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24 May 1945.

HEADQUARTERS, V Amphibious Corps, C/O FPO, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

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1st Endorsement on
4thMarDiv ltr 01971
over 156/nhb dtd
18 May 1945.

RECORDED
INDEXED
ON 9 August 1977
Unclas per [Signature]

From: The Commanding General.
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps.

- Via :
- (1) The Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.
 - (2) Commander, Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet.
 - (3) Commander, Fifth Fleet.
 - (4) Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas.
 - (5) Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet.

Subject: Operations Report - Iwo Jima, 19 February to 16 March, 1945.

1. Forwarded.

2. The 4th Marine Division landed in the assault on Iwo Jima on 19 February on beaches raked by enemy artillery, mortar, and small arms fire, and in spite of difficult beach and terrain conditions quickly established a beachhead in its zone of action. Thereafter, until 16 March, this Division pushed the attack against the enemy relentlessly, suffering some 8,000 casualties, including 1,731 dead.

3. The following comments are submitted concerning the comments and recommendations contained in Section V of the basic report:

a. The desirability of operating continuously with the same naval units is obvious, and where at all practicable this should be done even at the expense of minor delays.

b. It is believed that efforts should be made in future operations to neutralize antiaircraft defenses at the earliest practicable time in order to permit precise low-level bombing and the use of rockets against installations capable of interfering with the assault.

c. The necessity for deliberate destruction of blockhouses, pillboxes, weapon emplacements, and other installations interfering with the landing has been emphasized in previous correspondence.

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02/162
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Operations Report - Iwo Jima, 19 February to 16
March 1945.

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d. In connection with the request for "earthquake" bombs, this Headquarters was informed by higher authority that this was not feasible, particularly in view of the late receipt of the request. It is considered, however, that the heaviest available bombs should be used against fortified areas capable of interfering with the landing and repeated requests have been made by this Headquarters for the employment of such bombs during pre-D-day and pre-H-hour attacks.

e. With the present organization of Division Artillery and in order to permit a uniform tactical loading of assault battalions to be landed in LVTs, a minimum of 23 LSTs are required for lifting the Division. An additional LST for employment as an auxiliary command ship would be highly desirable.

f. Numerous LVTs were lost in the operation and in the forward area rehearsal because of inadequate recovery arrangements. LST commanders should not only be impressed with their responsibility for the recovery of tractors in distress but provisions should be made for adequate recovery vessels down-wind from the operation areas to save LVTs and their crews. The LSD appears to be ideal for this purpose.

g. It is considered that control of LSTs and LSMs should be delegated to using agencies as far as practicable consistent with the requirement for general overall control. This can be accomplished much more easily if sufficient LSTs, LSMs, LCTs, and other landing craft are available for the needs of all TRANSDIVs and TRANSRONS. The constant shifting of assignments necessitated by an overall shortage of such vessels resulted in confusion and reduced operating efficiency.

h. The inadequacy of the training of replacement drafts furnished all Divisions of the Corps is appreciated. These units were received too late to permit the necessary integration into the Divisions with the result that when they were committed to combat they were unfamiliar with the leaders of the smaller units to which assigned, were consequently less efficient, and suffered disproportionate casualties.

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02/162
0298B

Operations Report - Iwo Jima, 19 February to 16
March 1945.

UNCLASSIFIED

i. The inadequacy of aerial photography after the initiation of the attack has been previously pointed out by the Headquarters. It is understood that steps have been taken to provide the proper type planes and qualified personnel to permit the desired photographic coverage. This coverage is particularly important in uncovering targets well forward of the front lines, in order that they may be engaged before the assault troops get so close as to prevent the employment of naval gunfire, artillery, and aircraft bombing.

j. In connection with the need for a heavier and more powerful direct fire weapon than the Bazooka, steps have been taken to procure better weapons for this purpose. The assignment of a mortar battalion to each Division is probably not practicable at this time.

H. SCHMIDT.

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HEADQUARTERS,
FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE,
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

18 May, 1945.

From: The Commanding General.
To: The Commandant of the Marine Corps.
Via: (1) Commanding General, V Amphibious Corps.
(2) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.
(3) Commander, Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet.
(4) Commander, Fifth Fleet.
(5) Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas.
(6) Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet.

Subject: Operations Report - Iwo Jima, 19 February to 16 March, 1945.

References: (a) PacFlt Conf ltr 1CL-45 dtd 1Jan45.
(b) FMF Pac GO 66-44 dtd 27Dec44.
(c) VAC LanFor Spl O 2-45 dtd 26Jan45.

Enclosure: (A) Subject report.

1. In accordance with the references, enclosure (A) is forwarded herewith.

2. In order to preclude the necessity of forwarding all required copies through the chain of command, an advance copy has been transmitted directly to each addressee.

C. B. CATES.

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Operations Report - Iwo Jima, 19 February to 16 March, 1945.

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Comdt MCS	(1)	RCT 24	(4)
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ComPhibTraAtlantic	(1)	14th Mar	(5)
CG TroTraPac	(1)	4thEngrBn	(1)
CG TraCenFMF Camp Lejeune	(1)	4thPionBn	(1)
CG TraCenFMF Camp Pendleton	(1)	4thTkBn	(1)
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FOURTH
MARINE DIVISION
OPERATIONS REPORT
IWO JIMA
19 FEB TO 16 MAR
1945

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T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

BASIC REPORT

Section I	- Planning and Preparation.
Section II	- Movement to Objective.
Section III	- Ship to Shore Movement.
Section IV	- Narrative of Operation.
Appendix No.1	- Progress of Attack.
Section V	- Comments and Recommendations.

ANNEXES

ABLE	- Administration.
BAKER	- Intelligence.
CHARLIE	- Operation.
DOG	- Logistics.
EASY	- Communications.
* FOX	- RCT 23 Report.
* GEORGE	- RCT 24 Report.
* HOW	- RCT 25 Report.
* ITEM	- Division Artillery Report.
* JIG	- 4th Tank Battalion Report.
* KING	- 4th Engineer Battalion Report.
* LOVE	- 1st Joint Assault Signal Company Report.
* MIKE	- 2d Armored Amphibian Battalion Report.
* NAN	- 5th Amphibian Tractor Battalion Report.
* OBOE	- 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion Report.
* Pictorial Supplement.	
* Issued Under Separate Cover.	

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B A S I C R E P O R T

TO

FOURTH

MARINE DIVISION

OPERATIONS REPORT

IWO JIMA

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SECTION I

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

1. PLANNING

(a) The planning phase for the IWO JIMA Operation began with the receipt of the first tentative draft of VAC LANFOR Operation Plan 3-44 on 24 October. Prior to this time the Division had made preliminary studies of probable theaters of operations, which included the VOLCANO Islands, but since no indication of the probable nature of the next operation had been received from higher echelon, this study was superficial only. The VAC LANFOR Chief of Staff and other staff members conducted a beneficial conference with Division and major subordinate unit representatives during the latter part of October where the general plan and scheme of maneuver were presented and discussed.

(b) Based on the VAC LANFOR plan, and using a 1:5,000 map of the landing area, designated Island "X", the Division prepared a map problem which was issued on 27 October to subordinate units as a basis for preparing plans to include scheme of maneuver, boat assignment tables, landing schedules, and embarkation and loading data. This problem was classified SECRET and no connection with a prospective operation was divulged to personnel other than the major unit commanders and those members of the Division staff directly concerned with its preparation.

(c) Upon VAC LANFOR approving the Division's plan for the Island "X" operation, immediate preparation of the first tentative draft of the preferred plan for the IWO JIMA Operation was begun. By 30 November this draft was completed, except for several annexes to be issued later, and distribution was effected. Through the medium of the Island "X" problem and the first tentative draft of the operation plan, subordinate units within the Division were able to initiate early planning for the operation and materially profited thereby.

(d) On 28 October the Division was informed that loading for the operation would begin on 29 November, which required a speeding up of the training schedule and a general intensification of preparations, since 15 December previously had been set as the readiness date. Later, information was received that the target date had been postponed two weeks beyond the original date of 20 January. After an additional two weeks delay in the target date was announced, establishing it then as 19 February, loading dates for major units of the Division were firmed as 27 December and 3 January.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
SECTION I - PLANNING AND PREPARATION.

(e) The final draft of the preferred plan (Div Opn Plan 49-44), based on VAC LANFOR Opn Plan 3-44, dated 23 December, 1944, was prepared and distributed prior to completion of embarkation of major units on 3 January, 1945.

(f) The VAC LANFOR plan envisaged landing the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions abreast, 4th on the right, on the southeastern beaches of IWO JIMA. The 4th Division, landing with two (2) RCT's abreast on a frontage of 2000 yards (4 Battalion beaches), was assigned the mission of seizing objective O-1, which included the major portion of Airfield No. 1, the high ground between Airfields No. 1 and No. 2, and the rugged cliff line on the right flank. The objective varied in distance inland from 2800 yards along the Division boundary on the left to 1000 yards on the extreme right flank, necessitating a turning movement pivoting on the right after establishment of the initial beachhead. The absolute necessity for the early capture of the "Quarry" cliff line during the initial stages of the operation to protect the right flank was foreseen.

The Division was to be embarked in TRANSRON 15 (TRANS-GROUP BAKER), consisting of TRANSDIVS 43, 44, and 45, with 19 LST's, 2 LSD's, and 10 LSM's assigned. LVT's were to be used to land the four (4) assault BLT's, while the reserve BLT's and the Division Reserve (RCT 24) were to utilize LCVP's and LCM's.

(g) The VAC LANFOR plan assigned the Division four (4) battalion beaches, Yellow 1 and 2, Blue 1 and 2. Because of the proximity of Beach Blue 2 to the commanding high ground on the right, and in order to provide a safety factor in maintaining adequate neutralization fires on this high ground during the initial landing, authority was requested and granted to confine the landing of RCT 25 to Beach Blue 1. Accordingly, RCT 25 was directed to land on Beach Blue 1 and rapidly seize Beach Blue 2 in order to permit the early use of this beach for succeeding units and supplies. This decision proved sound in practice.

(h) During the early stages of the planning phase, the usual difficulties, occasioned by the assignment of a new TRANSGROUP with which the Division had never worked, were experienced. Physical separation of the Naval and Marine staffs was an initial handicap. Closer liaison between the TRANSGROUP and 4th Marine Division staffs and particularly between TRANSDIV and RCT staffs would have been preferable during this period when detailed plans were being formulated and orders written. However, in view of the comparatively early embarkation and resultant length of time aboard ship prior to the attack, opportunity was afforded to adjust and perfect coordinated plans.

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SECTION I - PLANNING AND PREPARATION.

(i) The tactical loading of assault elements in LST's was necessarily different for the IWO JIMA Operation than in previous ones in which the Division had participated. For the SAIPAN Operation, at least eight (8) LST's had been provided for each assault RCT, allowing four (4) for each assault BLT in which three (3) rifle companies, BLT support elements, and a proportional part of the LVT(A)'s were embarked. The LVT(A)'s were distributed equally throughout the sixteen (16) LST's assigned assault RCT's. Because of the limited number available to the Division for the IWO JIMA Operation, only seven (7) LST's could be allotted to each assault RCT while five (5) were assigned to the artillery regiment. Each assault RCT in turn assigned three (3) to each assault BLT and embarked the LVT(A)'s of its Armored Amphibian Company in the remaining one (a hospital LST). This plan did not provide equitable distribution of personnel, LST's embarking assault companies being overloaded beyond the capacity limit assigned by higher echelon, particularly those carrying radar and ponton barge personnel. LST's with armored amphibians were loaded to less than one-third capacity in personnel. It is believed that in the future assignment of LST's for an operation, consideration should be given to recommendations submitted by the Division which bases its requirements on the tactical plan, involving the maintenance of tactical unity, rather than upon a mathematical solution arrived at by dividing the number of LVT's and LVT(A)'s to be lifted by the capacity of an LST.

(j) Considerable difficulty was encountered in the allocation of boats to RCT's because higher echelon attempted to assign boats to specific units and tasks within TRANSDIVS. The practice of the RCT and TRANSDIV Commanders making detailed assignment within the TRANSDIV and then submitting to the TRANSGROUP Commander requests for additional boats required has been proven by past experience to be sound.

(k) Early in the planning phase higher echelon required the Division to submit a complete Division landing diagram to include all scheduled and certain call waves. In view of the fact that this data was submitted during the formative stage of the operation plans, changes and improvements in the detailed scheme of landing of subordinate units were inevitable. After the higher echelon diagrams, based on those submitted by Divisions, were prepared and distributed, considerable inertia was experienced in making modifications because approval of higher echelon was required. For instance, if a BLT Commander, basing his decision on last-minute intelligence received, wished to change the number of landing craft in his eighth wave, such change in a call wave was reflected in the plans of at least seven (7) echelons: RCT, TRANSDIV, Division, TRANSGROUP, VAC LANFOR, Naval Attack Force, and the Division.

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SECTION 1 - PLANNING AND PREPARATION.

While it is recognized that a certain amount of detailed landing data must be distributed by higher command throughout the entire force, it is believed that this data should be limited to only those scheduled waves which will be dispatched by central control, a total of five (5) waves in the IWO JIMA Operation, and the remainder left to the discretion of the RCT and TRANSDIV Commanders to be shown in Division, TRANSGROUP, and subordinate unit orders only.

(1) In providing for the landing of tanks, plans were initially made to utilize LCM's loaded in two (2) LSD's for the two tank companies attached to assault RCT's as had been the standard practice during past operations. After receipt of the M4A3 tanks, replacing the M4A2 with which the 4th Tank Battalion was formerly equipped, tests were conducted in which the new tank, with its added slope plate armor forward and lighter engines in the rear, caused the LCM to be bow-heavy and this means of landing tanks was considered unsafe for actual operations. This fact was transmitted to VAC LANFOR and resulted in additional tests being made with the resultant decision to substitute LSM's for landing all tanks of the 4th Tank Battalion.

(m) Originally, upon orders of the VAC LANFOR Commander, the two tank companies with assault RCT's were scheduled to land at H/30. After discussion and recommendation by the Division that the landing of tanks be left to the discretion of RCT Commanders under whose command they were operating, a change in the landing diagram dated 22 January, which provided that tanks be dispatched as directed by troop commanders, was promulgated by higher echelon. This revised policy proved exceedingly sound in practice.

(n) The final draft of the alternate plan for the IWO JIMA Operation (Div Opn Plan 50-44) was prepared during the MAUI-KAHOOLAWE rehearsal period and distributed during the rehabilitation period in PEARL, a tentative draft having been submitted to VAC LANFOR and distributed to major units during December. This plan was similar in all respects to the preferred plan with the exception that the landing was to be made on the west beaches, preceded by the seizure of KANGOKU ROCK (TA 230) at H-50 minutes, which mission was assigned to one reinforced company of RCT 24, the Division Reserve. The 4th Battalion, 14th Marines, (105mm Howitzer), was to be emplaced on this rock after seizure if conditions permitted.

