

COMMUNIQUE NO. 5

8 June 1944

Bayeux has fallen to our troops, which have also crossed the Bayeux-Caen road at several points. Progress continues despite determined enemy resistance. Fierce armored and infantry fighting has taken place.

Contact has been established between our sea-borne and airborne troops.

The steady build-up of our forces has continued. During the night, forces of E-boats made unsuccessful attempts to interfere with the continual arrival of supplies.

Support fire from Allied warships continued throughout yesterday.

Our airforces have given invaluable support to the ground troops on all sectors of the front. Advantage was taken of favorable weather over northern France yesterday afternoon and evening to attack enemy rail and road centers, concentrations of men and materiel, and to bomb airfields and other targets up to 100 miles in advance of our troops. More than 9,000 sorties were flown in tactical support of land and naval forces.

Out for the second time yesterday, heavy bombers with fighter escort in the late afternoon attacked airfields northwest of LORIENT, and railroad bridges and focal points in the area from the Bay of Biscay to the Seine. The bombers encountered no enemy fighter opposition but our fighters reported shooting down 64 enemy aircraft in combat and destroying more than a score on the ground.

After bombing rail and road objectives in the immediate zone of operations, medium and light bombers flying as low as 1,000 feet just behind the enemy lines, strafed gun emplacements and crews, staff cars and trains. Allied fighter bombers and fighters were also extremely active, flying armed reconnaissance over the assault area, covering naval operations and carrying out low level attacks on bridges north of Carentan and in the Cherbourg peninsula.

Coastal aircraft attacked naval enemy units in the Bay of Biscay and Channel areas and at least two E-boats were sunk.

Last night heavy bombers in strong force continued attacks on railroad centers at Achères, Versailles, and Massy-Palaiseau and Juvisy on the outskirts of Paris and a concentration of enemy troops and transports some twelve miles south of the assault area.

Anti-tank guns, motor transports and considerable supplies were delivered to our ground troops by very strong air transport and glider forces.

Small enemy air formations attempted attacks on the beaches and night intruders appeared over East Anglia.