Alpha, Delta, and Camel for the three VI Corps divisions, and the Support Force establishing the 1st SSF and French Commandos on their objectives, then supporting Seventh Army's advance westward. The Alpha Attack Force further prepared landing advance units of French Armee B on D+1 and unloading Air Force special equipment on the Island of Port Cros. Delta Force prepared assistance for Alpha in landing Armee B in the St. Tropez area, while Camel prepared to land CC Sudre on the St. Raphael Antheor beaches, and the second French CC once the beaches were cleared. Alpha and Camel would further neutralize enemy gun batteries on the flanks of the assault. The additional two naval forces consisted of the Naval Control Group and the Aircraft Carrier Force. The Control Force entailed naval beach control and established and operated naval fuel facilities. It established navigational and air beacon markers and conducted diversionary operations while protecting the assault convoys from enemy surface or submarine units. Finally, it provided convoy control and shipping escort outside the assault area. The Aircraft Carrier Force provided close air support and transferred aircraft to airfields captured ashore by Seventh Army. The remaining details of the final plan come from Patch, *Report of Operations*, 57-63. Each of the ground task forces was identified by a code name in the plan, which are not included in this monograph for ease in describing the operation. These code names were: FATF, Rugby Force; 1st SSF, Sitka Force; French Groupe de Commandos, Romeo Force; French Naval Assault Group, Rosie Force; VI Corps, Kodak Force; and II Corps, Garbo Force.

Four of the six ground task forces provided shaping efforts ahead of H-Hour. The FATF blocked from the high ground north and east of Le Muy and north of Girmaud to prevent movement of enemy forces into the assault area, clearing Le Muy on D-Day enabling glider landings. They would also prepare for on-order bridge destruction. Control of the FATF passed from Seventh Army to VI Corps upon contact, then returning on-order as the army reserve.

The 1st SSF and French Commandos would land on the left flank prior to H-Hour. The 1st SSF would neutralize enemy defenses on islands of Port Cros and Levant. The commandos would destroy enemy defenses on Cape Negre, followed by blocking the coastal highway and seizing the high ground north to protect the assault force's left flank. Operational control shifted to VI Corps upon link up, then on-order to army reserve. The French Naval Assault Group with a demolition team, coordinating with the Western Naval Task Force, would land on the right flank in the vicinity of Pointe des Trayas the night prior to D-Day to disrupt the Cannes-St. Raphael and Cannes-Frejus roads before falling back on Seventh Army's right flank. Subsequently, they were to move to the high ground north of Agay and conduct link up with VI Corps.⁹¹

VI Corps would assault with three reinforced infantry divisions and one French armored combat command at H-Hour over beaches from Cape Cavalaire to Agay, clear to the "Blue Line," secure airfield sites between Frejus and Le Muy, and exploit to the northwest while maintaining contact with the French II Corps and protecting the right flank of the army. The Blue Line was the initial limit of advance for assault forces prior to securing Toulon, defined as approximately twenty miles inland. VI Corps sub-divided into three infantry division assault forces, with 3rd Infantry Division (3ID) forming the left flank at Alpha Beach, 45th Infantry Division (45ID) in the center over Delta Beach, and 36th Infantry Division (36ID) followed by CC Sudre on the right flank over Camel Beach. The French II Corps, consisting of 1st Free French Division (1DMI) and

⁹¹ The details on the Rosie Task Force are found in Headquarters, Seventh Army, "Directive: Operation Rosie," to Commander, French Naval Assault Group, August 1, 1944.

the 3rd Algerian Division (3DIA), would land over beaches in the St. Tropez-Cavalaire area on D+1, pass through the left flank of VI Corps, and seize Toulon, followed by Marseille. The 9th Colonial Division (9DIC) with attached Gourmiers would follow around D+9 in the Le Lavandou-Hyeres area, and the remainder of the 1st French Armored Division (1st DB) by D+25.

Seventh Army developed a branch plan for French landings on unprotected beaches to the flank if the assault forces could not expand out from the beachhead. The initial French plan provided the backbone. If needed, it required a massive joint coordinated effort given the significant seaward defenses in the vicinity of Hyeres. These arrangements, brought about through determined planning under complicated circumstances, improvising organizational components, and fostering integration between coalition force, launched one of the most successful amphibious invasions in US history.⁹²

IV. Operation Dragoon: A Sword's Broad Strike

Side by side, wearing the same uniform and using the same equipment, battle experienced French and American soldiers are fighting with a single purpose and common aim.

—Lieutenant General Alexander M. “Sandy” Patch, *Seventh Army Report of Operations*

As the coalition completed final preparations for Dragoon, Generalfeldmarschall Johannes Blaskowitz, commanding German Army Group G, worked feverishly with limited resources to stop what one historian referred to as the “worst-kept secret of the war.”⁹³ Despite anticipating the invasion, Seventh Army’s deception efforts successfully prevented discovery of the location for the assault until the moment troops began landing. By July 1944, Army Group G owned the two thirds of France below the Loire River, and many of the soldiers were an international conglomeration, or refitting after tough fighting on the Soviet front. Their

⁹² Reuben E. Jenkins, “Operation ‘Dragoon’ - The Breakthrough,” *Military Review* (September 1946): 10-16.

⁹³ Breuer, *Operation Dragoon*, 34.

motivation largely stemmed from an intense fear, of capture by FFI showing little mercy, and of their own officers with orders to shoot those retreating.⁹⁴

Blaskowitz's reserve did contain one of the best remaining divisions in France, the 11th Panzer. It occupied Bordeaux for employment against a southern invasion, though Hitler owned the release criteria. Blaskowitz's additional reserve, the 157th Division, remained contained to the north fighting resistance fighters in the mountains. The Luftwaffe and the Kriegsmarine also provided support.⁹⁵

At Avignon, General Friedrich Wiese commanded Nineteenth Army, tasked with defending southern France. A month earlier, three of his eleven divisions shifted to help stem the Normandy invasion, weakening his 250,000-man force. Wiese's three corps headquarters and eight remaining divisions positioned their best troops east of the Rhone, along the Cote de Azur, and precisely in the way of the impending coalition. These included the 244th Division defending Marseille, the 242nd Division defending Toulon, and the 148th Division defended the coast from Agay to the Alps.⁹⁶

The extensive Mediterranean defenses spanned one hundred miles of casemated positions and block houses. The defenders saturated the approaches to the beaches with mines, well-sighted

⁹⁴ The German composition and disposition are located in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 33-34. Soldiers in Army Group G represented Poles, Armenians, Ukrainians, Georgians, and Azerbaijanis in addition to Germans. Colonel A.O. Connor, Committee Lead, "Studies of Recent Operations, Report of Committee No. 2, Subject: Operation Anvil" (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff School, 1946), Supplement Number 4. Deception operations included increased bombing attention west of Marseille, paratrooper dummies, electronic simulators creating ghost convoys, and heavy radio discussions regarding landings. Although the Germans knew the assault was coming, they were completely surprised by where it occurred. German General Major Bieringer, from the German Nineteenth Army, later stated that they shifted two divisions to Genoa to meet an attack there which never materialized.