2. TASK ORGANIZATION

(a) The Division was reinforced for the attack on IWO JIMA by attachment of the following units:

2d Armd Amph Bn (less 2 Co's and Hq Det)

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SECTION I - PLANNING AND PREPARATION.

5th Amph Trac Bn
10th Amph Trac Bn
1st JASCO
133d NC Bn (USN)
476th Amph Trk Co (Army)
7th Marine War Dog Plat
1st Prov Rocket Det
Det 8th Field Depot
Det 726th SAW Co (Army)
Det Sig Bn, VAC
442d Port Co (Army)
JICPOA Intelligence Team
24th Repln Draft
30th Repln Draft
VMO-4

(b) The 10th Amph Trac Bn, 1st JASCO, 1st Prov Rocket Det, and VMO-4 had been attached to the Division for previous amphibious operations and, along with the 7th Marine War Dog Plat, 476th Amph Trk Co (Army), 133d NC Bn (USN), and the 24th and 30th Replacement Drafts, participated in the training of the Division. The other units were assigned shortly prior to embarkation but in anticipation of their assignment to the Division for the operation the commanders of these units maintained close liaison with Division Headquarters throughout the planning phase.

3. TRAINING

(a) Upon return from the TINIAN Operation during the latter part of August, 1944, the Division initiated intensive training in accordance with an FMF PAC directive which designated 15 December, 1944, as the readiness date for the next operation. Having suffered 6,658 battle casualties in the SAIPAN and TINIAN operations, the majority being in infantry combat units, the Division initially concentrated on individual and small unit training with the objective of retraining key personnel and readying units for the absorption of large numbers of replacements.

(b) In preparing the training directive, the Division was somewhat handicapped because of a lack of sufficient knowledge as to the nature of the operation for which it was preparing. Based on a prospective operation involving large land masses and jungle-type terrain, the program proved flexible enough to be adapted to small island warfare by making only minor changes and shifting emphasis when the exact nature of the coming operation was revealed. Particular emphasis was then placed on training in the attack of fortified positions, in the detection, marking and

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SECTION 1. REHEARSING AND PREPARATION.

and in the coordination and use of supporting arms. Lessons learned and errors in technique revealed during the MARIANAS campaign were stressed in the Division training directive.

(c) By the first of September, sufficient replacements had been received to bring one infantry regiment and two battalions of another regiment up to strength in enlisted personnel, which permitted these units to reorganize and effect integrated training during the preparation period, the major obstacle then being the lack of officer replacements for these units. Not until 22 November did the remaining regiment and battalion receive assigned quotas of enlisted replacement personnel. The efficiency of the latter units as fighting teams was seriously jeopardized by the late receipt of these replacements. The shortage in junior officers, especially platoon leaders and artillery forward observers, was a distinct handicap in the reorganization and welding together of small units. Two replacement drafts consisting of approximately 2500 total personnel were received on 23 November. Authority was received on 1 December to assign approximately 70 lieutenants from these two recently arrived replacement drafts to infantry units. Thus one regiment and one battalion of another regiment embarked in assigned shipping for the IWO JIMA Operation, during the period 30 December - 3 January, having had 29 days of integrated training with all replacement personnel available. It is obvious that had the original loading date of 29 November been enforced the combat efficiency of the Division would have been seriously impaired. The one-month postponement of the loading date permitted a minimum of reorganization and training of those units which received last-minute replacements.

(d) During November, amphibious exercises consisting of five (5) days for each RCT and 2 three (3) day periods for the artillery regiment were conducted in the MAALAEA BAY area with a training TRANSDIV, composed of vessels from the TRANSGROUP in which the Division was to be embarked. A Division field exercise, based on the scheme of maneuver of the IWO JIMA Operation, was held in the MAALAEA BAY area in conjunction with the landing made at the conclusion of the final RCT amphibious exercise. Two (2) CPX's were held in the camp area using the same scheme of maneuver and designed to perfect technique in the use of supporting arms. Members of the VAC LANFOR staff participated in the second CPX.

(e) Training of the newly-activated 4th Amphibian Truck Company was seriously curtailed because of the late arrival of DUKW's. Some assistance was rendered by the 476th Company (Army) providing materiel for training until arrival of the DUKW's on 4 December. Considerable retraining of tank crews and maintenance personnel of

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SECTION I - PLANNING AND PREPARATION.

the 4th Tank Battalion was occasioned by the substitution of the M4A3 tank for the M4A2, the last of the new tanks being received on 25 October. Because of this fact, infantry-tank training was not as extensive as was desirable. In November, the 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment furnished a cadre of approximately half its personnel for the formation of a new unit, and intensive training within a limited time was necessary to bring the detachment up to a satisfactory status of readiness prior to embarkation.

4. REHEARSAL

(a) Plans for rehearsal exercises in the MAUI-KAHOOLAWE Area were formulated and distributed by 21 December, 1944. Embarkation and loading of major units was accomplished during the period 27 December - 3 January, and was as complete in all details for the actual operation as conditions permitted. The rehearsal was designed to simulate, insofar as the beaches and terrain would allow, the preferred plan for the IWO JIMA Operation.

(b) Prior to the scheduled rehearsal, TRANSRON 15 conducted preliminary ship to shore exercises in the MAALAEA BAY Area during the period 6-9 January, primarily to perfect training of landing craft personnel, control personnel, and beach parties. Troops were boated once each day during the exercises, using LCVP's and LCM's exclusively.

(c) Some artificialities were introduced into the rehearsal because of the absence of the 2d Armored and 5th Amphibian Tractor Battalions, and because the 4th Tank Battalion was forced to delay its loading in LSM's until after the rehearsal. While LVT(A)'s of the 2d Armored Battalion were simulated, the 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion provided its normal complement of service tractors for RCT 23 and in addition formed a provisional group of fifty (50) training tractors for RCT 25 in lieu of the 5th Amphibian Tractor Battalion. This LVT organization permitted RCT 23 to boat and land as scheduled, but only the left BLT of RCT 25 landed in LVT's, the right BLT landing in LCVP's representing LVT's. The six (6) LSM's assigned to lift the two assault tank companies were present during the latter stages of the rehearsal and participated by simulating landings though no tank units were embarked at this time.

(d) Exercises in the formation of boat groups and waves, where troops were embarked and waves dispatched from the line of departure but not landed, were conducted on the first day of rehearsal - 13 January. On 14 January, a landing was made with limited maneuver ashore and reembarkation was completed by 1600. The main tactical landing on MAUI was executed on 15 January with all major units participating, including simulated

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support. The Division remained ashore overnight continuing the tactical problem until reembarkation was begun at daybreak on 16 January. By 1600 all troops had been reembarked and a critique for designated officers was held aboard the AUBURN, flagship of the Naval Attack Force Commander. On 17 January, a simulated landing was made on the north coast of KAHOOLAWE. Fire support ships and support aircraft supported the simulated landing with live ammunition in accordance with the preferred plan. Landing waves were dispatched and approached the beach to within 300 yards, under cover of naval gunfire and air bombardment, at which point landing craft were turned about and no troops were landed. Reembarkation was effected by 1600.

(e) Upon completion of the rehearsal, transfer of troops from LST's to APA's was made in conformity with the embarkation plan for movement from the HAWAIIAN Area, and all units proceeded to PEARL and HONOLULU for rehabilitation.

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SECTION II

MOVEMENT TO THE OBJECTIVE

1. The Division (reinforced) was rehabilitated in PEARL and HONOLULU during the period 18-27 January, 1945. Detailed orders were completed and issued during this period. Shortages of equipment and supplies were filled and all personnel were given liberty. Troops were paid and organized recreational activities were provided from recreational funds.
2. On 22 January the Tractor Flotilla departed for the forward staging area (SAIPAN-TINIAN), followed by the main body (TRANSGROUP BAKER, composed of TRANSDIVS 43, 44, 45), on 27 January. Enroute both convoys stopped at ENIWETOK for fueling and other logistics. Current intelligence information was received and distributed to units concerned, and changes incorporated in Division Operation Plan.
3. Proceeding from ENIWETOK on the 5th and 7th of February, the Tractor Flotilla and TRANSGROUP rendezvoused at the forward staging and rehearsal area (SAIPAN-TINIAN) on 11-15 February. Troops were transferred from APA's to LST's and plans completed for final rehearsal. Because of the distance involved and the limited facilities of LST's during movement to the forward staging and rehearsal area, APA's were loaded to capacity and a minimum number of troops placed aboard LST's (approximately 250 per LST). From the staging area to the objective, LST's were loaded to assigned capacity with assault troops, average load being 380, plus special radar and ponton barrage personnel.
4. Due to inclement weather and high seas the rehearsal exercises scheduled for the 12th of February were cancelled; however, shore fire control parties, which landed on the 11th, conducted communications drills with fire support ships, NGF being simulated.
5. On 13 February, in accordance with plans, the final rehearsal was conducted off the western shore of TINIAN. Troops disembarked in landing craft, boat groups and waves were formed and landings simulated (waves were run to within 300 yards of beach and returned). On this date surf conditions were again unfavorable. After debarking LVT's it was necessary to move the LST area southward to a lee south of GURGUAN POINT in order to obtain more favorable area for reembarking LVT's. This unplanned maneuver resulted in some confusion in that guides of later LCVP and LCM waves, who could not see the beaches and had used certain LST's to guide on, changed course to the southward in direction of the LST's, thereby failing to reach the LD and landing area.

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SECTION II - MOVEMENT TO THE OBJECTIVE.

6. On 15 February a conference of the Division Staff and unit commanders was held. Completed plans were discussed and clarified, latest intelligence information distributed, and final instructions issued.

7. On 16 February the Division departed for the objective, arriving and landing on D-Day at H-Hour (0900, 19 February).

8. Enroute to the objective, ship-board training was carried out as practical; tactical employment of weapons was emphasized; staff planning was continuous, and thorough briefing of all personnel, to include the individual rifleman and coxswain, was completed. Physical exercise and drill for officers and enlisted personnel was carried on daily, resulting in minimum loss of combat efficiency though some personnel were embarked approximately 54 days.

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SECTION III

SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS

1. LANDING PLAN

(a) General. As outlined under Section I, the major concept of the landing on IWC JIMA envisaged the landing on contiguous beaches with the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions abreast, 4th Division on the right, each to land with two (2) RCTs in assault. The beaches assigned the Division were Yellow One, Yellow Two, Blue One and Blue Two and all averaged 500 yards in width. A careful preliminary study of available intelligence material disclosed conditions which indicated the inadvisability of attempting to force a landing on Beach Blue Two. Upon representation to V Amphibious Corps, permission was obtained to land initially only on three beaches and, once ashore, the scheme of maneuver was to provide for securing the use of Beach Blue Two by the early seizure of the "Quarry" cliff line which directly dominated Blue Beaches, particularly Blue Two, on the right (North) flank. Information available indicated that beach conditions would permit the use of all types of landing craft in landing troops, equipment and supplies, but adverse weather and wind conditions during the landing could be expected to seriously effect the landing of small craft. Further, the loose volcanic sand, which formed the beach and extended inland with a series of steep ledges, would probably be impassable for wheeled vehicles (except light equipment such as "jeeps") without improvement on construction of egress roads, and could even be difficult for the operation of tracked vehicles.

(b) Division Plan of Landing. Based on the above considerations, the Division plan provided for landing two (2) RCTs abreast, RCT 23 on the left (Yellow Beaches) and RCT 25 on the right (Blue Beach One). RCT 23 was to land with two (2) BLTs abreast, 1/23 on Yellow One and 2/23 on Yellow Two, with the RCT Reserve, BLT 3/23, prepared to land on either beach as directed. RCT 25 was also to land with two (2) BLTs in assault but, due to restriction of employing only Blue One initially, the landing formation was necessarily different. BLT 1/25, assigned the left and center of Blue One, was to land with two (2) companies abreast in assault and one in reserve; BLT 3/25, assigned the right of Blue One, was to land in a column of companies, while the RCT Reserve, BLT 2/25, was assigned the use of the entire beach area when ordered to land. The Division Reserve, RCT 24, was to be prepared to land, on order, on any designated beach(es) employing either one of two plans. Plan Number One was designed to land two (2) BLTs abreast, BLT 2/24 on the left and BLT 1/24 on the right, with BLT 3/24, the RCT Reserve, to follow either leading BLT as beaching conditions or the tactical situation indicated. Plan Number Two called for the RCT to land on one beach in a column of BLTs in order - 2/24, 1/24, 3/24.

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SHIP SECRET OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

(c) Employment of Ships and Landing Craft. To implement the tactical plans, the following ships and landing craft were available:

12 APA
 4 AKA
 19 LST
 16 LSM
 34 LVT(A)
 200 LVT(2) or (4)
 100 DUKW

No serious problem concerning the loading of the APAs or the AKAs presented itself. Ample liaison and conferences between the Division and Transron 15 placed this part of the loading and the tactical use thereof on a sound footing. Allocation of remaining landing ships and craft was as follows:

(1) LSTs. Of the total 19 LSTs available five (5) were assigned the artillery and fourteen (14) to the two (2) assault RCTs. One (1) additional LST (specially fitted) was shared by the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions as an CY-1 carrier for planes that were not embarked on CVEs. The fourteen (14) LSTs for the combat teams were divided equally between the two (2) assault RCTs. There was included in this number, however, several "special" LSTs which were greatly restricted as to their usefulness to the Division. Two (2) of the number were designated as "Hospital Evacuation LSTs", and were fitted for emergency operating, sorting and dispatch of casualties to the transports. They could be used to transport troops to the Target but had to be completely unloaded of all Marine personnel and equipment prior to How-Hour. In order to comply with this restriction these two LSTs were employed to transport the two (2) companies of LVT(A)s that were attached to the assault RCTs. As each of these units went aboard with only four (4) officers and one hundred and fifteen (115) enlisted about one-third of the available troop capacity was gainfully employed. Two of the LSTs in the group assigned to RCT 23 were "Radar" ships. Considerable effort was expended towards having these units split for the assignment of one each to the assault RCTs. This could not be done. Aside from cutting down on the passenger capacity by ten (10) officers and fifty (50) enlisted, these ships had to be either in a completely loaded or a completely unloaded state (and Radars calibrated accordingly). This seriously restricted the value of these two ships to the RCT to which assigned. Nine (9) of the LSTs carried LCTs top-deck loaded. While it is recognized that the LCTs are a necessity at the objective, the loading of these craft on a large number of LSTs seriously curtails troop space aboard for a long voyage, restricts the amount of LVT maintenance equipment that can be carried, and discharge of

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SECTION III - SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

the LCT usually conflicts with the employment of the LST at a time when its use is desired by the Division.

