

March 27, 1943
Washington, D.C.

Subject: Development of Army Operational Technique.

In France in 1918 a Division attack order was sometimes fifteen or twenty pages long. After the war continuous efforts were made to cut down this verbosity but even as late as 1927 when I took over the Infantry School I found a battalion order three and four pages in length.

It is very hard to break down a highly developed technique which had indoctrinated a great many officers as a result of trench warfare procedure.

Finally in 1930 I obtained through General von Blomberg (the head of the German Army whom Hitler fired because he married a carpenter's daughter of doubtful reputation), the data on recent German maneuvers where divisional attack orders were not only brief but at times purely oral.

Through the following years the matter still was one of bitter discussion but it was not until the preliminary to the maneuvers in Louisiana in 1940 that we succeeded in cutting divisions down to a simple operational statement based on the high state of training of combat teams (CT's) within the Division, consisting of a regiment of Infantry and a battalion of Artillery with or without attached supporting units.

With this too lengthy explanation I am attaching a copy of the order for the attack on Oran by the First Division (15,000 men) issued shortly after the landing on November 9th by Terry Allen, the Division commander who is now in command of the operation at Maknassy. All our field orders had five paragraphs, each one dedicated to a certain purpose; the first, to information regarding the enemy and our friendly troops; the second, to the general plan; the third, to the details for the operation; the fourth, to supply matters; and the fifth, to the location of command posts (CP's).

General Marshall

Hq 1st Inf Div
RENAN
2210, Nov 9, 1942

FO #3

1. Omitted.
2. Div atks at 0715 Nov 1942 (See operation map scheme maneuvers and time of atk). CC B atks from S at 0730 in conjunction with 1st Div.
3. a. CT 18 see operation map.
1st Bn CT 18 follows CT 18 after mopping up around St CLOUD
- b. CT 16 less 1st Bn, see operation map.
1st Bn CT 16 (brought forward in trucks follows in Div res).
- x. Civilian snipers caught red-handed will be summarily shot.
Nothing in Hell must delay or stop this atk.
4. Attached.
5. Div. CP initially follows 16th Inf.

ALLEN
Maj Gen