⁹⁵ Colonel Connor, "Studies of Recent Operations," Supplement Number 2, Algiers Phase; Breuer, 21-23. The 11th Panzer Division consisted of twenty-six Mark IVs and forty-nine Mark Vs. The Luftwaffe had 186 aircraft for use in southern France. The 6th and 7th Kriegsmarine in support consisted of twenty-eight torpedo boats, nine submarines, five destroyers, and fifteen patrol craft.

⁹⁶ Headquarters, Seventh Army, *Seventh Army Operations in Europe, 15 August 1944 - 8 May 1945: G-2 History*, June 3, 1945, 1-2, 8-9.

barbed wire and machinegun positions, and flame thrower crews. Wiese additionally covered all potential landing zones for airborne and paragliders with poles and stakes.⁹⁷

Seventh Army embarked across five ports on two continents under the careful command of the respective Near Shore Control Parties. The 853 vessels of American, British, French, Greek, and merchant ships forming the naval task force converged from ten convoy routes on an assembly area west of Corsica by August 14, 1944.⁹⁸ Despite the massive effort required to coordinate the coalition dispersed across so many staging areas, the smooth execution relied on this dispersion. Between the air bombardment and FFI sabotage, destruction of rail, highways, and telegraph and telephone wires was highly successful. Critically, FFI severed the cable linking the German Army Group G with forces in northern France.⁹⁹

Just after midnight on August 15, the first man of Operation Dragoon touched French soil. By design, this belonged to a Frenchman. Commandant Marcel Rigaud landed alone on the beach at Rayol in his “rendezvous with France,” establishing a guide light for the assault force.¹⁰⁰ The three groups of French commandos following Rigaud drifted westward due to currents and low haze, landing a mile further west. Realizing they were in the wrong location, the first two groups surprised the German defenders and overran a pillbox and artillery, worked their way back and cleared Rayol Beach, and established two roadblocks on the coastal highway. The third group, capitalizing on surprise and FFI, seized the town of La Mole.¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, 1st SSF landed on the off-shore islands of Port Cros and Levant. The Levant coastal defense battery was a cleverly disguised dummy, and the small German garrison

⁹⁷ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 35-41; Breuer, *Operation Dragoon*, 25. French conscripts provided the majority of the manpower for construction of the extensive defense-works and fortifications.

⁹⁸ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 93-96.

⁹⁹ Colonel Connor, “Studies of Recent Operations,” Supplement Number 4; Breuer, *Operation Dragoon*, 80-81.

¹⁰⁰ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 64. Rigaud was captured in 1940, but escaped through Spain.

¹⁰¹ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 108-109; Clarke and Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine*, 98-100.

surrendered early on August 15. The Germans on Port Cros put up stiffer resistance, falling back to prepared fortifications which proved impenetrable to air and naval fire. Its surrender on the 17th required a deliberate assault, delaying installation of the radar equipment and relief by the French army and navy base personnel. However, by D+2, the remaining Rangers transferred to the mainland, and French personnel garrisoned both islands.¹⁰²

An hour after these assaults, the French Naval Assault Group landed on the rocky shore of Deux Freres Point past the right flank of the VI Corps assault. The small group ran into barbed wire and a minefield, alerting the German defenders who killed many of the commandos before the remainder surrendered. Despite this setback, it furthered the deception efforts of a main attack in the Genoa area.

The FATF took off from airfields around Rome early on D-Day. There is controversy over accuracy of the drops, though the official history records most landed near their objectives. At least some troops landed away from their assigned locations, as one group of mis-dropped paratroopers landed near St. Tropez, and with FFI assistance, captured the town. The FATF established a network of screens inland from the assault beaches, repulsed counterattacks, conducted sabotage, dispersed the German LXII Reserve Corps, and captured the commander and principal German communication center by the 17th.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Patch, *Report of Operations*, 106-108; Clarke and Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine*, 98-100. The *Report of Operations* details how the German battery on Levant was the subject of much staff deliberation during planning. Despite multiple reconnaissance pictures showing the three 6.5-inch batteries, the French planners insisted these guns were destroyed and abandoned during the German seizure. The American staff discounted this as “typical emotional Frenchmen.” A blatant example of the lack of trust on intelligence application, Seventh Army committed a significant force of Rangers to determine the French staff were correct.

¹⁰³ Truscott recounts the capture of the LXII Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Neuling in Truscott, 419-420; additional details on the First Airborne Task Force operations on D-Day are referenced in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 110-115; Clarke and Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine*, 102-104. The FATF capture of St. Tropez accomplished one of the objectives for 3rd Infantry Division later on D-Day. It was also during this operation in which Corporal Mel Clark and a British paratrooper enjoyed small unit coalition friction while communicating the challenge and password.

For two hours prior to H-Hour, the naval fire support group bombarded the forty-five miles of assault coastline. Ceasing just before H-Hour, mine sweepers and a final barrage of naval rockets led the way for the assault craft. Between 0800 and 0810, the US VI Corps assaulted the beaches on three divisional fronts. Facing a surprised German force and quickly overcoming light resistance from mortars, snipers, and minefields, the American assault forces cleared the beaches and began expanding inland. Only one temporary setback occurred, on the right flank at St. Raphael.¹⁰⁴

Patch viewed the capture of the St. Raphael port, and the town of Frejus on the coastal highway, as critical for D-Day. They enabled CC Sudre's planned advance up the Rhone Valley, the best route inland, the only airfield in the area, and a crucial port basing area. However, Patch and Truscott placed the most experienced division, 3ID, on the left flank, and the least experienced division, 36ID, on the right. Patch wanted his best division passing and maintaining contact with the French II Corps during their assault on Dragoon's main objectives.¹⁰⁵

The 3ID landed on the left flank, secured the St. Tropez peninsula, established the western Blue Line, and gained contact with the French Commandos. Now operationally under VI Corps control, the commandos advanced along 3ID's southern flank, protecting from multiple German counterattacks, and clearing the Cape Benat peninsula. Advancing rapidly, 3ID contacted the paratroopers in St. Tropez and with 45ID on the right flank.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 117-118, 138-140. Working to clear out the German mines in front of the assault beaches, the Americans employed an innovation, drone boats laden with explosives to destroy mines closer to shore.

¹⁰⁵ Truscott, *Command Missions*, 396. As the best route up the Rhone Valley, Frejus through Lyon, Napoleon used this same route during his re-entry into France in 1814.

¹⁰⁶ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 119-127; Clarke and Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine*, 108-113. The 3ID landed with 7th Infantry Regiment and 15th Infantry Regiment abreast at Alpha Red and Alpha Yellow on Cavailaire Bay, then passed 30th Infantry Regiment on 7th Infantry's right flank and continued advancing to the north and west. Each regiment task organized with four amphibious tanks, Naval Fire Shore Control Parties, and French LNOs. The amphibious tanks were launched from Landing Craft- Tanks (LCT) two thousand yards from the beach. Audie Murphy earned one of his DSCs during action clearing a German strongpoint on the St. Tropez peninsula.