(2) LSMs. The employment of the LSMs provided another problem. Originally scheduled to have ten (10) of these ships, the Division planned to use these as follows:

- 4 - To carry Shore Party equipment of the Pioneer and Naval Construction Battalion, two (2) for each assault RCT Shore Party.
- 5 - To the Division Reserve - Four (4) for tanks, and one (1) for "half-tracks".
- 1 - To the Division Signal Company - To carry heavy radio equipment, trucks pre-loaded with signal equipment and supplies, and radio "jeeps".

After detailed plans for loading had been made, and after loading had started, the Division was informed that LSM 60 (assigned Shore Party) was the Flotilla Flag and that its troop capacity must not exceed one (1) officer and seven (7) enlisted. This restriction was later modified to the extent that the Division was permitted to embark a total of one (1) officer and twenty-eight (28) enlisted from the Staging Area to the Target. Similarly, the "rated" capacity of two (2) officers and fifty-two (52) enlisted for the remainder was reduced to two (2) officers and thirty-nine (39) enlisted. During the Planning Phase, the Division discovered from tests that the LSM(3) could not carry the M4A3 tank with any degree of assurance that it could be beached and the tank landed successfully. Further tests were conducted by higher authority at Pearl and this resulted in the assignment, after the Division was completely loaded, of six (6) additional LSMs to carry the tanks of the two (2) companies assigned to the assault RCTs. This delay caused considerable confusion at the time, and some trouble later at the Target since little opportunity was had for contact with the Commander of the LSM unit with respect to the employment of these vessels, but was a wise decision as conditions at the Target would have prevented the landing of tanks in LCMs on the Division beaches.

(3) Other Craft. The LVT(A)s and LVTs were equally divided between the two (2) assault RCTs except for maintenance LVTs and four (4) LVT(4)s which were assigned to the artillery to assure the early landing of four (4) radio "jeeps". The overall assignment of the craft available was designed to land the maximum number of combatant elements in the shortest possible time and resulted in the following:

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SECTION III - SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd)

The leading wave was composed of 34 LVT(A)s, 17 to each assault RCT. Upon beaching these craft (except the right flank platoon on Blue One) were to proceed inland past the first terrace to positions in defilade and there to cover the landing of personnel in succeeding waves. The right flank platoon on Blue One was to echelon to the right rear to furnish protection to that flank, from positions ashore or afloat, as appropriate.

The assault waves of the BLTs were embarked in LVT(2)s and LVT(4)s. The personnel were to be disembarked generally in the lee of the first terrace. Scaling ladders were provided for ascent of this terrace if necessary. When empty, LVTs were to clear the beaches promptly by utilizing as a return route the boundaries between beaches in order not to interfere with following waves. The personnel LVTs were to re-embark on their parent LSTs, except those from the "rajar" ships which were assigned for return to certain designated artillery LSTs and other infantry LSTs, and immediately start loading high priority supplies from the preloads for landing on order.

All Support Groups, the Reserve BLTs of the assault RCTs, and the Division Reserve (RCT 24) were boated in LCVPs and LCMs.

The Division Shore Party had its advance elements embarked in LVTs, all of its heavy and most of its light equipment on the four (4) LSMs assigned, and with the bulk of the personnel and the remainder of the light equipment embarked in boats with the various Support Groups.

All combatant vehicles of the Tank Battalion were embarked in LSMs. The companies attached to the assault RCTs were originally scheduled to land as a "timed" wave, the 7th, but the landing schedule was changed to allow this wave to be dispatched as an "on call" wave by the RCT Commanders. The tanks attached to the Division Reserve were to be prepared to land on Division order to reinforce those with the assault RCTs, or if not so employed they were to be landed "on call" by the Division Reserve Commander.

The Artillery Battalions were embarked in four (4) LSTs with their weapons, essential equipment, and about 2/3 of a Unit of Fire of ammunition preloaded in DUKWs. The fifth LST assigned to the artillery carried the bulk of the Regimental H&S Battery plus additional ammunition preloaded in DUKWs. Four (4) radio "jeeps" were carried preloaded in LVT(4)s. Landing was to be effected by battalions in a column of batteries (batteries in column) at ten (10) minute intervals. DUKWs were to be launched and units landed on Division order with the two (2) battalions assigned to direct support of the assault RCTs landing first, RCT 24

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SECTION III SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

on Blue One and 2/14 on Yellow One. The remaining battalions were to land on Yellow One on Division order. Battalion reconnaissance parties were to land with the rear elements of the assault BLTs to determine the exact positions in the pre-selected areas. Upon landing all DUKWs, except those fitted with "A" frames, were to return immediately to their parent LSTs to continue landing additional personnel and ammunition.

For details of landing, including special landing instruction and assignment of landing craft, see Annex KING to Division Operation Plan Number 49-44.

2. CONTROL PLAN

(a) General. In general, the control for the operation was carried out as outlined in Chapter 9, Transport Doctrine, Amphibious Force, Pacific. Control was to be effected by a series of Control Vessels carrying both Naval and Troop Control Officers to coordinate and control all movement to and from the beaches.

(b) Brief of Plan. The following craft and personnel were employed to effect control of the landing:

(1) Over-all control was centralized in a "Central Control Vessel". This vessel, a PC(E), carried the Senior Naval Control Officer; the VAC LANFOR tactical, logistical, LVT and Shore Party Officers. This party controlled the dispatching of the first five (5) scheduled assault waves of both Divisions. After the dispatch of these waves this vessel became a "free boat" and exercised such general supervisory control as was necessary.

(2) Each Division had a "Transron Control Vessel" for the coordination of the landing of the various elements of the Division. This vessel, a PC(S), exercised general over-all control of Yellow and Blue Beaches for this Division. It carried the Transron Control Officer (Naval - representative of Commander Transport Squadron 15) and the tactical, logistical, artillery, Shore Party, and LVT Officers representing this Division. Control of the first five (5) scheduled waves was funneled through this vessel and, by plan, passed direct control of all remaining waves directly to the "Beach Control Vessels" operating under it. This vessel, like the "Central Control Vessel" became a "free boat" after the dispatch of the first five (5) waves but in general maintained a position in the center of and seaward of the LD to provide a landmark for elements coming in to land. After the landing of the assault echelons, this vessel dispatched elements for landing to either Yellow or Blue Beach Controls, depending on surf and beach conditions.

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(3) Operating under the Transron Control were two (2) "Beach Control Vessels", one for Yellow and one for Blue Beaches. These vessels, PCs, were to maintain position on the center of their respective sections of the LD and controlled the actual dispatching of all scheduled and "on call" waves. They also controlled the actual dispatching of all other elements as directed by the Transron Control Vessel. This vessel carried the TransDiv Control Officer (Naval) and initially the RCT Commander and his staff. When the RCT Commander landed, he left logistical and LVT officers aboard to act as his representatives.

(4) The Control Plan for this landing was essentially the same as that used for the Marianas Operation with respect to craft employed with the following exceptions:

SCs, designated as "LD Marker Vessels", were employed to mark the division of the colored beaches on the LD. They maintained position on the "Beach Control Vessels" and, although they were without control personnel, were equipped with flags and communication equipment in order to take over control functions in event any control vessel became a casualty.

As in previous landings, LCP(L)s were employed to guide assault waves into the beach. However, in previous landings the initial wave guide was an LCC which, after guiding in the leading wave, took station about 300 yards offshore to serve as traffic control boat for control of the movement of craft to and from the beach as directed by "Beach Control Vessel". In this landing, LCP(L)s were used instead of LCCs for guiding the initial wave and as traffic control boats. The Division protested this change but were overruled by higher authority.

3. THE LANDING

(a) D-Day (19 February, 1945).

(1) The transports entered the Transport Area about 0630. The Division and RCT control personnel were located and dispatched to their respective control vessels. By 0730 all control vessels were in position and the LD had been established. By 0810 all control personnel were reported embarked in their respective control vessels. The Assistant Division Commander and party were embarked in PC(S)-1455 as a roving observer for the Division Commander. A member from the Underwater Demolition Teams, that had surveyed the island's beaches prior to D-Day, was aboard Transron, Yellow and Blue Beach Control Vessels to give the late information on the beaches. An interview with the representative

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

aboard the Transcon Control Vessel revealed no information not previously received aboard the USS BAYFIELD on D minus 1.

(2) The Division tactical air observer was on station at 0810. Radio reception aboard the Transcon Control Vessel, ranging from poor to unreadable, seriously compromised the value of the observers reports.

(3) The weather was favorable for the landing, the sky clear, visibility unlimited, except for the smoke and dust, resulting from NGF bombardment, carried by an 8 to 12 knot northerly wind obscuring the beaches. The sea was calm with slight swells of 2 to 3 feet, and, because of the wind direction, the surf conditions were ideal. During the NGF bombardment no enemy fire fell on the LD or in the Transport and LST Areas.

(4) The LSTs closed the LST Area in good order and immediately began launching LVTs. By 0807 all LSTs had launched their amphibious vehicles for the assault waves and at 0815 the first three waves were formed and waiting in position in rear of the LD. The remaining waves were forming up and it was now apparent that How-Hour could be met.

(5) During the pre-How-Hour air strike the smoke and dust cleared from the beaches and some enemy fire, of small caliber (probably anti-aircraft misses) fell in the vicinity of the LD but with no apparent effect.

(6) Preceded by LCS(L)s (the LCI(G)s were unable to participate in the assault due to heavy damage received in preliminary operations prior to D-Day), and on signal from Central Control, the first assault wave crossed the LD for all beaches at 0830 on time. The next four assault waves followed on schedule and were dispatched as planned by Central Control. Beach Control Vessels then took over and the dispatching progressed without incident through the scheduled waves to and including 6 Able. Only a small amount of gunfire was observed in the boat lanes during the approach to the beaches and no serious damage or casualties were reported.

(7) The first and second waves were approximately one (1) minute late in landing on all beaches. At this time only light small arms fire and moderate mortar fire fell on the beach area. The LVT(A)s were able to cross the first terrace by access routes cut in the ledges by NGF and bombing and take positions to cover the landing of the personnel wave. The right flank platoon on Beach Blue One operated as planned. The personnel LVTs of the initial waves were rapidly unloaded and retracted and this resulted in few casualties to tractor personnel and equipment.

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SECTION III SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

The anticipated flooding of the beach areas did not materialize. Enemy fire was relatively light until the lifting of the NGF. This lifting approximately coincided with the landing of the BLT Reserve elements and as succeeding waves came into the beach, the effect of large caliber mortar and artillery fire began to exact a heavy toll in personnel and equipment.

(8) Having discharged their LVT(A)s, LSTs 930 and 931 (Hospital Evacuation LSTs) launched one (1) pontoon barge each and took station 300 yards in rear of their respective Beach Control Vessels. They were on station, prepared to receive casualties by 0940.

(9) As a result of heavy mortar fire on and adjacent to the beaches it was necessary to delay the "call" waves of the assault battalions somewhat to permit clearing the beaches by the assault troops and tanks. Progress up the steep slope from the waters edge to the edge of the airfield was slow. During this time casualties to reconnaissance, liaison, advance Beach and Shore Parties were high. Boat crews and boats were hard hit. Casualties to LVTs and personnel were surprisingly light. The remaining waves of the assault BLTs were sent in as beaching conditions permitted and by 1200 all elements, except two (2) LCMs of BLT 2/23, (carrying 37mm guns) had been dispatched to the beaches.

(10) The preliminary reconnaissance by tank liaison personnel indicated the feasibility of employing tanks in support of the assault waves and this information was passed back to the RCT Commanders. RCT 23 dispatched its tank LSMs to Yellow Beaches at 0930 and RCT 25 dispatched theirs at 1005 to land on Blue One. The LSMs hit Yellow Beaches about 0940 and were immediately taken under heavy enemy mortar and artillery fire. Those landing on Blue One hit the beach about 1020 and came under the same type of intense enemy fire. Four (4) of the six (6) LSMs were hit, two (2) seriously. All succeeded in discharging their tanks except LSM 216. This ship initially beached on Yellow Two and one (1) tank was discharged, but it bogged down at the mouth of the ramp. After a half hour's efforts failed to move the tank, the LSM retracted and beached again about 1100 on Yellow One but again beach conditions prevented the landing of any tanks. By this time it had been hit repeatedly and again withdrew and proceeded to the Evacuation LST 930 to discharge its casualties. The tanks aboard had not been seriously damaged. At 1245 it again beached on another portion of Yellow One and succeeded in discharging its tanks by 1300. The Division would like to comment on the high degree of courage and tenacity shown by these ships in beaching and accomplishing the landing of this vital equipment in the face of the heaviest enemy mortar and artillery

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SECTION III - SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

fire yet seen in any operation. On the request of assault RCT Commanders, Division authorized the landing of the tanks attached to the Division Reserve to reinforce the Tank Companies attached to the assault RCTs. The first elements of this unit were landed from an LSM on Yellow One at 1155 and consisted of two (2) tank retrievers and an armored dozer. At 1255 another LSM landed a Tank Platoon on Blue One for attachment to the Tank Company operating with RCT 25 and this was followed by two (2) other platoons which also landed on Blue One and were completely ashore by 1330. The remaining Tank Platoon was landed on Yellow One about 1400 and was attached to the Company operating with RCT 23. These LSMs also were subject to enemy artillery and mortar fire but it was neither as accurate or as intense and no serious damage resulted.

(11) The reserve BLTs of the assault RCTs commenced landing at 1233 when the first wave of BLT 2/25 was dispatched to Blue One. The last elements of this unit, except some vehicles in LCMs completed landing by 1327. The first wave of BLT 3/23, RCT 23 Reserve, crossed the LD at 1313 and the last elements of this unit were ashore by 1358.

(12) In addition to the destroyed enemy craft that blocked portions of the Division's landing beaches, partial reports received by 1230 indicated that there were at least five (5) LVTs, one (1) medium tank and an undisclosed number of LCVP-LCMs blocking the beaches. Moderate enemy mortar and artillery fire continued on the Division beaches and water areas adjacent thereto. Beached boats with no crews, because of casualties resulting from enemy fire, had broached, filled with sand and water, and, because of the excess weight, could not be retracted by the LCP(R) salvage boats of the Beachmasters. This condition became progressively worse and by late afternoon the beaches were so cluttered with wrecked craft that strict traffic control was necessary to effect any unloading. This condition seriously restricted the landing of the Support Groups of the assault RCTs.

(13) Advance elements of the Shore and Beach Party landed with the reserve units of the assault BLTs on all beaches. The four (4) LSMs carrying heavy Shore Party equipment were on station in rear of the LD by 1000 ready to land on order. Due to the congested condition on the beaches, restricted landing areas for LSMs, and the necessity of favoring the landing of LSMs with tanks, the landing of Shore Party equipment embarked in LSMs was considerably delayed. This resulted in the bulk of the Shore and Beach Party, landing with the BLT Support Group (boated in LCVPs and some equipment boated in LCMs), having little essential equipment to work with on the beaches. Furthermore, some of these units landed on the wrong beaches, the bulk of the Shore Party for

UNCLASSIFIED

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SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd)

Yellow One landing on the north half of Red Two. Also, casualties to Shore and Beach Parties were extremely heavy, particularly in officers, and this further added to the difficulty of establishing control on the beaches. It was not until 1400 that CPs and communication facilities were firmly established on all beaches. By 1730 Regimental Shore Party CPs were established and sufficient equipment had been landed from Shore Party LSMs to start effective clearance of the beach areas and the construction of access roads.