The 45ID landed along four narrow beaches in the center. The fiercest resistance occurred during house to house fighting clearing Ste. Maxime. Truscott and his French LNO came ashore here mid-afternoon of D-Day. That night, 45ID contacted the paratroopers outside Le Muy, and established the central Blue Line by the 16th. FFI assisted VI Corps as they advanced, providing advanced warning of German defenses, and in some cases, joining the assaults. Truscott praised the high quality of their local knowledge, information, and fighting ability.¹⁰⁷

The delay on the right flank stemmed from a controversial decision. The east two beaches consisted of poor exits. The first regiment landed, passing the second to attack St. Raphael from the rear. The third regiment planned an assault on St. Raphael from the front at H+6. When Admiral Spencer S. Lewis, commanding the amphibious assault force in this sector, decided to avoid the frontal assault on St. Raphael and shifted those forces to the eastern beaches, Truscott was livid. Although 45ID seized Frejus and St. Raphael from the rear on the 16th, this placed the follow-on forces a day behind schedule.¹⁰⁸

Although a coordinated branch plan, Lewis did not account for the consequences for the French combat command, preventing CC Sudre's planned exploitation. Truscott adjusted Sudre's

¹⁰⁷ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 127-135; Truscott's praise is found in Truscott, *Command Missions*, 420; Information on Truscott's LNO is found in Truscott, 414. The 45ID landed with the 157th Infantry Regiment assaulting Delta Red and Green Beaches on the left, and 180th Infantry Regiment assaulting Yellow and Blue Beaches on the right.

¹⁰⁸ The plan called for the 141st Infantry Regiment landing at Camel Blue and Green at H-Hour, then passing 143rd Infantry Regiment through to attack St. Raphael, with the 142nd Infantry Regiment assaulting St. Raphael, Camel Red, from the front. See Patch, *Report of Operations*, 138-143; Truscott's response to the decision is found in Truscott, *Command Missions*, 414. Frejus provided the only rapid route for exploitation of the assault, the port at St. Raphael for rapid unloading of necessary supplies for Toulon, Marseille, and the pursuit, and contained the planned landing area for CC Sudre. The right flank in the Camel Beach area also contained the most fortified German positions from the 242nd Division in the sector, and the Germans there put up the greatest resistance to the landings. Both the US 142nd and 143rd met fierce resistance while expanding out from the beaches to attack Frejus and St. Raphael. The 36th Division Commander previously approved the alternate landing plan Admiral Lewis committed to as a branch if the fortifications at St. Raphael were too strong, Admiral Lewis could not reach the division commander at the crucial point, and fell back on previous understanding for the decision without fully grasping the ground force impact. Camel beaches also experienced the only effective attack against their beachhead by the Luftwaffe on the night of the August 15th.

landing to the 45ID beaches, near his established VI Corps headquarters. CC Sudre consolidated at Le Muy and attacked west through heavy resistance in the gap between 45ID and 3ID.¹⁰⁹

The beach groups adapted and reorganized for the expedited landings, prioritizing supply depot establishment and unloading of troops and equipment, in addition to the mine and lane clearing operations. They also reversed the prioritization of ammo and gas in favor of the latter, establishing supply depots, opening roads, and controlling traffic. Protecting the force, they additionally managed prisoners of war, established smoke screens, conducted antiaircraft operations against the Luftwaffe, and assisted medical evacuation of casualties. On the left flank, they prepared to pass the French II Corps toward their objectives.¹¹⁰

Early on D+1, Patch, Hewitt, and Lemmonier visited Truscott's headquarters ashore. Patch encouraged Lemmonier's speeches to local French citizens, increasing the emotional jubilation of locals celebrating the liberating French leadership. Together, all three inspected the II Corps passage area on Alpha Beach. Late on August 16, the Seventh Army headquarters established at Hotel Latitude, a resort west of St Tropez, providing quick access between the two corps, assuming supply functions, and operationalizing the Beach Control Group.¹¹¹

The hasty reorganization of the beach group on the left flank helped expedite French landings as Patch ordered the acceleration from August 16-19. De Lattre shifted their assembly areas forward off the beaches, increasing momentum toward the ports, reducing beach congestion, and enabling easier passage. Four hours after receiving the order, de Lattre's ships arrived in the bays of Cavalaire and St. Tropez by 1900 on August 16. Three divisions and de

¹⁰⁹ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 151; Truscott, *Command Missions*, 418.

¹¹⁰ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 145-149. Seventh Army's history did record difficulties resulting from failure of small units landing to obey the signals from beach groups creating some confusion based on improper landing locations and submerging vehicles. The 40th Engineer Beach Group on the right flank also developed and cleared the landing strip for artillery observation near Frejus, while in the center the 36th Engineer Beach Group did the same on the St. Tropez peninsula, and the 40th prepared the port of St. Raphael for operations by D+3 under the Seventh Army Beach Control Group.

¹¹¹ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 146-147; Seventh Army, *G-2 History*, 1-2.

Lattre's headquarters landed on the left flank of the assault area. Assisted by the beach groups, de Lattre quickly maneuvered his forces into their assembly areas and began relief-in-place with the Americans, expediting the attack on Toulon by six days. De Lattre linked up with Patch that night, establishing crucial shared situational understanding, German dispositions, the return of CC Sudre and the commandos, and updating coordination plans between the two Corps.¹¹²

Patch found himself mediating several disputes between Truscott and de Lattre over the succeeding weeks. The first occurred over the speed of the French advance on Toulon. Patch still believed Toulon and Marseille "would be a tremendous morale factor for the French," and destroy German hope in southern France.¹¹³ They remained his priority, despite Truscott's contrary urgings. As Patch restrained VI Corps' advance, Truscott felt de Lattre delayed his advance too long. De Lattre insisted he needed forces still downloading for the attack. When Truscott recommended 3ID take Toulon, Patch understood the difficult political repercussions this entailed. Between de Lattre's advanced assembly areas, and his desire to remain abreast of US positions, de Lattre expedited his movement toward Toulon after Patch's urging.¹¹⁴

The second dispute involved the command arrangements for CC Sudre. Truscott's preparation enabled VI Corps' rapid organization of the ad hoc TF Butler. Prior to returning, CC Sudre provided a crucial outflanking maneuver at Brignoles for 3ID, leveraging its speed and armor.¹¹⁵ As the French II Corps approached Toulon, de Lattre expedited plans for capturing Marseille, continuously focused on maintaining pace with the Americans, cementing French honor, and avoiding relegation to the Alps after capturing the ports. Patch accepted this risk based

¹¹² Patch, *Report of Operations* 151-152; Truscott, *Command Missions*, 423; De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 72-73; Jenkins, "Planning."

¹¹³ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 152.

¹¹⁴ Truscott credited Patch's political understanding of the French and his ability to convince de Lattre, as found in Truscott, 421-422; de Lattre writes that he decided on boldness and surprise despite the inferiority in men and material relative to the Nazi defenders in Toulon as the better course of action over adhering to the initial plan in De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 71.

¹¹⁵ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 70.

on surprise, belief in French training, and French morale in their homeland, despite two reinforced German divisions in fortified positions at the ports.¹¹⁶

The combined beach groups labored from August 17-20 unloading the entire II Corps. Rapid landings enabled a quick turn to Corsica forty-eight hours ahead of schedule with the remaining II Corps forces. 1DB, reinforced by CC Sudre on the 19th, maintained contact with VI Corps on the right, while continuing the attack west to Aix. The expedited landing and 1DB provided the additional forces de Lattre needed to begin operations against Marseille.¹¹⁷

As II Corps began encircling Toulon on August 19, Patch found himself working through another dispute over logistical arrangements. Truscott's plans involved three mutually-supporting division maneuvers, protecting the French right flank while attacking north to isolate Weise's Nineteenth Army. De Lattre requested additional munitions for his attack, jeopardizing Truscott's pursuit for lack of fuel. Although the Seventh Army staff disapproved de Lattre's request, Patch overrode them, providing additional artillery ammunition from already depleted stocks. Patch assured Truscott this also expedited French relief of 3ID forces, freeing VI Corps for a limited attack up the Rhone.¹¹⁸

Following a breach of the Hyeres defenses east of Toulon by the French commandos, while equipment and forces continued arriving across the beaches in a "real gun race," de Lattre initiated his attack on the outer perimeter of Toulon on August 20th.¹¹⁹ De Lattre's close collaboration with the FFI provided critical tactical intelligence on German positions and freed II

¹¹⁶ Jenkins, "Planning."

¹¹⁷ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 71-73. While sending the Tabors north with 3 DIA, de Lattre committed the 9 DIC in the gap between the 1 DFL and the 3 DIA, and retained a task force with 9 DIC in reserve from CC2.

¹¹⁸ Clarke and Smith, 126-128; De Lattre wrote that Patch gave de Lattre "a free hand, the munitions and my C.C.1" in De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 75; additional details on the command discussions and decisions in Clarke and Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine*, 137; and Truscott, *Command Missions*, 421.

¹¹⁹ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 97. De Lattre initiated his attack with the 1DFL and 9 DIC.

Corps through FFI assistance with mop up operations. However, the partisans still required assistance from the regular French forces against the Nazis. With II Corps now controlling the area west of the Blue Line, de Lattre coordinated for air and naval bombardments of the St. Mandrier peninsula.¹²⁰

Employing the Gourmiers, II Corps meanwhile completed encirclement and control over all routes out of Toulon. The 1DB relieved 3ID forces at Aix, reaching the outer defenses of Marseille by the 20th, while receiving reports of 11th Panzer operating in the area. Continuing reorganization for simultaneous assaults, de Lattre shifted his headquarters west for command over both battles. As the French pressed the attack directly into the outer ring of Toulon's forts, the entrenched German artillery "punished all our movements," and the encircled Germans fought with fanaticism. Small unit tactical actions broke out everywhere, and the Gourmiers and FFI, seized multiple points by "gangs, and by groups of two or three...this very special kind of warfare was just their kind of business."¹²¹

Prior arrangements ensured superb coordination between the French forces and the US air force and navy during the seizure of Toulon and Marseille. First in Toulon from August 18-24, then shifting priorities to Marseille from August 25-27, the air force bombarded the coastal

¹²⁰ French coordination with the FFI is found in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 168. The FFI discovered their inability to match German forces at Marseille, where they attempted to seize control of the city before the II Corps arrived. This helped force de Lattre's hand in decided to attack Marseille simultaneously. Coordinated air and naval bombardment information is found in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 160, and Jenkins, "Planning." The antiaircraft fire hit twenty-eight aircraft with three destroyed.

¹²¹ The encirclement of Toulon and outskirts of Marseille are found in de Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 97-98, 100-101, and Clarke and Smith, *Riviera to the Rhine*, 138-139; The quotes are found in de Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 85, 87; additional information on the German defense is found in Jenkins, "Planning." Aix was actually in the French area of operations, but 3ID spilled across this boundary through confused fighting during initial integration of French forces as they advanced from the beaches. De Lattre shifted his headquarters from Toulon to Aux-en-Provence and placed the complete assault on Toulon under the command of the now full strength 9 DIC, with the armored force from CC2 in support, while 3 DIA, the Tabors, and the rest of 1 DB attacked to seize Marseille. The Gourmiers and 1DB worked together closely fighting through hedges, mines, and broken walls on the outer defenses of Marseilles against a stiff defense, while other elements attempted outflanking unsuccessfully to the northeast. The report on 11th Panzer came from a combination of allied and FFI intelligence, relayed to de Lattre through Patch.

batteries despite heavy flak. Simultaneously, the navy reduced the German batteries harassing the French, screened by French artillery smoke, and directed by French observation posts with liaison shore fire control parties. The navy began port opening mine clearance by the 26th.¹²²

Final resistance in Toulon collapsed on the 27th, with surrender on the 28th enabled by French forces' local knowledge.¹²³ On August 26, the US 13th Artillery Brigade landed and moved into action at Marseille as a planned reserve provided by Patch. The 13th silenced the German 155mm coastal batteries by the 28th. Patch's operations officer credited de Lattre's "judgment in thus dividing his forces" enabling Marseille's surrender on the 28th as well. Seventh Army's history credits the entire coalition that the "seemingly brilliant tactics of the French were made possible only by the combined efforts of the entire Seventh Army."¹²⁴

During the pursuit over the ensuing three weeks, Seventh Army's campaign took on its most integrated character as the French I Corps landed on VI Corps' right, officially creating Armee B. Under Seventh Army, the three corps attacked north in the direction of Lyon. This also became the most contentious period. On August 25, Patch ordered VI Corps' advancement on the east bank of the Rhone, and a reconnaissance-in-force on the west bank from de Lattre, while fighting in Toulon and Marseille still raged. As the ports fell, Patch also directed the French move east to the Alps, relieving the FATF protecting the right flank. Patch wanted to shift French forces to the eastern flank in preparation for a US junction with forces from Normandy, supporting Eisenhower's intent for a continuous US frontage with the French on the far right.¹²⁵

¹²² Patch, *Report of Operations*, 159, 166; Devers, "Operation Dragoon;" Jenkins, "Planning."

¹²³ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 93. As the French attempted early efforts at parlaying with the German commander, a signal officer in the 9 DIC found and repaired a telephone cable because his house was just down the street from the severed communication node.

¹²⁴ The quote crediting de Lattre is found in Jenkins, "Planning;" The quote crediting combined efforts is from Patch, *Report of Operations*, 170; many of the US-specific efforts aiding in the capture of Marseille are included in the footnotes in de Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 110; additional information on the final collapse of German resistance is found in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 166-169.

¹²⁵ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 121-122.

De Lattre exploited the reconnaissance opportunity, intending to not remain “behind our friends, but at least beside them.” He established a garrison in both Toulon and Marseille, then shifted additional forces across the river, joining the 1DB in pursuit. The French still retained the only armored division available. De Lattre’s orders sending the reduced division northwest of Marseille helped increase their utility during the initial stage of the pursuit north. CC Sudre again maintained contact with VI Corps.¹²⁶

A series of negotiations coordinating the pursuit occurred from August 25 - September 1. The commanders agreed the French would seize Lyon, and only then would II Corps transfer the remaining elements east, uniting Armee B’s zone between the Swiss frontier and the Saone. A further agreement delayed Armee B’s relief of the airborne forces closer to the sea, allowing their continued use against the Germans. Although splitting Armee B with VI Corps in the center created additional liaison, communication, and supply challenges for both nations, de Lattre argued that “the strictly military decisions of the French command of the army of liberation could not leave out of account the effect of our national pride.”¹²⁷

The Rhone river posed a significant obstacle to de Lattre’s forces. French engineer units were only at half strength this early in the campaign, and only one bridge escaped destruction. De Lattre’s engineers improvised, floating the heavier equipment and tanks across by pontoons, while also using a system of ferries coordinated through their local French networks. Patch shifted a company of amphibious trucks to the French on the 28th and followed with eight US landing craft at Arles. With this assistance and their own ingenuity, they accomplished the impossible by the 29th. By the 31st, the French II Corps was abreast of the US VI Corps.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 118, 125-126.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, *History of the French First Army*, 119; the proposal of changes is found in de Lattre, 123; the debates regarding Lyon are found in Truscott, *Command Missions*, 434. The FFI requested a general uprising of partisan forces in Lyon on 30 August, but Patch directed them to wait for further coordination with US and French regular forces.