(14) Beginning about 1300 various elements of the BLT and RCT Support Groups of the assault RCTs were landed as the situation ashore and the beach conditions permitted. Practically all the BLT Support Groups were landed except some vehicular elements which could obviously not be moved off the beach. A larger proportion of the RCT Support Groups was not landed but the bulk of the more essential elements were ashore by darkness. Both RCTs had advance CPs established ashore about 1600 and both CPs completely established by 1700.

(15) The artillery LSTs were in position and ready to launch DUKWs, on order, by How-Hour. At this time, Battalion Reconnaissance Parties embarked in LCVPs and reported to the Division Artillery Officer who was with the Control Party on the Transon Control Vessel. By 1200 information from the assault RCT Commanders indicated that the front lines were still about 200 yards short of Airfield #1 and that in general, conditions ashore were not favorable for the landing of artillery. It was decided however, to land the Reconnaissance Parties and the Party from 1/14 landed on Blue One about 1240. The Party from 2/14 landed on Yellow One about 1340 and this was followed by 3/14 and 4/14, the latter landing about 1430. Division ordered the landing of the two direct support battalions at 1400. These were launched without incident, proceeded to their respective Beach Control Vessels and commenced landing about 1500. 1/14 (75mm Pk How) moved into position off Beach Blue One without too much trouble and was emplaced, registered, and firing direct support missions at 1740. 2/14 (105mm How), landing on Beach Yellow One had an extremely difficult time getting into position. Each piece had to be unloaded from the DUKW just above the water line and then dragged across the beach and into position by an angledozer. This Battalion was in position, registered, and firing direct support missions by 2130. The landing and emplacement of these units was accomplished under heavy artillery and mortar fire and was an extremely difficult operation. Both units were emplaced close to the beach areas, which facilitated ammunition supply but further complicated the already congested condition of this area. 3/14 was launched about 1530 but on the receipt of further information from shore was ordered to re-embark as was the Regimental Reconnaissance Party which had started ashore about 1610.

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SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

No attempt was made to land 4/14 on D-Day. DUKWs which landed the two direct support battalions, returned to their parent LSTs and commenced loading additional personnel and ammunition.

(16) Division ordered two BLTs of the Division Reserve (RCT 24) boated at 1404. BLT 1/24 was ordered to report to Blue Beach Control Vessel and BLT 2/24 to Yellow Beach Control Vessel. At 1500 Division ordered the landing of these two BLTs and, effective upon landing, 1/24 was attached to RCT 25 and 2/24 attached to RCT 23. However, the Division specified that these BLTs were not to be committed without Division authority. Beginning at 1615 the first wave of 1/24 crossed the LD for Beach Blue One and was followed at five (5) minute intervals by the remaining waves and all were ashore by 1700. The first wave of 2/24 was dispatched for landing on Yellow Two at 1620 and was followed by its remaining waves at five (5) minute intervals and this unit was completely ashore by 1650. At 1509 Division ordered the landing of the remainder of the Division Reserve on Blue One. By 1800 BLT 3/24 and the Regimental Support Group, including the Regimental Headquarters, was in position behind the LD off Blue One. The first wave of 3/24 crossed the LD for landing at 1820. The remaining waves followed at five minute intervals and these in turn were followed by the waves of the Support Group. Part of the Regimental Weapons Company and the attached sections of the War Dog Platoon were not landed. By 2030 RCT 24 (less 1/24, 2/24, and the elements noted above) was completely ashore, in Division Reserve, in an assembly area in TA 166 F.

(17) By darkness on D-Day the situation in general was that the Division had three (3) RCTs (less some Support Group elements), two (2) Battalions of artillery, and a fair amount of heavy Shore Party equipment ashore. It held the line which included the eastern edge of Airfield #1 and was of sufficient depth inland from Blue Beaches to guarantee the successful holding of the beachhead. It had firm contact with the 5th Marine Division on the left and sufficient supplies of water, ammunition and rations were ashore to support the continuation of operations in the morning. Although surf and sea conditions had been favorable for the landing of all types of landing craft, beach conditions and the continuous mortar and artillery fire had seriously hampered the actual landing of troops and equipment. This fire had disabled heavy equipment, LVTs, and landing craft on the beach and in the surf to such an extent that only by prompt salvage could the beaches be prepared for the next days operation. It was apparent at this time that the equipment available to the Beachmasters was not sufficiently heavy to either salvage or junk the wrecked craft on the Division beaches. Night retirement of Transports and LSTs was conducted in accordance with plans. Certain APAs, including ~~Company~~ ~~ships~~ ~~and~~ ~~craft~~ ~~in~~

UNCLASSIFIED

designated LSTs and all Control Craft remained in the area. The LSMs also remained in the area and certain of these commenced unloading of priority supplies and equipment from the APAs which remained in the area.

(b) D plus 1-Day (20 February, 1945).

(1) During the hours of darkness of D/D plus 1 every effort was made to improve the condition of the beaches, both at the waters edge and inland. Intermittent enemy harassing fire fell in the beach areas all night and interfered with this activity but some progress was made in clearing the beaches by using LVTs, a certain number of which had been retained ashore, to carry supplies and equipment forward to the front line units. No appreciable progress was made in clearing the beaches of wrecked landing craft except for the landing of a few LVTs with emergency supplies, particularly 81mm mortar ammunition, no unloading was accomplished during the night. Information was received that bad weather could be expected in the morning with the wind shifting to the south and east.

(2) At 0800, Transron Control was informed that RCT 21 (3rd Mar Div - VAC LANFCR Reserve) had been ordered to boat and report to it for landing. This RCT was to be landed on Division beaches as directed by Corps order. Since the exact landing area of this unit was not known, it was decided to rendezvous one (1) BLT in the vicinity of Yellow Beach Control Vessel, a second in the vicinity of Blue Beach Control Vessel, and a third BLT plus the Regimental Headquarters Group in the vicinity of the Transron Control Vessel. This was done, in order, as the boat groups arrived. The Regimental Commander with some of his staff and the Naval Officer in charge of the Boat Groups, were brought aboard the Transron Control Vessel. Effective control was maintained in this manner and the RCT could have been landed on any beach or beaches as desired. However, as the situation developed ashore during the day, it became apparent that they could not be utilized successfully ashore and were re-embarked on their parent APAs late in the afternoon.

(3) The expected bad weather developed, and by mid-morning the landing of LCVPs and LCMs became extremely hazardous due to surf conditions on beaches and more of these craft were wrecked. Progress in clearing the beaches of wrecked craft was poor. Higher Naval control finally managed to get some empty LSMs close-in to assist in clearing wrecked craft from the beach and landed UDT personnel to begin blasting wrecks where they could not be towed off. By noon it was decided to confine the landing of additional troops, supplies and equipment to LSMs though some Beach Controls managed to land a

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SECTION III TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

lee of the larger vessels while they were beached. During the day additional Support Group elements including additional Shore Party equipment were gotten ashore and by late afternoon some progress had been made in clearing the areas inland of the beaches and some egress roads had been started.

(4) The remainder of the Division artillery was landed. 3/14 commenced landing on Yellow One at 1500 and was in position, registered in firing missions by 1730. Considerable difficulty was experienced in landing 4/14. The LST in which it was embarked could not be found for several hours and it was finally located in an outer area endeavoring to recover an LCT launching cradle. It was finally brought in and commenced launching DUKWs about 1600. By this time sea conditions were very rough and, while the launched DUKWs were being assembled for movement to the LD for landing, seven (7) of them swamped and sank, including five (5) carrying artillery pieces. The remainder of 4/14 commenced landing on Yellow One at 1735 and was in position ready to fire by midnight. The Regimental Command Group landed on Yellow One at 1705 and the advance CP was established ashore at 1715.

(5) Throughout the day, other than LSMs, all supplies were landed in LVTs and DUKWs which operated continuously in unloading the pre-loads on the LSTs. The beaches and adjacent water areas continued to receive intermittent enemy artillery and mortar fire which varied in intensity from moderate to heavy. Casualties remained heavy and the facilities of the Evacuation LSTs were stretched to the limit. The rough seas seriously hampered the transfer of casualties from LVTs and DUKWs, which were evacuating them from the beaches, to the pontoon barge rigged alongside each LST. The Division Shore Party Group landed about 1500 on Blue One and the Division Shore Party CP opened just off the left flank of this beach at 1530.

(6) By darkness the situation ashore had cleared considerably and the Division in conjunction with the 5th Marine Division on the left held all of Airfield #1 and some gains had been made on the right. Although the supply of some items, principally mortar ammunition became critical, sufficient supplies had been built up ashore to support all elements during the night and assure the continuation of the attack in the morning. Night retirement of ships with the same exception as for the night of D-Day was again executed.

(c) D plus 2-Day (21 February, 1945).

(1) During the hours of darkness efforts continued in the clearance of the areas inland from the beaches.

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SECTION III - SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

and the few "Weasels" that were available continued to be the only effective means of moving supplies inland. Some progress had been made in establishing beach dumps. Intermittent enemy fire on the beaches continued during the night but had lessened in intensity.

(2) RCT 21 was again boated and reported to Transron Control for landing under the same conditions as prevailed on D plus 1. The Regimental Control Party reported aboard the Transron Control Vessel about 1030. About 1100 orders were received to land this unit on Yellow Beaches. An advance Regimental CP was landed on Yellow One at 1200 and the CP established at 1225 in the vicinity of TA 148 D. The leading BLT commenced landing on Yellow One and Two at 1335 and was followed by the remaining BLTs at half hour intervals. By 1720 all elements were ashore and in an assembly area in TA 148 D, H, I. At 1800 RCT 21 was attached to the Division by VAC order.

(3) The landing of the remaining elements of the RCT Support Groups continued throughout the day as beach conditions permitted. Weather conditions remained bad with rough seas and high surf. Enemy fire remained fairly heavy on all beaches. LCS(L)s were employed during the day in an effort to clear wrecked craft from beaches and though some progress was made the effort was only partially successful. Additional Beach Parties were landed and conditions inland from the beaches began to improve. A few LSTs were beached and succeeded unloading badly needed supplies. The landing of other supplies was confined to the use of LSMs, LVTs and DUKWs. In the case of LVTs and DUKWs, refueling began to become a major problem as the supplies on LSTs became exhausted. Priority was given to landing gasoline in LSMs for establishment of dumps ashore. The ADC came aboard the Transron Control Vessel about 1200 and was landed on Blue One at 1255. He established himself initially at the CP of our CT 24, the Division Reserve. It had been planned to land the advance Division CP about 1400 but an LSM could not be obtained to land the necessary communication and other equipment. Evacuation of casualties through the Evacuation LSTs continued adequate but the difficulties increased as the continual battering of the pontoon transfer barge by landing craft resulted in damage to some of the pontoon sections and they filled with water. This caused a bad list and for a time it was thought that one barge might sink. Additional barges were launched but proved unmanageable in the high winds and rough seas. Several of these finally drifted ashore and further blocked the beach area. By darkness the Division had achieved further advances, particularly on the right, and the supply situation ashore remained essentially the same. Additional LSTs and APAs were kept in the area over night to facilitate unloading of

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SECTION III -- BEACH TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

essential supplies. Remaining ships executed night retirement as usual.

(d) D plus 3-Day to D plus 4-Day (22 - 23 February, 1945).

(1) During this period the remaining elements of the Division, except some Motor Transport and Medical, were landed. Weather conditions remained unfavorable and even LVTs and DUKWs had difficulty. Intermittent enemy artillery and mortar fire continued on all beach areas. Unloading was confined principally to the use of LSMs, LCTs and a few remaining operational LCMs that could be beached in the lee of the larger craft. An increasing number of LSTs were beached and unloading was greatly increased but remained "selective" from APAs and AKAs. Beach conditions began to improve rapidly as additional Shore Party equipment and personnel was landed.

(2) The advance Division CP was landed on Yellow One in an LSM at 1500 D plus 3 and was established and opened at 1600 in TA 164 Y. The Commanding General with the bulk of the Division CP landed on Yellow Two by LSM about 1100 on D plus 4. The Division CP closed on the USS BAYFIELD (APA-33) at 0930 and opened ashore at the advance CP location at the same time. The Division Chief of Staff with a small party remained on the BAYFIELD to act as liaison with the Commander of Transron 15 and he and his party landed early in the morning of D plus 7. All elements of the Division were ashore by D plus 7 and general unloading started at that time. With the landing of the Commanding General, the Tactical Control Officer on the Transron Control Vessel also landed but Logistical and LVT Control Officers remained aboard until unloading was completed.

(3) For complete details of the landing of the various elements of the Division during this period, see Section IV and the various reports of the organizations concerned, which are appended as Annexes to this Report.

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SECTION III - SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

4. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) The number of LSTs made available to the Division for this operation was insufficient, particularly in view of the restrictions placed on the "special" types (Evacuation Control and Radar). It is considered that a minimum of eight (8) LSTs should be assigned to each assault RCT as anything less than this number will not permit adequate tactical loading and landing of two assault BLTs. The presence of one LST, specially fitted for casualty evacuation control, in such a group would not be a serious interference as their use is deemed essential. However the present practice of embarking numbers of Naval personnel, both officers and men, who are concerned with the launching and operation of pontoon barges and causeways and of LCTs should be stopped. These personnel should be carried to the target in other shipping and transferred to the LSTs after the assault troops have been landed. If any "radar" LSTs are required in future operations they should be in addition to those assigned assault echelons.

(b) Although cooperation and coordination by the LST Flotilla Commander was excellent throughout the operation and the initial operation of the LSTs was highly satisfactory, considerable difficulty was encountered with Group Commanders and, in particular, with individual Ship Commanders in the days following the initial landing. This trouble had to do principally with effecting movement as desired, and required by the difficult unloading conditions on the beaches, and with the old complaint of failure of individual LSTs to retrieve LVTs for necessary fueling and servicing. In connection with moving LSTs, a great deal of the difficulty encountered was caused by the refusal of Commander Transron 15 to delegate the necessary authority to his Transron Control Officer and his insistence on the personal issuance of such orders. In connection with the failure of certain LSTs to retrieve LVTs, particularly at night and under bad sea conditions, the Captains of these ships should have had impressed upon them the responsibility they bear in accomplishing this task when engaged in operation with these vehicles. A number of LVTs were lost during this operation due to the refusal of LSTs to take them aboard.