¹²⁸ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 169; Jenkins, “Planning;” De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 125. Seventh Army planners did not foresee a major river crossing for several more weeks, and the

As the French advanced, their ranks swelled with volunteers. The first FFI unit officially integrated into Armee B on August 31. While the Americans remained east of Lyon, the French entered from the west on September 2. FFI helped coordinate the maintenance of law and order. The 1DB and 45ID attacked retreating Germans north of Lyon, where the 11th Panzer defended the flank of the retreating Nazis whose resistance stiffened as their lines contracted.¹²⁹

Patch again adjusted Seventh Army operations, focusing on pursuit and annihilation of the Germans within their two likely escape routes. He therefore delayed rearranging the commands or shifting the French to the eastern flank. VI Corps pursued toward the Belfort Gap, while Armee B attacked along the northwest bank of the Saone toward Dijon and Strasbourg.¹³⁰

De Lattre interpreted this “abrupt change” as Truscott’s doing, believing this prevented his regrouping and 1DB from effectively pursuing the Germans west of the Saone. The French commander responded by adjusting his own command, formalizing I Corps and making things more difficult by creating an army headquarters under Seventh Army. He advanced his two corps toward the Rhine on either side of VI Corps “whom I did not despair of beating to these two objectives.” De Lattre remained at Aix to “keep contact with Patch’s command.”¹³¹

Supply management and distribution remained a point of contention during the pursuit. The main issue was fuel. Supplies lines extended across a six-hundred-mile turn-around from bases around the Mediterranean to the three corps. Armee B’s technical bureau expertise from

materials did not exist on shore at this point in the campaign. The river’s swift current extended across 250 yards in most areas.

¹²⁹ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 127; Patch, *Report of Operations*, 254-256; Jenkins, “Planning.” The 1DB’s attack north of Lyon killed another several hundred Germans and captured two thousand.

¹³⁰ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 258-259, 269.

¹³¹ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 123, 134-135. De Lattre gave temporary command of elements on the right flank of Seventh Army to his Chief of Staff, along with part of his Army headquarters. Subsequently, General Antoine Bethouart arrived from Italy and took command of I Corps, while General Joseph de Goislard de Monsabert assumed command of II Corps. To the eastern flank, de Lattre dedicated the 2 Moroccan Infantry Division (2 DIM), which was still landing over the beaches, 3 DIA, and 9 DIC.

service units gained from the Expeditionary Corps helped, while the beach groups managed distribution based on Patch's priorities. De Lattre complained that the French performed "acrobatic feats" distributing and using what little fuel arrived from the beaches while, not anticipating requirements, the Americans were "anxious to satisfy their own demands."¹³²

Truscott also complained about the shortages and constant shifting of priorities. He described efforts circumventing Seventh Army and going directly to the navy for additional supplies, while reserving most of his criticism for the French. Truscott felt they constantly appealed for more, despite his belief the French maintained greater respective organic transportation and fuel.¹³³

The French I Corps became operational on September 5-6, necessitating further agreement on a boundary with VI Corps. Truscott cemented this agreement with coffee and cocktails. After conducting a combined attack with the FATF into the Maurienne Valley, I Corps advanced toward Besancon-Belfort. German resistance stiffened, and they counterattacked across the front on September 8th and 9th. To the east, the 19th Army and elements of 11th Panzer temporarily halted I Corps' momentum, but both the II and VI Corps defeated these attempts. The French successfully liberated Dijon, while VI Corps captured Besancon on 10 September. Through September, the airborne troops and French I Corps eliminated the threat to Seventh Army's supply lines on the eastern flank. The II Corps meanwhile now officially sought link up with General Patton's Third Army near Neufchateau. Eisenhower directed the French 2nd

¹³² De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 126; information on the supply technical services is in de Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 57; further information on supply shortages is in Jenkins, "Planning."

¹³³ Truscott, *Command Missions*, 437. Truscott insisted that Seventh Army did everything possible to remedy the situation as they controlled supplies, but were hampered by the delays in arrival of Army transportation and service troops, and the difficulty in securing labor. VI Corps wound up loaning 10,000 gallons of fuel to the French 1DB at Lyon.

Armored Division south from Paris to conduct link up with the French II Corps. By September 14, the forces established firm contact, officially joining Dragoon and Overlord.¹³⁴

Seventh Army now regrouped Armee B on VI Corps' right. Field Order Number 5 suspended further advance pending reorganization, although German counterattacks continued. The VI Corps established contact with the US Third Army to the west, and the rest of Armee B moved north to the junction of the French-Swiss-Italian frontier. The 6th Army Group became operational September 15, containing both Seventh Army and Armee B, and the Dragoon forces passed to the SHAEF.¹³⁵

De Lattre reminisced that “too often [there was] a belief that it was obtained easily because of the weakness of a demoralized enemy yielding in advance.” Despite ferocious fighting in Toulon, Marseille, St. Raphael, the St. Tropez peninsula, and withstanding continuous counterattacks from a desperate enemy, Dragoon was an enormous success. Within thirty days, Seventh Army cleared all southern France, killed, wounded, or captured nearly 100,000 German troops, and seized and destroyed thousands of German vehicles and pieces of equipment. This came at a cost to Seventh Army of approximately 4,200 killed, captured, or missing, and 8,700 wounded. Toulon and Marseille doubled the supply chain availability for forces in France, while Marseille alone provided fourteen divisions and an average daily distribution of 8,000 tons of supplies. On September 15, the first Liberty ships arrived in Marseille. General Devers

¹³⁴ Details on I Corps operations on the eastern flank are found in de Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 135, and Patch, *Report of Operations*, 246-247; the agreement between VI Corps and I Corps is found in Truscott, *Command Missions*, 440; orders for II Corps counterattack and link up are found in Patch, *Report of Operations*, 269-272, and Jenkins, “Planning.” On the night of September 10-11, a patrol from a French armored reconnaissance group west of Dijon met a patrol from the French 2 DB at Sombornon. On September 12, reconnaissance forces from the French 1 DFL also linked up with a patrol from the 2 DB near Chatillon-sur-Seine. The linkage of Overlord with Dragoon resulted in the further German surrender of eighteen thousand troops, including three generals and an admiral.

¹³⁵ Patch, *Report of Operations*, 271-272; Jenkins, “Planning.”

acknowledged, “The capture of these two ports by the French in such a short period of time will go down in history as one of the greatest jobs they accomplished in the war.”¹³⁶

V. Analysis: Wielding the Unwieldy- Inertia, Friction, and Broad Aims

[O]ne country may support another’s cause, but will never take it so seriously as its own.

—Clausewitz, *On War*

The Franco-American coalition for Operation Dragoon achieved rapid integration through operational planning in strategic ambiguity, commander patience and understanding, creation of important organizational structures, and centralized logistics. Continued planning despite ambiguity which is the norm rather than the exception, and the ability for commanders to understand coalition politics and conduct effective negotiations focused on the mission’s objectives and intent created an environment which took advantage of both host nation and US capabilities. Organizational structures created included staff integration, LNOs at critical nodes and down to the battalion level, planning considerations for communication, capability augmentation of armor, signal, and fires, training centers, and reception, staging, and onward movement. These combined also enabled flexibility in application of combined organizations, and largely mirrored current operational considerations found in JP 3-16.¹³⁷ Finally, the centralized agreement on French structure and equipping through the JRC enabled common understanding of shortages, supply, and requirements during the campaign.

The command structure established resembles JP 3-16’s definition for a lead nation command structure in which all member nations place their forces under the control of one nation, with a dominant lead nation command and staff arrangement and strict national integrity of subordinate elements. However, elements of an integrated structure existed as well with staff composed of all member nations and integration of subordinate elements to

¹³⁶ De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 95; The information on the “capture of these two ports” and information on outcome are found in Devers, “Operation Dragoon,” 34.

¹³⁷ US Joint Staff, JP 3-16, III-13 – III-43.

the lowest echelon necessary for accomplishing the mission. Important differences also existed in terms of the US dominance of the command structure and control over the resources supplying the logistics and equipment for the French, as well as having the benefit of experience during similar previous operations and a common doctrine.

The doctrine informing future multinational structures may not fit perfectly into ad hoc situations, so understanding adaptation as well as critical organizational tenets becomes key to managing rapid integration of a coalition. Integration in Dragoon occurred at staffs down to the regimental level, and in cases like the Beach Groups, down to the battalion level. Seventh Army achieved success in their command structure by focusing on capabilities, and integrating multinational structures and capabilities both to fill gaps and shared understanding while maintaining unity of command.¹³⁸

Despite the structural command arrangement for achieving unity of effort, as the Prussian theorist Carl von Clausewitz noted, complete synergy is attained only “if the contingent promised...were placed entirely at the ally’s disposal and he were free to use it as he wished.” This is rarely the case. Instead, “the auxiliary force usually operates under his own commander; he is dependent only on his government, and the objective the latter sets him will be as ambiguous as its aims.” In that case, “the inertia, the friction, and the outside interests that always emerge, especially in allied armies,” creates continuous tension and requires negotiations throughout planning, preparing, and execution of a coalition operation.¹³⁹

Planners on Force 163’s small staff in Algiers planned in ambiguity as strategic debates on whether the operation would occur, as well as size, timing, and location. It is evident that missing during the initial month was a commander who could dedicate not just

¹³⁸ US Joint Staff, JP 3-16, II-4 – II-5

¹³⁹ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), book Eight, chapter Six and Nine, 603, 636.

energy, but persuasion, negotiation, and understanding to the problem set absent specific strategic guidance. Patch created the necessary structure once integrating his own IV Corps staff into Force 163, and then bringing de Lattre's French personnel into the staff sections through March and April. Previous experience forming a task force across cultural lines absent doctrinal solutions at New Caledonia, and with the Marines on Guadalcanal, served Patch well over the five months available for planning.

French understanding of the operational environment, and US understanding of the administrative systems necessary for an army in combat worked in synergy during these months of planning. The shifting objectives from the Riviera to Cannes to Bordeaux created a process of coordination among the allied planners that transcended national boundaries. Devers notes in an article on combined operations that directives remain broad by necessity accounting for multiple divergent political factors except in terms of the "ultimate object."¹⁴⁰

The Americans and French could also rely on the strategic rearmament agreement, and the multinational structure through the JRC managed by SOSNATOUSA established the previous year. US understanding of their own requirements helped produce estimates for the French, absent dedicated force allocations because of the similarity of tables of organization and equipment established through the strategic JRC agreement. Finally, despite continuous dissension between strategic and political leaders over Anvil, Patch's own force of personality kept the planners focused on the process under an assumption of execution with the highest possible forces and minimum shipping arrangements. The twin capability augmentation of French operational environment understanding, and US technical and administrative expertise worked together to speed integration and operationalization of forces once allocation of forces occurred in June 1945.

¹⁴⁰ Devers, "Major Problems."

In May, the US planners sought confirmation of command arrangements between Force 163 and Armee B. While correspondence between the AFHQ chief of staff and the French LNO confirmed command arrangements for Anvil which both Force 163 and Armee B planners acknowledged, official operational control over Armee B by Seventh Army did not occur until July 7th, one month prior to the operation. This meant the relationships between the commanders and between the staffs were crucial to coordinating in the absence of formal arrangements.¹⁴¹

It is not a secret that gregarious and egotistical personalities struggle with the dexterity in understanding necessary for coalition warfare. Patch, and even Truscott, despite his continuous disputes with de Lattre, deftly managed the navigation of this precarious negotiation. De Lattre recounted a story of Patch in Italy splitting a flower given him on slopes of Vesuvius by a young girl for luck and proposed that the two of them "each keep half and it will take our two armies side by side on the road to victory."¹⁴² These symbolic gestures become important to managing the coalition relationships, but so does substance.

JP 3-16 lays out tenets of multinational operations fundamental for success stemming from Eisenhower's remarks on the requirement for "mutual confidence" making coalitions work. Commanders must demonstrate respect, rapport, knowledge of partners, patience, mission focus, and trust and confidence.¹⁴³ With de Lattre upset about his lack of involvement in the initial assault, Patch appealed to his sense of national pride seizing the principal ports and critical French cities of Marseille and Toulon. Additionally, Patch appealed to de Lattre's ambition, reminding the French commander that the two ports were the main objective for the entire invasion. When de Lattre submitted a plan at odds with

¹⁴¹ From the Collection of Seventh Army Planning Papers and Correspondence: Letter from LTG Gammell to General Bethouart; Letter from General Bethouart to AFHQ; internal memorandum from General Wilson to AFHQ.

¹⁴² De Lattre, *History of the French First Army*, 75.

¹⁴³ US Joint Staff, JP 5-0, I-3 – I-4.

Seventh Army's, Patch again negotiated a compromise which extended the US lodgment west, but kept all US and French forces east of Toulon based on Seventh Army's planning assumptions. The short time remaining required adherence to as many assumptions as possible that planners made over the previous five months of strategic debates and uncertainty. It was a delicate touch and a negotiated solution which ultimately served the interests of both parties by appealing to these separate national interests.

Simultaneously, the Americans and French understood the American lack of armor as a capability gap which the French filled with CC Sudre. Still, this was an imperfect total solution, and recognition of the national interests and politics at play, Truscott developed the branch plan for TF Butler. When Patch directed Butler's formation after agreeing for the return of CC Sudre to de Lattre on August 18th, VI Corps was ready for the adjustment. The final negotiation of plans occurred with all combined headquarters collocated at Naples, easing coordination across the national staffs. This sped understanding and developed the trust and rapport, as Patch held almost nightly dinners and the staff worked directly with their French counterparts for final arrangements.