(c) As with the LSTs, the initial operations of the LSMs were very satisfactory but the same difficulty in obtaining their movement, loading, and beaching prevailed and to even a greater extent than with the LSTs. Some of this difficulty can be attributed to the fact that uncertainty of loading plans and the existence

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SECTION III - SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

until the initial Rehearsal in MAALAEA BAY had been completed. Further, these ships sailed in early echelons with the tractor groups and this prevented Division officers holding conferences with the Flotilla and Group Commanders in order to coordinate and explain the plans of the Division for their use. However, as in the case of the LSTs, the major factor with respect to these ships was the refusal of Commander Transron 15 to delegate authority for their control to the Transron Control Officers.

(1) The landing control for this operation, although it accomplished the task, was neither as satisfactory nor as efficient as for the Marianas Operation. In addition to the remarks noted in paragraphs (b) and (c) above, there was a tendency to centralize control in the higher echelons. There is no question that the dispatch of the initial assault waves should be a direct function of "Central Control". However, it is believed that this control should not extend beyond the first three waves and that thereafter the dispatching of all waves and all traffic to and from the beach should be a direct function of the "Beach Control" (TransDiv Control Officer). The function of the "Transron Control", and of the "Central Control" after the dispatch of the initial waves, should be supervisory in character. This system was employed with great success in the SAIPAN and TINIAN Operations. Another change which seriously hampered control of landing operations was the substitution of LCP(L)s for LCCs as traffic control boats off the individual beaches. These craft had inadequate communication and were too small. To the coxswains and drivers of boats and landing vehicles they looked just like another salvage boat cruising around off the beaches. At no time were these craft able to exercise effective control over traffic to and from the beaches. LCP(L)s are excellent as tenders for all Control Ships and their use should be confined to this duty.

(1) Control communications, with the exception of the LCP(L)s used as traffic control boats, were excellent. The greatest improvement was noted in the communication channels set up for control of LVTs which worked better than any previous operation.

(e) Refueling of LVTs developed into a major problem during the first four days of the operation. During the critical unloading period, from D plus 1 to D plus 4, considerable delay resulted from inadequate arrangements for refueling. Although the Division had recommended that each LST carry from 80 to 100 drums of gasoline this was cut to twenty (20) drums by the Navy. This small

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SHIP TO SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

quantity of fuel was quickly consumed and by D plus 1 little if any remained on the LSTs. The use of LCVPs and LCMs as Bowser boats became difficult during the bad weather condition which developed beginning with D plus 1. The plan to use pontoon barges, anchored close in shore, as refueling points failed as these craft proved unmanageable in the high wind and rough sea. The problem was partially solved by transferring large quantities of gasoline from APAs and AKAs to LSTs. This was a slow expedient and could have been obviated by the initial loading of adequate fuel on LSTs at the Staging Area. The problem was not finally solved until, by the use of LSMs, adequate dumps were established ashore.

(f) The use of specially fitted LSTs for Casualty Evacuation Control was highly satisfactory and a great improvement over the methods used in previous operations. From a control standpoint, the only difficulty encountered was with the pontoon barges, which were secured alongside the LST and were used for casualty transfer stations. The continual pounding of these barges in the rough sea by LVTs, DUKWs and landing craft, punctured some of the pontoon sections and caused them to fill with water. This caused the barges to list and made the transfer of casualties very difficult. It is recommended that these barges be well protected by fenders in the future. Some difficulty was experienced in keeping these LSTs on proper station but on the whole their performance was excellent.

(g) One of the most serious, and largest problems encountered during the landing operation was the clearance of wrecked landing craft and equipment from the beaches. The use of LCP(R)s to salvage wrecked craft from beaches proved wholly inadequate and in future operations where similar conditions are anticipated, a heavier type craft, specially fitted and manned by trained personnel will be necessary. Also Beach and Shore Parties will have to receive more training in the clearance of wrecked landing vehicles and equipment from beach areas.

(h) The initial operations of Beach and Shore Parties were badly disorganized. The main contributing factors to this condition were as follows:

Practically all of the Beach Parties and the great majority of the Shore Party were composed of "green" personnel and lacked training and experience. In the case of the Shore Parties, the bulk was composed of Naval Construction Battalion and Marine Replacement Draft personnel who had no previous experience and had been attached to the Division a very short time prior to the operation.

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SHORE OPERATIONS (Cont'd).

Heavy casualties, particularly on D and D plus 1, which in some cases amounted to 80% of the officers and 50% of the men. This resulted in a loss of control and seriously retarded the initial organization of the beaches.

The inability, due to the extremely difficult landing conditions, of getting sufficient heavy Shore Party equipment ashore early.

Conditions began to improve on D plus 2 with the landing of Replacement Beach Parties and additional Shore Party personnel and equipment. Thereafter progress in beach organization was rapid and by the afternoon of D plus 3 was well under control. By D plus 5 the Division beaches were in an excellent state of organization and continued so, though landing conditions remained bad and the beach areas remained under intermittent enemy fire for many days.

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SECTION IV

NARRATIVE OF OPERATION
(See Map, Progress of Attack)

1. FROM 0900, 19 FEB 45 TO 1800, 19 FEB 45 (D-DAY)

(a) Elements of TF 54, reinforced by elements of TF 58, opened fire at sunrise in assigned areas of responsibility. Beginning at H-45 all fires were intensified in scheduled series along the beaches and on the Division right flank, concentrating along the beaches from H-15 to H-3, thereupon initiating a rolling barrage forward of the assault forces. Shifting progressively 200 yards inland, fires were 400 yards from the beach when the first wave landed.

(b) B-24's of CTF 94 bombed the objective at 0730. From H-55 to H-35 support aircraft of CTF 58 and CTG 52.2 struck the flanks and the landing beaches. From H-5 to about H-2 these units repeated their attacks on the flanks and beaches, strafing inland 200 yards in advance of the assault troops.

(c) After the above Naval and Air bombardment, the 4th Marine Division (Reinforced) landed at 0902 on Beaches Yellow and Blue with the mission of seizing O-1 in its zone of action, and protecting the right (NE) flank of the Corps, then on Corps order seize O-2, prepared for further operations to seize the remainder of IWO JIMA within its zone, in order to assist in securing that Island and destroying the enemy thereon.

(d) Initial resistance was moderate but increased in intensity as units advanced inland. No obstacles and only a few land mines were encountered on the beaches, but the entire zone of action of the Division was subjected to heavy artillery, rocket, mortar, machine gun and rifle fire throughout the day, causing many casualties, particularly along the beaches. The fire from these weapons was delivered from commanding ground and from well-concealed, well emplaced concrete pillboxes, blockhouses, and caves.

(e) Inland from Yellow Beaches to Airfield No. 1 the advance of troops and movement of vehicles was impeded by loose volcanic sand, abrupt terraces, and a generally steep slope from the water's edge to the rim of Airfield No. 1.

(f) Egress from Blue Beach was similar, and, in addition, on the extreme right of the zone the entire area of both Blue and Yellow beaches was dominated by sheer cliffs rising above quarries, necessitating hazardous envelopments from the

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order to neutralize those heights.

(g) RCT 23 landed on Yellow Beaches at 0902 with two battalions abreast, 1/23 on the left and 2/23 on the right. The attack of this Combat Team was of necessity a direct frontal assault against well-organized positions on commanding ground. At 1655 orders were issued to BLT 2/24 to pass through BLT 2/23 in order to seize the edge of the Airfield. The passage of lines in this instance was postponed until just prior to darkness because of the initiation of an advance by BLT 2/23 to the Airfield. Relief by BLT 2/24 was completed by 1915.

(h) RCT 25 landed on Beach Blue 1 at 0902 with two battalions abreast, 1/25 on the left and 3/25 on the right. Because of the restricted beach area (Beach Blue 2 being untenable for a landing), the right battalion landed in a column of companies. This RCT had the difficult mission not only of landing on a narrow front, but also of delivering a frontal attack with the left battalion, as the right battalion, preparing for the envelopment of the heights, executed a turning movement to the right to secure Beach Blue 2.

Casualties were excessive, necessitating the passage of reserve battalions of both RCT's through assault units. The Commanding General, in order not to allay the momentum of the attack, ordered two BLT's of the Division Reserve, RCT 24, to land and to support the attack. BLT 1/24 landed on Blue Beaches at 1632 and was attached to RCT 25. BLT 2/24 landed at 1650 and was attached to RCT 23 as noted above. RCT 24, less two BLT's, completed landing at 2030 and assembled in TA's 165 0 and 166 FG as Division Reserve.

(i) 14th Marines. 1/14 in direct support of RCT 25, landed and was in position at 1700. 2/14 in direct support of RCT 23, landed and was in position at 2130. The Artillery Regiment less these two battalions remained afloat.

(j) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "C", in normal attachment to RCT 23, began landing from LSM's on Yellow Beaches at 0940. Because of difficulties at the beach and inland the company did not complete landing until 1300. Considerable difficulty was experienced in negotiating the loose sand; as a result of that and enemy fire many tanks became inoperative. Because RCT 23 anticipated the need for additional tanks to knock out pillboxes holding up the advance, one platoon of Company "B" was attached to Company "C".

Company "A", attached to RCT 25, began landing from LSM's on Blue Beaches at 1017. Although the terrain inland from these beaches was somewhat more favorable for the operation of tanks

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

than was that of Yellow Beaches, many mines were encountered causing delay in the commitment of the entire company. Because of initial losses and slightly more favorable terrain, Company "B", less one platoon, was attached to Company "A" during the afternoon.

(k) Call fires were delivered by ships assigned to assault battalions. VOF planes, employed with organic ship spot planes, augmented the search for the location of enemy artillery. Counter-battery fires against both AA and artillery positions predominated.

(l) Although the penetration was not as deep as had been planned, the landing was successful. The combination of a well organized and determined defense and extremely rough terrain retarded the progress of the attack, but by late afternoon the assault elements had reached the edge of Airfield No. 1, and had made considerable progress towards the capture of the high ground on the right flank (See Map, Progress of Attack).

(m) At 1700 all units were ordered to consolidate positions on the most favorable ground, prepared to continue the attack at 0830, 20 February, 1945.

(n) Weather and Visibility. The weather was fair, visibility good, except where impaired by smoke drifting across the beaches from the northwest.

2. FROM 1800, 19 FEB 45 TO 1800, 20 FEB 45 (D PLUS 1)

(a) During the night units consolidated positions, established firm contact and made preparations for continuing the attack the following morning. Contact was maintained with the enemy during the night. All units received mortar and artillery fire, but otherwise the night was generally quiet, with no other activity to the front. BLT 2/24, attached to RCT 23, relieved BLT 2/23 in the line at 1915, BLT 2/23 reverting to RCT 23 Reserve.

(b) Because BLT 3/25 had sustained approximately 50% casualties, and because complete relief over such rugged terrain was impracticable, two companies of BLT 1/24, which was attached to RCT 25, were attached to BLT 3/25 in the line at 1845 and 2053 respectively.

(c) Assigned units of TF 54, reinforced by elements of TF 58, provided illumination and harassing fires during the night.

(d) Black Cat night observers were employed but were unable to carry out missions effectively because

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

other reasons discussed elsewhere.

(e) Supported by CTF 54 and elements of CTF 58 firing a coordinated naval gunfire preparation from K-15 to K-hour, and by two direct support artillery battalions furnishing local preparation fires for each assault RCT, the Division continued the attack in accordance with VAC LANFOR order, at King-hour, 0830, to seize O-1. There was no change in boundaries or formation; the Line of Departure was the present front lines.

(f) Progress was made initially on the left, but intense machine gun, heavy mortar and artillery fire halted the advance during the afternoon. Little progress was made on the right.

(g) RCT 23, with BLT 3/23 on the left, BLT 2/24 on the right, and BLT's 1/23 and 2/23 in reserve, jumped off at the following hours: 3/23 at 0830, and 2/24, delayed for 15 minutes while waiting for tanks to support the attack, at 0845. The northern and eastern extremities of Airfield No. 1 were secured after a slow and bitterly contested advance. Upon the request of the 4th Division, VAC LANFOR ordered elements of the 2d Bomb Disposal Company to land at 1517 and to report immediately to RCT 23, reporting to the 4th Engineer Battalion when its duty with RCT 23 was completed.

(h) RCT 25, with 1/25, 2/25 and 1/24 in line and 3/25 in reserve, continued the attack on the left at 0855 in conjunction with RCT 23. Little progress was made by this Combat Team, since it was imperative that it conform to the advance of RCT 23. Due to difficulty in distinguishing boundaries on the ground, BLT 1/25 fought most of the day in zone of RCT 23. BLT 2/24, attached to RCT 23, assumed control of this area at 1630. One platoon of Company "B", 4th Engineer Battalion was attached to BLT 1/24 for the period and operated with RCT 25.

(i) RCT 24, less two BLT's, remained in an assembly area in TA's 166 FG and 165 O as Division Reserve.

(j) The 14th Marines, less 4/14, completed landing at 1730. Battalions immediately went into position and registered to support the attack.

(k) 4th Tank Battalion. Companies "A" and "B" (less 1 platoon), attached to RCT 25, remained on call most of the day while Engineers removed land mines obstructing the advance. Company "C" (plus 1 platoon of Company "B") supported the advance of RCT 23, destroying pillboxes, automatic weapons and gun positions.

(l) Naval Gunfire. Units of CTF 54 and elements of CTF 58

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

continued to support the action with normal fires. Throughout the day fires were intense, with all ships searching for enemy gun and mortar positions. Fires were restricted about 1500, as the cloud cover after that time hindered float and VOF planes.

(m) Aircraft from the above units executed support missions. Search and attack patrols were instituted by CASCU as requested by the Division. Day and night tactical observers were employed together with NGF and artillery air spotters. VMO-4 did not operate. Air support began securing at 1515.

(n) Although combat efficiency was reduced by heavy casualties, the capture of Airfield No. 1 was completed by 1600, and an advance of 200 to 1000 yards had been made across the Division front.

(o) At 1630, upon VAC LANFOR order, units were ordered to consolidate positions on the most favorable ground, prepared to continue the attack at 0810, 21 February, 1945. Particular attention was directed toward anti-mechanized defense and firm contact between units right and left.

(p) Weather and Visibility. Weather fair and visibility good during the morning. In the afternoon clouds and rain decreased the visibility.

3. FROM 1800, 20 FEB 45 TO 1800, 21 FEB 45 (D PLUS 2)

(a) Because of enemy activity and troop movements along the entire front, RCT 24 (less 2 BLT's), the Division Reserve, was ordered at 2015 to be prepared to be committed on short notice in the zones of action of either RCT 23 or RCT 25.

(b) Rockets or heavy mortars were reported falling in the zones of action of each Combat Team and in rear areas. Since this fire supposedly was coming not only from the front but from the rear in the vicinity of Suribachi, the 5th Marine Division artillery was requested to execute counter-battery fire on positions in the Suribachi area. RCT 23 reported enemy tanks in the vicinity of TA 181 S; artillery fires were requested, and the tanks were either destroyed or dispersed.

(c) At 0443 RCT 25 repulsed an attempted infiltration by approximately 100 Japs; the lines remained intact and all the enemy were killed.