Patch also mediated multiple disputes between Truscott and de Lattre. The first occurred over the perceived slight to de Lattre by Truscott leaving him out of the discussions and employment decisions for CC Sudre. With Sudre attached to VI Corps for the assault, Truscott's visit to Sudre's headquarters without de Lattre created a rift requiring Patch to intervene directly. Even more difficult were negotiations during the operation itself. Patch balanced the desire of the French participating in the exploitation up the Rhone Valley, ensuring Armee B's entrance into Lyon first. At the same time, Seventh Army gained continued use of their only armored division in the campaign as 1 DB continued its drive west of the Saone River.

Frustrations over supply, both ammunition and later fuel also absorbed coalition negotiations during the pursuit. To do this, Patch held Truscott back from his initial desire to

exploit north from the Blue Line, maintaining focus on the mission's primary objectives, and using the Beach Groups to reorganize supplies and facilitate provision of additional artillery munitions to the French for seizure of Toulon and Marseille. During the pursuit, Patch reallocated fuel to the French to ensure the continued armored advance on the west flank, taking advantage of an unexpected opportunity, and then maintaining the French on the flank for link up with the French 2DB with Patton's Third Army from the north. Truscott also assisted with provision of fuel to 1DB in Lyon, after coordinating directly with du Vigier to maintain contact on the seam between VI Corps and II Corps. Throughout, Patch balanced the needs, focused on the capacity of each national armed force component's capability to maintain themselves based on requirements and politics, without arbitrarily diverting resources from one nation to another. They were calculated decisions.¹⁴⁴

Ultimately, Patch negotiated the art of coalition politics through deftly understanding the separate national interests, while focusing on where divergent capabilities assisted the mission regardless of nationality. His personal involvement in the negotiations, and appeals to both ambition and national honor, along with proximity and strong relationship forming at Naples, assisted in this effort.

With the personal negotiating capabilities between Patch, de Lattre, and Truscott, along with the strategic structural agreements through the JRC and command of Seventh Army and Armee B, the Seventh Army planners developed specific organizational plans which further facilitated rapid integration given the short time available once forces were assigned in June. The first step was integrating the staff at Force 163. This occurred almost immediately on forming the small staff in Algiers in January 1945 at the joint level based on lessons from previous amphibious invasions. However, through the first two months, de Lattre remained focused on the strategic debates, and Force 163's staff dealt with a dearth of

¹⁴⁴ Devers, "Major Problems."

continuous leadership or clear directives. The first attempt to integrate as a coalition staff occurred in March, with full integration in April. Key to the ability to rapidly integrate three months later was the organization of Seventh Army staff, and now the focused leadership of both Patch and de Lattre. Patch took command at the beginning of March and immediately worked to integrate his staff with French officers. With de Lattre also struggling to build Armeé B's staff, it is a testament of their understanding for coalition forming that they managed to achieve complete organization in agreement one month after Patch assumed command.

As Devers pointed out, organization at the army level differed from that employed by the Anglo-American coalitions. This avoided redundancy, which helped expedite understanding because all officers on the staff held a function. Integration did not occur at the deputy level, but across the lower staff sections where detailed planning and analysis occurred, like the signal intelligence section, propaganda, and civil affairs.¹⁴⁵

The staff also implemented additional coordination measures including a dedicated Allied Service Liaison Detachment with Seventh Army and Armeé B staff in the Adjutant General sections translating every correspondence to both English and French. Orders demonstrated above referenced specific US doctrinal publications for reporting and tactics, and the staff secured these publications and provided them to the French through the LNOs and translation sections. Orders were clear, and only published after coordination and draft sharing enabling parallel planning between the small staff at Algiers and de Lattre's Armeé B staff. This organizational method mixes elements of lead nation and integrated command structures found in JP 3-16. The United States formed the dominant operational headquarters, and final campaign decisions rested with the Americans, though Patch continued recognition

¹⁴⁵ Force 163, "G-2 Outline Plan."

of French buy-in throughout. However, the integrated staff design helped ease coordination and reduce redundancy.¹⁴⁶

Direction for the French partisan forces also occurred through specific organizational arrangements. Initial coordination went through SPOC at AFHQ, but as planning progressed, this became unwieldy. Patch created the Provisional Number 4 Special Forces Group within his staff, and gained operational control directly for the coordination of organized French resistance in support of Anvil. This increased direct liaison and use of FFI during execution, with VI Corps receiving direct support as they advanced up the Rhone Valley, and de Lattre used FFI not only to assist in capturing Toulon and Marseille, but eventually to replace his personnel losses. This direct assistance from FFI also became an important argument by Eisenhower with Wilson and Churchill for opening another front in France rather than attacking through the Balkans.

Liaison officers additionally furthered coordination. These LNOs were discussed as early as March as the first French integration occurred. The Seventh Army Field Order in July codified the initial coordination arrangements, incorporating LNOs in certain cases down to the battalion level. This became crucial as small units coordinated and conducted link up on the coastal road with the French Group of Commandos on the western and eastern flanks, as well as maintaining contact on the Franco-American advance up the Rhone.

Additionally, planners leveraged partner capabilities to fill national gaps. The gap in US armor during the invasion was filled by Sudre and the 1DB, enabling outflanking German forces at Brignolles. Additionally, French provided superior local knowledge when interacting with the FFI in Marseille and Lyon, while also enabling local resistance through pride in the French forces. Flexibility and coordination with the French Commandos protected 3ID's flank during the initial landings. Simultaneously, the Americans augmented

¹⁴⁶ De Gaulle, "General Order."

the French in areas including employment of joint fires, communication, and technical supply specialists. The US Fire Shore Control Parties with the French enabled joint fires to reduce the batteries in Toulon and Marseille, and the French LNOs operating with the US artillery brigade supporting de Lattre outside Marseille proved critical to effective fires. Additionally, the signal teams and equipment provided to de Lattre enabled continuous coordination between Seventh Army and Armee B throughout the operation. This became important in tactical changes effected on the ground by the expedited landings, and increased speed of the Franco-American attacks. Finally, as the US inspections of French forces recognized the lack of equipment and technical training, Seventh Army augmented personnel to assist with Near Shore Control Parties in loading, while leaving command details to French unit commanders at each port, along with expediting training for the administration sections of Armee B during the final month prior to the operation.

In terms of training, although limited time was available for combined training, Seventh Army focused on those few friction points in the coalition campaign. The ITC assigned directly to Seventh Army standardized the training for all forces across the Mediterranean Theater, increasing understanding across cultures in Armee B. The French commandos and Naval Assault Group conducted training direct with the 1 SSF. The rest received understanding through attendance and standardization of the training regimen across the theater, regardless of nationality.

The Beach Control Group proved critical to easing integration at the tactical level. A situationally-dependent task force which developed from previous amphibious operations, this organization composed itself around a nucleus of engineer battalions, then attached the additional capabilities. This included supply, medical, and prisoner of war interrogation, holding, and transport. The engineers not only continued reduction of obstacles and mines, freeing the assault forces, but created passage lanes and coordinated unloading and direction of follow-on forces. For Seventh Army, these forces were French. Therefore, Seventh Army

and Armee B attached French liaison sections to this critical node. Signs directing forces were multi-lingual. Organization of supply depots and dumps facilitated onward transportation to both French and US forces. Even as de Lattre shifted his assembly areas forward to expedite his attack, the Beach Groups adjusted, while accounting for Patch's reprioritization of supply and unloading. This was only possible through the unique, combined-joint task organization of these groups at the specific point of greatest confusion.