(d) Naval Gunfire. Units of CTF 54 and CTF 58 maintained

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SECTION IV. NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

illumination and intensive harassing and defensive fires throughout the night in an attempt to reduce enemy shelling to a minimum.

(e) Night air observers furnished one flight, returning to base on account of bad weather.

(f) 14th Marines. 4/14 completed landing and was in position and registering at 0638. Four guns were operative. Seven had been lost in the sinking of DUKW's, and one was ineffective because of defective sights.

(g) Following a coordinated artillery and naval gunfire preparation from King-hour minus 20 to King-hour plus 20, and a prepared air strike (Plan VICTOR) from King-hour plus 20 to King-hour plus 40, with air on call prior to King-hour, the Division continued the attack at 0810, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 1-45, to seize O-2.

(h) The boundary between the 4th and 5th Divisions was the present boundary extended, inclusive to the 5th Division, and the boundary between Regiments was as shown on the map, Progress of Attack.

(i) Substantial gains were made initially on the right, but further progress was held up by extensive minefields, intense artillery, mortar, automatic weapons, and sniper fire. An advance of approximately 500 yards was made on the extreme left of the Division zone of action.

(j) RCT 23, with BLT 2/23 on the left and BLT 2/24 on the right, BLT's 1/23 and 3/23 following at 600 yards, continued the attack at King-hour. The advance against numerous pillboxes and extensive minefields was extremely costly and very slow. All minefields were expertly covered by mortar, artillery and machine gun fire. Advance was made only on the left of the RCT zone, where slightly defiladed areas permitted local and restricted envelopments. Maximum use was made of all supporting weapons. Because of the difficult and unusual terrain it was necessary for mutual contact to be established on the left between BLT 1/27 and RCT 23.

(k) RCT 25, with BLT's 1/25, 2/25, 1/24 in line, and 3/25 in reserve, continued the attack at King-hour. BLT 1/24 held in its initial position until 0930 in order to straighten lines. The attack of the RCT was held up initially by minefields laid in rough terrain and by sniper, artillery and heavy mortar fire. Under constant pressure, resistance gradually weakened in the center, and gains varied from 50 to 300 yards.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

At 1430 BLT 3/25 was committed between BLT 1/25 and BLT 2/25. This move was necessary because of a gap which had developed between the two BLT's. One (1) company of BLT 3/25 and one (1) company of BLT 1/24 was reconstituted as RCT reserve.

(l) RCT 24, less 2 BLT's, continued in Division Reserve in the same location.

(m) At 0915 the following message was received from VAC LANFOR: "Prepare receive RCT 21 (3d Mar Div) Yellow Beaches, beginning 1130. Assign assembly area your zone. Will be released to you on your request to assist if required in capture of Airfield No. 2. If and when committed designate one integrated RCT as VAC LANFOR Reserve and assign suitable assembly area." The time date group on the message was 210726.

As a result of this message Division requested either the Commanding Officer or the Executive Officer of RCT 21 to report aboard the Division Command Ship for orientation. The RCT Commander so reported.

(n) At 0917 RCT 21 was directed to land as ordered, assemble in TA 165 HIKLMQ, and await orders. Upon Division request, RCT 21 was released to Division control at 1630. The last unit completed landing at 1720, and the entire RCT was in the above assembly areas at the close of the period.

(o) 14th Marines. 1/14 fired 1500 rounds on preparation, counter-battery and continued supporting the attack of RCT 25. 2/14 fired 463 rounds on preparation and continued the support of the attack of RCT 23. This battalion also fired 900 rounds on counter-battery fire across the Division front. 3/14 reinforced 1/14 on preparation and counter-battery fires.

(p) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "A" and Company "B" (less 1 platoon), attached to RCT 25, supported the advance and were instrumental in driving the enemy from the heights of the quarry and cliff areas on the extreme right of the Division zone.

Company "C" (plus 1 platoon), attached to RCT 23, supported the advance but was held up by the enforced slowness of the engineers in removing minefields under heavy fire.

(q) Aviation. CTF 58 and CTG 52.2 continued to furnish air missions, and CTF 58 voluntarily increased the size and number of air strikes effectively. AA fire damaged two Division Tactical Air Observation planes. Naval Gunfire and Artillery air operations:

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

conducted normal missions. VMO-4 did not operate.

(r) Naval Gunfire. Units of CTF 54, reinforced by elements of CTF 58, continued to support the attack. Numerous enemy artillery, mortar and rocket positions were reported silenced or neutralized.

Additional elements of CTF 58 arrived in the early morning to reinforce the present naval strength and were assigned sectors of responsibility along with other major units in an "all-out" attempt to search out and neutralize enemy artillery and mortar fire. Organic float planes were again reinforced with VOF planes to provide a maximum of observation facilities for firing ships.

(s) Amphibious Tractors. The 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion was assigned to beach defense and the 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion was utilized to supply all units with ammunition and supplies.

(t) Assistant Division Commander. The ADC was ordered to land at 1245 to report on beach conditions and to select a site for the Division CP. He arrived at the CP of RCT 24 at 1255 and reported that although conditions on Beaches Yellow 1 and 2 were still unsatisfactory on account of wreckage of boats and equipment, conditions were improving and beaches were sufficiently open to receive some LCM's and LCVP's. He further reported that Beach Blue 1 was under fire and that an ammunition dump had been hit. Explosions from this dump were endangering both Blue and Yellow Beaches.

At 1502 the ADC reported that after consulting with all RCT Commanders he was of the opinion that the Division CP should remain aboard the USS BAYFIELD until February 22d.

At 1600 the ADC further reported that because of the location of assembly areas of RCT 21 and the general congestion of beaches and inland areas he recommended that RCT 21, instead of relieving RCT 25, as had been previously planned, relieve RCT 23. The Commanding General concurred in the above recommendations.

(u) At 1620 all units were ordered to consolidate present positions for the night at 1700, paying particular attention to contact with adjacent units.

(v) At 1654 the following warning order was issued: "This is a warning order. RCT 21 released to 4th Division. Intend pass 21st through 23d, repeat 23d, tomorrow AM to continue attack present 23d zone. Elements 4th Tank Battalion and 14th Marines, now

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

supporting 23d, will be assigned direct support 21st effective upon relief of 23d. Arrange necessary liaison and reconnaissance prior thereto. Upon relief, intend revert 23d to VAC LANFOR Reserve. RCT 23 recommend assembly area."

(w) Combat efficiency, reduced by heavy casualties and battle fatigue, was estimated at the close of the period to be 68%.

(x) An advance of 50 to 500 yards had been made across the Division front. The enemy, employing every type of weapon available, was being slowly driven back yard by yard to strongly prepared positions across the center of the Island.

(y) Weather and Visibility. The weather was fair and visibility was good.

4. FROM 1800, 21 FEB 45 TO 1800, 22 FEB 45 (D PLUS 3)

(a) During the night units consolidated their positions on the most favorable ground and established contact with units on the flanks.

(b) RCT's 21 and 23 carried out preparations to effect the relief indicated in the Warning Order of 211654.

(c) RCT 23 reported the following areas in which the Combat Team would assemble upon the relief of RCT 21: TA's 164 E - 165 PQGU. BLT 2/24 was to be assembled in TA's 165 E and 166 A, as requested by RCT 24.

(d) At 2300 RCT 23 reported that 3/23 was receiving a counter-attack in force on its right and that the enemy was converging on RJ 283 in TA 182 P, along the road from NE to E. At 2340 RCT 23 reported that requested Artillery and Naval Gunfire appeared to have dispersed the attack, but that enemy units were still attempting infiltration. At 0020 small groups were observed and fired on in TA 182 G.

(e) In order to be prepared for any eventuality the Division, at 2345, requested permission from VAC LANFOR to use RCT 21, if necessary, to assist in repelling the counter-attack. The request was approved at 0030, with the provision that an equivalent VAC LANFOR Reserve be reconstituted as soon as practicable after the commitment.

(f) At 2325 information was received that the 4th Battalion, 13th Marines, would be available to the 4th Division.

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SECTION 1 AREA OF OPERATION

1200, 22 February.

(g) At 0300 RCT 25 reported three air bombs were dropped behind its lines.

(h) At 0400 VAC LANFOR confirmed flash red from 0316 to 0346.

(i) Night air observers did not reach the objective because of the air raid. The Division night air observer's base was damaged and inoperative, necessitating his transfer.

(j) Direct and general fire support ships, plus one mortar boat unit, fired extensive harassing missions throughout the night, neutralizing enemy installations and, on several occasions, assisting in turning back enemy counter-attacks.

(k) At 0630 the Second Section, 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment, was ordered attached to RCT 21 as of 0700.

(l) At 0741 the Division requested the Division Control Officer, on board PC(S) 1452, to have LVT(4)'s meet the Advance CP Party on Beach Yellow 1 about 1000. The Party was to report to the Control Officer before landing. At 0830, however, a message was received from the Division Control Officer, stating that surf conditions would not permit landing boats and suggesting that the Party remain aboard the USS BAYFIELD until conditions improved.

(m) At 0755 RCT 21, in the process of relieving RCT 23, reported that it was held up by enemy fire and requested that BLT 2/24 remain in its present position and be attached to RCT 21 in order to continue the attack at King-hour. The Commanding General did not approve.

(n) Preceded by a coordinated artillery and Naval Gunfire preparation from King minus 20 to King-hour, and with 8 VF and 8 VT planes on station at 0730, the Division continued the attack, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 2-45, at King-hour, 0835. Objective - O-2; boundaries - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(o) RCT 21, with BLT 1/21 on the right, BLT 2/21 on the left, and BLT 3/21 in reserve, was to pass through RCT 23 prior to 0730. Although movement to effect relief was begun at 0500, progress was slow because of heavy mortar and machine gun fire. This RCT was under heavy fire from the first movement towards the

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

of departure. Defenses to the front were composed of a succession of mutually supporting pillboxes emplaced on the high ground between Airfields No. 1 and No. 2. These pillboxes were equally well protected on the flanks, and only direct hits by major caliber weapons seemed to have any effect on them. Because of the restricted nature of the area, and because of the excellent defensive system installed, any maneuver, other than a frontal assault, was impossible. As a result, progress during the morning was very slow, but in the afternoon the lines were advanced 200 to 400 yards.

(p) RCT 25 assisted the advance of RCT 21 by fire, but necessarily had to conform to the movement of RCT 21 on its left. The resistance and defenses in this zone were just as determined as those previously described. On the right RCT 25 advanced approximately 50 to 200 yards. On the left a substantial gain was made during the day but at dark the lines had to be pulled back to the original morning position in order to tie in with RCT 21 on the left.

(q) RCT 24, less 2 BLT's, continued in Division Reserve until BLT 2/24 was relieved and reverted to parent control at 1200. BLT 2/24 assembled in TA's 165 E and 166 A. After BLT 2/24 had reverted to RCT control, the RCT, less 1 BLT, was placed in Division Reserve and so disposed as to cover any attempted breakthrough within the Division zone.

(r) RCT 23, less the mortar platoons of BLT's 1/23 and 3/23, was to assemble in TA's 165 PUQLGH, 164 E, with the CP at 164 Y, as VAC LANFOR Reserve. Mortar platoons supporting the advance of RCT 21 were to be released about 1500. Complete relief of this RCT by RCT 21, however, was not effected until approximately 1130, and it was late afternoon before RCT 23 was entirely disengaged. By the end of the period, the RCT was in the designated assembly area and had made reconnaissance of the zones of action of RCT 25 and the 5th Division.

(s) 14th Marines. 1/14 furnished direct support for RCT 25 and 2/14 supported RCT 21. 3/14 was in general support until 1300, when it reinforced the fires of 2/14. 4/14 was in general support. 4/13 was in general support until 1200.

At 1229 the Division, upon VAC LANFOR Order, directed the 14th Marines to prepare to move further inland in order to clear beaches to permit general unloading. The movement was initiated at 1425, after the suggested plan of displacement was approved by VAC LANFOR.

(t) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "A" and Company "B" (less

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OF OPERATION.

1 platoon) continued support of RCT 25. Company "C" (plus 1 platoon) was attached to RCT 21 and closely supported the attack of that Combat Team in the area northeast of Airfield No. 1. This company operated principally against pillboxes and automatic weapons. Within the battalion, 26 tanks were operational.

(u) Aviation. CTF 52.2 continued furnishing support aviation. No land based aircraft were employed, and requests for air missions exceeded the capabilities of the available planes. No Division Tactical Observers were on station. LST 776, equipped with "Brodie Gear", was requested to advise regarding the feasibility of launching and recovering VMO planes. RCT 23 and the 4th Engineer Battalion were also directed to submit recommendations as to whether or not Airfield No. 1 was suitable for the operation of VMO planes.

(v) Naval Gunfire. CTF 54, reinforced, continued to support the attack with normal fires. The search for enemy gun positions on the objective was continued throughout the day until the air spot was forced down by lack of visibility.

(w) Division Advance CP. At 1139 the Division Advance CP Party started loading into LSM 59, and a message was sent to the Division Tactical Control Officer to have a guide and four (4) LVT(4)'s meet the party on Beach Yellow 1. At 1500, after reporting to the Control Vessel and transferring the Artillery Officer from that Vessel to the LSM, the Advance CP Party landed on Beach Yellow 1. The party contacted the guide and proceeded to TA 164 Y, arriving there at 1600. An Advance Division CP was immediately set up. Because of unfavorable surf and other conditions, it was suggested that the Division Commander wait until the following day to establish the Division CP. The ADC concurred in this recommendation.

(x) Because of weather conditions favorable for an enemy counter-attack, RCT 24, at 1617, was ordered to be prepared to relieve RCT 25 on short notice.

(y) At 1623 the following dispatch was sent to all units: "Consolidate 1630. Weather ideal for enemy concentration and counter-attack tonight. Prepare strong defense in depth. Maintain contact with adjacent units on flanks."

(z) Combat efficiency, reduced by casualties and battle fatigue was estimated to be 65%.

(aa) An advance of from 100 to 400 yards against determined resistance was made across the Division. The Division

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

prepared to continue the attack on the following day.

(bb) Weather and Visibility. Strong winds from the south-east, rain during the afternoon, moderate swells, and unfavorable surf conditions prevailed during the day.

5. FROM 1800, 22 FEB 45 TO 1800, 23 FEB 45 (D PLUS 4)

(a) At 2000 the Division Advance CP Party notified the Division that the Advance CP had been set up and that communication with all units had been established. At 0930, 23 February, the 4th Division CP was closed on the USS BAYFIELD and opened at the Advance CP (TA 164 Y) at the same time.

(b) At 2000 it was requested that the Division Reconnaissance Company, the 4th Platoon of the Military Police Company, and the remainder of Headquarters Company be ordered ashore the following morning for assignment to CP security. The Reconnaissance Company was ordered to land at daylight.

(c) At 2140 it was suggested, upon recommendation of the ADC and RCT 23 Commander, that replacements be released to RCT 23 the next day, and to RCT 25 when that unit reverted to Division Reserve.

(d) At 0019, in Division Operation Order No. 4-45, RCT 24 was ordered to relieve RCT 25 in its zone prior to 0600. BLT 1/24, previously attached to RCT 25, passed to the control of RCT 24 at 0600. BLT 2/25, in the line, also passed to control of RCT 24 at 0600. The Division Order further directed that RCT 24 attack in the present RCT 25 zone and seize O-2, and assist RCT 21 in the capture of Airfield No. 2. When relieved, RCT 25, less BLT 2/25, was to assemble in the vicinity of TA's 165 EJ and 166 AF as Division Reserve.

(e) At 0415 the following message was received from enemy sources: "About 50 enemy troops infiltrated 200 meters northeast of TA 201 QR. Use password SAHURA." Artillery was fired on this position with unknown results.

(f) At 0455 a small counter-attack was repulsed by RCT 25 in TA 183 CD.

(g) No Division tactical missions were flown during the night.

(h) Night harassing fires by Naval U

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because of the depleted supply of ammunition, but few urgent missions were required.

(i) Other than the above, and enemy mortar fire falling in the Division Advance CP at 0645, the night was comparatively quiet.

(j) At 0725 a dispatch received from VAC LANFOR stated that in order to facilitate the advance of the 5th Division and to assist in the advance of RCT 21, the 5th Division was authorized to move into the 4th Division zone over the boundary as necessary. Close liaison was to be maintained between adjacent Regiments on the boundary. All units concerned were to be kept advised of the plan and actual movements. VAC LANFOR was to be advised if a change in boundaries would facilitate the general advance.

(k) Following an intense coordinated artillery and naval gunfire preparation from King minus 45 to King-hour, and a prepared air strike, plan VICTOR, from King plus 15 to King plus 30, the Division continued the attack at King-hour, 0730, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 3-45 Objective and boundaries - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(l) RCT 21, on the left, was unable to make any advance except on the extreme right because of difficult terrain and extremely stubborn enemy resistance from pillboxes, emplaced tanks, 47mm guns sighted so as to cover both airstrips of Airfield No. 2, high velocity flat trajectory weapons, heavy artillery, mortar and automatic weapons fire. Continuous artillery, naval gunfire and air support failed to break the determined and fanatical resistance in this critical area.

(m) RCT 24, on the right, with BLT's 2/24, 3/24, 1/24 in line and 2/25 in reserve, advanced an average of 300 yards along the entire front against moderate to heavy resistance. BLT's 2/24 and 3/24 moved out in time to effect the relief of RCT 25, but because of broken and rugged terrain and enemy fire were not able to completely effect this relief until about 0830. At 0850 all units of this Combat Team, supported by tanks, were moving forward all along the line.

(n) RCT 25, less BLT 2/25, when relieved, reverted to Division Reserve in TA's 165 EJ and 166 AF.

(o) RCT 23 continued in Corps Reserve.

(p) 14th Marines. 3/14 furnished support for RCT 24, 2/14 for RCT 21. 1/14 and 4/14 were in support of 1/13.

UNCLASSIFIED

AFFIRMATIVE OF OPERATION.

5th Division, was attached to the 14th Marines in general support from 0730 until the end of the period. All battalions fired extensive counter-battery, preparation and close support fires. A flash ranging team was established at 1430 on SURIBACHI Volcano and began operations. At 1900 sound ranging was established and located six (6) targets.

(q) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "A" and Company "B" (less 1 platoon) were attached to RCT 24. Company "C" (plus 1 platoon) was attached to RCT 21. Neither company was employed to any great extent because of the unusually rough terrain. At the end of the period 27 tanks were operational.

(r) Aviation. CTF 52.2 furnished normal support missions. No land-based aircraft were available, and no tactical day missions were flown. VMO-4 did not operate. The Division Radar Station, capable of reporting bogies at ranges exceeding 90 miles, was established. Work was started on the northeast-southwest airstrip of Airfield No. 1 for the use of VMO-4 planes.

(s) Naval Gunfire. Elements of CTF 54 continued to support the attack. Normal support missions were fired throughout the day with emphasis remaining on counter-battery fire.

(t) Since RCT 21 had been unable to advance during the day, and because RCT 24 was restricted to conform to the movements of RCT 21, and in order to prepare for a concentrated and intensive bombardment, warning orders to consolidate for the night were issued to RCT 24 at 1500, and to RCT 21 at 1630. RCT 21 was in contact with RCT 26 on its left, but a gap of about 200 yards, which was filled by RCT 24 before night, existed on the right.

(u) Combat Efficiency, reduced by casualties and battle fatigue, was estimated to be 63%.

(v) Moderate advance was made on the right of the Division front, but no appreciable gain was made on the left. The Division was prepared to continue the attack on the following day.

(w) Weather and Visibility. Winds gusty 15 to 25 MPH from the northwest, overcast most of period, visibility from 4 miles to unlimited, sea and surf moderated during period permitting landing of small boats.

(x) At 1605 VAC LANFOR offered the Division the use of 7.2 rockets if they could be unloaded. The Division replied affirmatively and requested that the landing of 14 rockets be completed.

UNCLASSIFIED

be expedited.

(y) At 1639 the Division requested that 4/13 remain attached during the night because of the extended front. VAC LANFOR concurred. 4/13 was available to reinforce the 14th until time for preparation fires on 24 February.

6. FROM 1800, 23 FEB 45 TO 1800, 24 FEB 45 (D PLUS 5)

(a) The enemy attempted small patrol infiltration during the night in front of both RCT's, but only seven enemy were reported to have been able to get through the lines. Contact with the enemy was maintained throughout the night. Sporadic mortar and artillery fire fell in all areas during the hours of darkness.

(b) There were no night air observers on station.

(c) The 726th SAW Radar functioned efficiently during air raids but sustained damage during the night.

(d) Direct support ships, reinforced by gunboat units and VAC LANFOR controlled general support ships, fired harassing and illuminating fires throughout the night.

(e) Following a deliberate destructive bombardment by Naval Units with 8" or heavier caliber, from King minus 75 to King minus 15, against targets in areas 199 GHLMJO and 200 FKP, with a maximum VT and VF air strike on TA 199 O and 200 KP from King minus 15 to King-hour, and a coordinated Corps-Division Artillery concentration and preparation from King minus 30 to King-hour, the Division, making the main effort on the left, continued the attack, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 4-45, at King-hour, 0915, to seize a limited objective, O-1A. Boundary between Divisions - present boundary from front lines to TA 199 V, northwest to TA 216 W, 216 M; Line of Departure - present front lines.

(f) RCT 21, with BLT 3/21 on the right, BLT 2/21 on the left, and BLT 1/21 in reserve, and with Companies "A" and "C", 4th Tank Battalion attached but under tactical control of Commanding Officer 5th Tank Battalion, was supposed to coordinate its attack with that of the tanks. The attack, delayed by the late arrival of the tanks, was not initiated until 0930; thus a great deal of the effectiveness of the preparation was lost. During the morning a slow advance closed out the reentrant in the zone of BLT 3/21, and by 1130 the RCT had reached a general line along the southeastern edge of Airfield No. 2. Stiff resistance from the opposite side of the airstrip and from mortar and artillery positions to the north

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

necessitated another preparation and coordinated tank-infantry attack, which was launched at 1330. In bitter action throughout the afternoon, the RCT advanced a considerable distance on the right, with practically no gain on the left, as shown on the map, Progress of Attack. Upon consolidation for the night at 1700, difficulty was experienced in establishing firm contact between the 5th Division on the left and RCT 24 on the right. Gaps existed in the line across the east-west airstrip of Airfield No. 2 but were covered by fire.

(g) RCT 24, with BLT 2/25 attached, and with BLT's (from left to right) 2/24, 3/24 and 1/24 in the line, attacked at 0915 on schedule, and, with a steady, slow, and determined advance reached positions as shown on the map, Progress of Attack. In TA 183 CD, which was called "Charlie-Dog Ridge", bloody fighting occurred until this ridge was finally neutralized at 1520. Numerous emplacements in this area and in the draw immediately north were holding up the advance of RCT 21. At 1700 this RCT was ordered to consolidate for the night. Contact was maintained with RCT 21 on the left, and the shore line on the right.

(h) RCT 25, less 2/25, was in Division Reserve in TA 165 EJ and 166 AF. At 1600 BLT 1/25 was attached to RCT 24 for use as RCT Reserve during the night.

(i) RCT 23 continued in VAC LANFOR Reserve. BLT 2/23 was employed to mop up Airfield No. 1 and revetments adjacent thereto, but encountered no enemy. Because of the location of the Division Reserve, the extended front of RCT 24, and the casualties of RCT 21, the Division requested at 1035 that one BLT of VAC LANFOR be released to the 4th Division. At 1100 VAC LANFOR approved the request but stipulated that the BLT, in view of the contemplated employment of the 3d Division, be moved to the zone of action of RCT 24, and that it was not to be committed without further authority. At 1650 VAC LANFOR released one (1) BLT to Division; at the same time the Division assigned BLT 3/23 to RCT 21 as RCT Reserve. RCT 21 assigned BLT 3/23 to an assembly area in TA 182 UP.

(j) 14th Marines. 2/14 was in direct support of RCT 21 and 3/14 was in direct support of RCT 24. 1/14 and 4/14 were in general support. 1/14 fired supporting fires for the 5th Tank Battalion. 4/13 reinforced the fires of 2/14 from 1800 23 February to 1200 24 February.

(k) 4th Tank Battalion. Companies "A" and "C", after a delayed start, attacked in conjunction with RCT 21 along the NE-SW runway of Airfield No. 2, destroying pillboxes, AT guns, and machine gun positions. Company "B", attached to RCT 24, assisted BLT 1/24

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UNCLASSIFIED

OPERATION.

in advancing up the shore line. At the end of the period, 26 tanks were operational.

(l) Aviation. CTG 52.2 and CTF 94 continued normal air support. Air support and artillery air spot planes were considered insufficient, particularly in the zone of RCT 21. Antiaircraft was very active, and one tactical air observer of 5th Marine Division was shot down. No day air observers were provided as the 5th Division tactical observers were functioning for this Division. No land based aircraft were made available, although planes from the MAR- IANAS appeared over the objective. VMO-4 did not operate, as personnel were not landed from LST 776. The Division had 8 planes operational during this period.

(m) Naval Gunfire. Elements of CTF 54 continued to support the attack by firing normal missions. Major units of CTF 54 fired main batteries on deep support targets from King minus 75 to King minus 15 as part of the coordinated preparation for the attack. Fire support ships worked with VOF planes throughout the day.

(n) VAC LANFOR assumed command ashore at 0955 and established its CP at TA 147 R.

(o) The 4th Reconnaissance Company landed at 1115.

(p) The 3d Marine Division assumed control of the south one-half of Beach Yellow 2 and the north one-half of Red 2 at 1600 and the Division commenced landing at 1315. The Beaches were redesignated as **Black Beaches**.

(q) 4th Engineer Battalion. H & S Company was landed during the afternoon and established the Battalion CP at 165 R at 1500.

(r) Support Group. The Commanding Officer, Support Group, landed at 1743. The CP was established at TA 164 Y.

(s) Combat Efficiency was reduced by casualties and battle fatigue to an estimated 60%.

(t) Better progress was made during this period than during the succeeding one. The resistance encountered was determined, but advances of up to 1000 yards were made by some units. At the close of the period, the Division prepared to continue the attack the following day.

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(u) Weather and Visibility. Fair and warmer, wind WNW, 5 to 15 MPH, visibility and ceiling unlimited.

7. FROM 1800, 24 FEB 45 TO 1800, 25 FEB 45 (D PLUS 6)

(a) During the night all units consolidated positions, established contact with adjacent units, and maintained contact with the enemy. Activity during the night was particularly vigorous, especially on the front of RCT 21. Enemy patrols in this area consisted of small parties of about platoon strength which attempted local counter-attacks at 1925 and 2345. Heavy grenade and small arms fire was directed against this RCT during the night. The entire front and rear areas were subjected to mortar, artillery, and rocket fire. RCT 23, which had been in VAC LANFOR Reserve, was released to the Division at 0630. BLT 3/23, attached to RCT 21, was released to RCT 23 at 0530. At 0700 RCT 21 passed to the control of the 3d Marine Division.

(b) There were no night air observers on station.

(c) The 726th SAW Radar installation was again operational, tied in with AA Artillery, the 14th Marines, and with the Division Air Section for coordination and the exchange of information.

(d) Direct support ships fired harassing and illuminating fires throughout the night.

(e) Following a coordinated naval gunfire preparation from King minus 50 to King-hour, with general support ships employing major caliber batteries, and a coordinated VAC LANFOR-Division Artillery preparation from King minus 45 to King-hour, the Division, making its main effort on the left, continued the attack in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 5-45, at King-hour, 0930, to capture O-2. The 4th Division maintained contact with 3d Division. Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour; Boundaries - see map, Progress of Attack.

(f) RCT 23, with Company "C", 4th Tank Battalion (plus 2 platoons Company "B") attached, on the left, executed a passage of lines of the left battalion of RCT 24 during the preparation fire and attacked in column of battalions in the following order: 3/23, 1/23, 2/23. The advance was met with heavy mortar and machine gun fire from pillboxes, bunkers, and caves and progress was slow. In order to expedite the advance, the 3d Division was requested to permit the tanks attached to RCT 21 to use an approach route through the 3d Division's zone to Airfield No. 2. Permission was granted at 1253, and from this approach the tanks were able to attack.

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UNCLASSIFIED

OPERATION

pillboxes, bunkers, and AT guns holding up the advance. RCT 23 maintained contact with 3d Division.

(g) RCT 24, with BLT 2/25 attached, continued the attack at King-hour and made slow progress throughout the day. The difficult terrain, coupled with mortar fire and with interlocking bands of fire from automatic weapons in pillboxes, bunkers and caves, delayed the advance of this RCT. BLT 2/24 relieved by RCT 23 at King-hour, when reorganized, was placed in RCT reserve until 1600, at which time it relieved BLT 1/24 on the right of the zone of action. BLT 1/25 was released to RCT 25 at 0930.

(h) RCT 25, less BLT's 2/25 and 1/25 until 0930, remained in Division Reserve.

(i) All units were ordered to consolidate at 1700, and to be prepared to continue the attack at 0800 with no change in boundaries, objectives or attachments.

(j) 14th Marines. 2/14 was in direct support of RCT 23, 3/14 in direct support of RCT 24, and 4/14 was in general support. At 0500 VAC LANFOR directed the attachment of one (1) battalion of artillery to support the attack of RCT 9, 3d Division. 1/14 was assigned this mission. Rapid adjustment was made and the battalion ably supported RCT 9 with preparation and close supporting fires for the remainder of the period.