Despite initial friction in direction across both US and French forces on the landing, the multi-functional nature of the Beach Groups, under the direction of the Seventh Army G4, enabled rapid passage of follow on French forces and maintenance of logistics across the coalition. These organizations are similar in concept to both a current Brigade Engineer Battalion (BEB) in a modern Brigade Combat Team, or an Army Field Support Battalion (AFSBn) for sustainment functions.¹⁴⁷ AFSBn's uniqueness also allows multi-functional support, while enabling coalition integration for passage and sustainment.

There is no doubt that the centralized JRC process aided the Seventh Army sustainment function. However, this also required additional considerations from the coalition structure. The Seventh Army G-4 section realized the profound shortage of equipment and technical training expertise within Armee B as they began inspections of French units in May. Some of these shortages resulted from the lack of importance ascribed to them by the French, exacerbated by the lack of direct command authority. Understanding of the JRC structure and usage of the same tables of organization and equipment enabled credible assumptions to initiate shipping of supplies for the operation, but did not solve the equipping and training

¹⁴⁷ For information on the BEB, see US Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-34, *Engineer Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014) 1-6; information on AFSBns is found in US Department of the Army, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 4-91, *Army Field Support Brigade* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 2-4. The BEB in a Brigade Combat Team is based around an engineer organization, but also includes the Brigade's primary signal and intelligence assets. AFSBns provide specialized and tailorable sustainment support and serve as key synchronizers of related acquisition, logistics, and technology to Army units.

shortfalls. Thus, the G-4 planners arranged to make up shortages by cross-leveling stocks through SOSNATOUSA. Centralization of control for both JRC and US supply in the Mediterranean through one headquarters assisted this effort. This also enabled training on cross-leveled equipment providing some measure of capability prior to August. Receiving operational control cemented these gains as experienced French technical personnel arrived from the French Expeditionary Corps to manage gaps filled by Seventh Army personnel.

Seventh Army additionally accounted for French basing, using a combination of US Near Shore Control Parties while leaving individual small unit coordination to French commanders who understood their units with US LNOs. Seventh Army also assigned bases specific to the French Army, helping rapid reallocation of priorities through the Beach Control Group to the Western Naval Task Force running the convoys between the beachheads and the bases. The French Base 903 in Corsica was especially critical to shortening the round trip for the naval convoys when priorities shifted.

VI. Rapid Coalition Forming: The Future Weapon of Choice

When the United States partners with other states, we develop policies that enable us to achieve our goals while our partners achieve theirs. Allies and partners are a great strength of the United States.

—President Donald J. Trump, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*

Coalition warfare was not new in WWII, nor will it go away regardless of what future complexities manifest in war in the US Army's operating environment. There were several important distinguishing features that provide relevance for studying Dragoon over its more famous precursor, Overlord, among others. Employing a relatively new force in the French First Army, Armee B, created for operation in its homeland, along with a very short period from five weeks to two months at the longest, from allocation to operation. The former provided challenges in negotiating supply and equipment, along with understanding how to take advantage of differences in capabilities rather than viewing them as a detractor. The latter element challenges

rapid integration absent a period of habituation and norming, which required planning in strategic ambiguity, negotiations on operations, and unique organization components.

Despite some reviews of the operation as a “Champagne Campaign,” the nature of fighting, especially in the French sector at Toulon and Marseille, and the desperation of the final counterattacks by the German 19th Army belies this reductionist view. However, there remains a lack of literature on this campaign. What does exist focuses on the strategic debates prior without regard to impacts on the planning, the campaign’s utility to the destruction of Nazi Germany from the basing established at the ports of Toulon and Marseille without how the coalition integrated efforts and forces, or the individual tactical contributions of forces from a US perspective around soldiers like Audie Murphy, or from a French perspective of the honor regained, rather than on the operational integration and negotiated solutions to complex coalition problems. This paper seeks to fill the gap in this literature through understanding the planner’s challenges establishing the campaign plan in an integrated manner, the national negotiations occurring over objectives and supply arrangements occurring between the operational commanders, and unique organization components that overcame the challenges of integrating the French forces, themselves a coalition, and US forces, combined with the British and Canadian forces through which norms already existed.

Seventh Army succeeded in Dragoon through effective negotiations bridging operational and strategic considerations through personal relationships and structural agreements, multi-echelon organizational design, and centralized supply arrangements. Patch, de Lattre, and Truscott worked effective negotiating solutions through understanding of both perspectives, and a continuous focus on the common objectives. None of them submitted entirely to their own national capabilities, and strove to maximize combined capacity. The staff command arrangements encompassed elements from both current doctrinal lead nation and integrated structure.

With the United States in the lead, especially in terms of centralized supply based on the JRC and NATOUSA relationships, they integrated staff sections, better than by the simple inclusion of LNOs at headquarters without creating redundancies by replicating staff section responsibilities. Most of this occurred at junior staff levels, cementing the lead nation, while ensuring cooperation and coordination where plans developed. The staff established a section for direct coordination with organized FFI in France, while augmenting the US task force with armor and the French task force with joint fire and signal capabilities. The commonality in theater training ensured shared understanding of procedures, while specific procedures established within Seventh Army plans ensured the filling of gaps. Finally, the RSO handled by the Beach Parties served as an ingenious arrangement which combined multiple functions with personnel from US and French forces collaborating at the point of maximum friction at the passage and continued onward movement of personnel and supplies.

The future operating environment envisioned by the US Army's multi domain battle concept only increases the likelihood of coalition employment as the joint force combats anti-access technology. As the US Army cannot predict where this will occur, but with heightened tensions across both state and non-state actors, the chances of employment outside a common command structure provided by alliances like NATO increase. In describing the joint planning process during operational integration of multinational forces, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Planning*, points to a "Multinational Force (MNF) Standard Operating Procedures" document drafted by military planners in the Indo-Pacific theater as an important example. Innovations like the MNF SOP as starting points for discussion become important to bridging the gaps across coalitions.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ The MNF SOP was written by a large group of Pacific nations under a US effort to increase the speed of response, interoperability, mission effectiveness, and unity of effort in MNF operations... while reducing the "ad hoc nature" in crisis. See US Joint Staff, JP 5-0, II-19. The MNF SOP is available at <http://community.apan.org/>.

Aside from personalities, the organization and doctrine establishing combined procedures are the most critical components to enabling rapid integration of forces. Continuing other paradigms like the operationalization of Theater Security Cooperation exercises like Pacific Pathways also further combined understanding of future partners.¹⁴⁹ Understanding how to maximize capability gaps across nationalities and using multi-functional elements like the BEB or AFSBn capabilities combined with other nationalities helps streamline functions otherwise unwieldy in a coalition. Together these considerations help understand how to integrate a coalition force rapidly, absent a period of forming and normalization which occurs in many other past coalition settings and for which elements like NATO train continuously. Approaching the study of Dragoon from this perspective helps understand future rapid coalition integration.

¹⁴⁹ Pacific Pathways is an ongoing effort begun under Pacific Command (PACOM) in 2014, which combines multiple existing exercises into an operational deployment of forces. These joint forces provide advanced posturing in the PACOM Theater, while building readiness, advancing joint and interagency interoperability and access, and enhancing regional partner capability and collaboration.

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