At 1726 VAC LANFOR directed that one (1) battalion of the 14th Marines continue to support the 3d Division until 0700, 26 February. All units fired call and counter-battery fire throughout the period.

(k) 4th Tank Battalion. The majority of the available tank strength was assigned to RCT 23. The terrain in front of RCT 24 was not negotiable for tanks except along the coast line, where they supported the advance of the right BLT. At the end of the period, 30 tanks were operational.

(l) Aviation. CTG 52.2 and CTF 94 continued normal air support missions. At 1425 a strike by 9 B-24's, each armed with nine (9) 500 pound bombs, was accurately placed as directed in TA 216 NOSTXY.

(m) VMO-4 personnel (less pilots and planes) landed and were tentatively located northeast of Airfield No. 1. Enemy AA was active but inaccurate.

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SECTION IV. TACTICAL ASPECTS OF OPERATION.

The North-South airstrip of Airfield No. 1 was considered ready for emergency landings. VMO-4 and two planes were ordered to be flown in from the USS MAKIN ISLAND on 25 February. For the period, the 5th Marine Division tactical observers continued to furnish information to the 4th Division.

At 1245 a message was received from EXTROPAC that there would be no more coordinated pre-King-hour air strikes until further notice.

(n) Naval Gunfire. Elements of CTF 54 continued to maintain fires in support of the attack. In movements along the east coast, one destroyer was able to take under fire and to destroy major enemy installations.

(o) 4th Engineer Battalion. During the period construction was begun on a road in the beach area. At the end of the period the road was 25% completed.

(p) Nine (9) distillation units were ashore, with six (6) units operating in TA 149 C. The search for and demolition of land mines, booby traps, and duds was carried out.

(q) Combat efficiency was reduced by casualties and battle fatigue to an estimated 55%.

(r) The combination of terrain skillfully employed to the best advantage by the enemy, terrain unsuited for tank employment, the locations of installations in areas which were defiladed from our artillery, and the stubborn to-the-death attitude of the defenders had temporarily limited the advance of this Division; but the Division prepared to continue the attack.

(s) Weather and Visibility. Fair and warmer, visibility and ceiling unlimited, 2/10 to 4/10 high cloud cover.

8. FROM 1800, 25 FEB 45 TO 1800, 26 FEB 45 (D PLUS 7)

(a) At 2158 a dispatch was received that the 4th Division Rear CP was closing on the USS BAYFIELD at 2200. Personnel and equipment landed in LSM 238.

(b) Activity during the night was relatively quiet. A small enemy patrol in front of BLT 3/24 attempted infiltration, but all were either killed or dispersed. The Division zone was shelled sporadically during the night by rockets, mortars, and artillery.

UNCLASSIFIED

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SECTION I NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(c) Normal night missions were fired by CTF 54 with large area neutralization effected by mortar boat units.

(d) Information was received at 0530 that a B-24 strike had been ordered to hit TA 218 BCDHI at about 1500.

(e) No night air observers were on station.

(f) After a coordinated VAC LANFOR-Division-Naval Gunfire preparation from King minus 45 to King-hour, the Division continued the attack at King-hour, 0800, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 6-45. Objective - O-2; boundaries - see map, Progress of Attack; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(g) RCT 23, with BLT 1/23 on the left and BLT 3/23 on the right, continued the attack at 0800 as scheduled. The advance was slow and difficult. Enemy resistance consisted of heavy small arms, and mortar fire from well emplaced, well dug-in pillboxes and block-houses. A general advance of about 300 yards was made along the front, which placed the RCT in position on the southwest slopes of the vital Hill 382 (TA 200 Y), thus partially neutralizing the effect of this point to the enemy. Orders were issued to the RCT to consolidate at 1700, but at 1800 it was still actively engaged with the enemy. The RCT reserve was employed in mopping up the RCT rear area. Sniper fire hit in the CP and in TA 183 U, indicating that there was still some of the enemy in that area.

(h) RCT 25, with BLT 3/24 attached, started relieving RCT 24 at 0530. At 0830 the RCT attacked with three battalions abreast, from left to right, 1/25, 2/25, 3/25, with 3/24 in RCT reserve. The delay in launching the attack was occasioned by the time involved in effecting the return of BLT 2/25 to RCT control, reorganization, and movement to the line of departure. Progress was slow and difficult along the entire front because of the extremely difficult terrain and stiff enemy resistance employing small arms, machine guns, and mortars fired from well-prepared and camouflaged positions. The RCT considered that it was not feasible to by-pass positions and cleaned them up as units advanced. An advance was made on the right, of about 75 yards. The RCT reserve was employed in mopping up the RCT rear area. Company "A", 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion, was assigned to direct support of this RCT for possible employment along the coast line.

Orders were issued to the RCT to consolidate at 1700, paying particular attention to the left flank, and to be prepared to continue the attack the next day.

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SECTION I. SUMMARY OF OPERATION.

(i) RCT 24, less BLT 3/24, upon being relieved by RCT 25, assembled in Division Reserve in the vicinity of TA's 165 EJO and 166 A. The RCT located a cave in TA 183 W which extended underground for over 400 yards and contained about 200 Japanese dead. Investigation of this cave continued.

(j) 14th Marines. At 0700 1/14 reverted to Division control. 1/14 was in direct support of RCT 25, 2/14 in direct support of RCT 23, 3/14 reinforced 1/14, and 4/14 was in general support of the attack for the period. In addition to the preparation fire at King-hour, another fifteen minute preparation was fired for RCT 23 at 1430. The regiment continued counter-battery and call fires. Flash teams on SURIBACHI and sound ranging teams in Regimental Area continued to furnish valuable intelligence for counter-battery fires.

(k) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "A" was attached to RCT 25 and Company "C" to RCT 23. Tank activity in the vicinity of the Radio Weather Station in TA 200 resulted in the destruction of two tanks and the damaging of one tank by land mines on the taxiway of Airfield No. 2. At the end of the period, 32 tanks were operational.

(l) 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion. All elements reverted to parent control at 0600. Company "A" was assigned direct support of RCT 25.

(m) Aviation. CTF 52.2 continued to furnish support aviation but the number of aircraft on station was insufficient to carry out requests for missions. Planes on call were available for pre-King-hour strikes. Land based aircraft missions were cancelled because weather conditions were unfavorable. Artillery and Naval Gunfire Air Spot missions by VO and VS continued throughout the day when weather permitted. Two planes of VMO-4 landed at 1025 and furnished artillery air spot during the afternoon. VMO-4 was out of gasoline before the end of the period. Division day air observers did not operate.

At 0800, 1500 x 100 feet of runway on Airfield No. 1 was operational and available for use.

(n) Naval Gunfire. CTF 54 continued to support the attack with normal and on call missions.

(o) 4th Engineer Battalion. During the period construction was expedited on roads in the beach area. On level stretches roads were operative for all traffic, but on grades they were still difficult. The matting of grades progressed satisfactorily, however, and by the end of the period the project was 90% completed. (5)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

OF OPERATION.

distillation units were operating in TA 149 C and turned out 3500 gallons of water for the period. Fifteen (15) units were ashore by 1800. Units deactivated and removed five (5) JLXVC single-horn and two (2) JLXIII two-horn Japanese land mines from TA 149 C, and neutralized two (2) depth charges armed with improvised fuzes in TA 166 E. Excavation for a Division Hospital was started in TA 165 KL.

(p) Combat Efficiency was reduced by casualties and battle fatigue to an estimated 53%.

(q) The area of the operations for the period was still in the enemy defensive organization encountered during the preceding day. Gains were secured by a methodical pillbox-to-pillbox advance. The Division prepared to continue the attack at the end of the period.

(r) Weather and Visibility. Weather fair, visibility good until 1300, when it was reduced by rain. Ceiling low and overcast 6/10 to 10/10.

9. FROM 1800, 26 FEB 45 TO 1800, 27 FEB 45 (D PLUS 8)

(a) Although ordered to consolidate at 261700, RCT's 23 and 25 encountered considerable enemy opposition before effecting security for the night. Mortar and machine gun fire harassed the entire front until about 2100. Firm contact was eventually established between the RCT's and with the 3d Division. Activity during the night consisted of enemy mortar and artillery fire on the front and rear areas, particularly on Division artillery positions. Small arms firing continued throughout the night. Attempted infiltrations by small parties all along the front were repulsed. At 0535 RCT 23 reported a probable counter-attack forming in TA 201 QV. The distinct sound of tanks was heard and a resulting smoke screen indicated that it was laid by the tanks. Artillery fired in this area, dispersing the possible counter-attack.

(b) Normal night missions fired by fire support ships included harassing fires and illumination.

(c) Following a coordinated VAC LANFOR-Division-Naval Gunfire preparation from King minus 45 to King-hour, the Division continued the attack at King-hour, 0800, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 7-45, to capture O-2. Formation and boundaries - no change. Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(d) RCT 23, with BLT's 1/23 on the left, 3/23 on the right, and 2/23 in reserve, continued the attack on schedule but was unable

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

OF OPERATION.

to advance. Smoke was employed by this RCT from King minus 30 to King minus 10 to cover reorganization and movement of front line companies. Resumption of the attack, following a short preparation from 1200 to 1230, resulted in only a short advance of about 100 yards on the left of the sector. Two (2) enemy tanks, emplaced as pillboxes in the recesses of Hill 382, greatly retarded the advance but were finally destroyed with bazookas. Although troops reached the top of Hill 382, they were forced to withdraw to consolidate on more favorable ground at 1700. Hill 382, one of the most vital terrain features in this area, was made up of a series of deep fissures or crevices which blended well into the scheme of the Japanese defense. It was envisaged that the capture of this terrain freak would be costly and a time-consuming job.

(e) RCT 25, with no change in formation since the last period, continued the attack at King-hour. In order to bypass and isolate a pocket of resistance in TA 184 F, BLT 1/25, on the left, withheld its advance until BLT 3/23 had advanced sufficiently to permit BLT 1/25 to enter the zone of RCT 23. Since BLT 3/23 was unable to advance until quite late in the day, no appreciable gain was made. Company "B", 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion, was attached to this RCT for the period; Company "A" reverted to Battalion control.

(f) RCT 24, less 3/24, continued in Division Reserve. On Division order one (1) company of this RCT was alerted in its assembly area to be on call to RCT 23, and was attached to RCT 23 at 1530.

(g) 14th Marines. There was no change in the assignment of artillery since the last period. Preparation, call, and counter-battery fires were delivered as requested. Ten (10) rounds of propaganda leaflets were fired in TA 201 E. Sound ranging operated with VAC LANFOR and Division Artillery and Flash Ranging with Division Artillery.

(h) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "A" was attached to RCT 25 and Company "B" to RCT 23. Company "C", which was attached to RCT 23, reverted to Battalion control. At the end of the period 32 tanks were operational, 11 destroyed, and 13 damaged.

(i) Aviation. CTG 52.2 and CTF 94 provided air support of King-hour call strikes and a nine (9) plane B-24 (9-500 pound bombs per plane) strike at 1500. One (1) Division observer flew tactical missions for the 5th Division.

(j) The 726th SAW Squadron covered the approach of VMO-4 from the Carriers. VMO-4 planes flew in from the USS MAGINALL BAY.

UNCLASSIFIED

and the USS MAKIN ISLAND and arrived at Airfield No. 1 at 1630. One (1) VMO-4 plane was lost while being launched from LST 776. At the end of the period VMO-4 had eleven (11) pilots ashore, and seven (7) planes were operational.

(k) Naval Gunfire. CTF 54 continued normal day and night missions.

(l) 4th Engineer Battalion. The construction of roads was continued. The construction of revetments for VMO-4 planes was interrupted by the presence of enemy mines. Six (6) water distillation plants were operating on Yellow Beaches.

(m) Combat Efficiency was reduced to 50%.

(n) Weather was fair and visibility was good.

10. FROM 1800, 27 FEB 45 TO 1800, 28 FEB 45 (D PLUS 9)

(a) Activity during the night consisted of heavy mortar fire falling along the Division front and in CP locations. Fifteen (15) heavy shells hit the Division CP area before 2200. Fire of either 20mm or 40mm enemy automatic weapons fell on the beach area. At 0043 RCT 23 reported parachutes dropping in enemy-held territory about 400 to 600 yards in front of the Division's zone. Although reported from three sources, the plane (or planes) were not picked up on the radar.

(b) CTF 54 continued to provide normal harassing and illumination fires during the night.

(c) After a coordinated VAC LANFOR-4th Division-3d Division-Naval Gunfire preparation from King minus 45 to King-hour, the Division continued the attack at King-hour, 0815, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 8-45, to capture O-2, prepared to continue the attack on order. Formation - no change; Boundaries and Objectives - see map, Progress of Attack. Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(d) RCT 23, (plus one (1) company from RCT 24) with BLT's 1/23 on the left, 2/23 on the right, and 3/23 in reserve, continued the attack at King-hour. BLT 2/23 relieved BLT 3/23 prior to King-hour. Initial advances on the left moved favorably for about 300 yards; however, increasing artillery fire, mortar fire, and cross fire from machine guns in bunkers and pillboxes halted the advance on the right. On the left resistance from heavy weapons of all types directed from the vicinity of Hill 382 temporarily held up the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

advance. At 1300 a coordinated attack, following a short preparation, permitted the extreme left of BLT 2/23 to advance approximately 300 yards. The operation of Company "B", 4th Tank Battalion, was restricted because of the terrain and the heavy AT fire which could not be located. RCT 23 maintained contact with 3d Marine Division.

(e) RCT 25, with BLT's 1/25, 2/25, 3/25 in line, and 3/24 in reserve, continued the attack at King-hour. The center of this RCT was unable to advance during the period, but a gain of 250 yards was made on the right flank. Upon request of RCT 25, one 75mm pack howitzer was assigned to BLT 2/25 as an accompanying gun in order to neutralize opposition to the front. The howitzer was transported to the rear of the front lines via DUKW; from there it was packed to the vicinity of BLT 2/25, where it was assembled and dug in preparatory to firing. It succeeded in destroying the opposition to the front of the BLT. The howitzer returned to parent control at 2100. Company "B", 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion was attached for the period.

(f) On the Regimental boundary, approximately in TA 201 U, the flanks of both RCT's received a murderous concentration of heavy mortar fire which was extremely accurate and which **must** have been observed fire. Although all agencies of the Division were employed in an attempt to locate the source of this fire, no definite conclusion regarding its location could be reached.

(g) RCT 24, less BLT 3/24 and one (1) company, remained in Division Reserve.

(h) 14th Marines. There was no change since the last period.

(i) 4th Tank Battalion. There was no change since the last period. A new battalion CP was set up in TA 165 O. Thirty-five (35) tanks were operational, twelve (12) destroyed, and nine (9) damaged.

(j) Aviation. CTG 52.2 continued to provide air support. The B-24 mission was cancelled for the afternoon strike. VAC LANFOR Air Delivery Section planes from SAIPAN dropped ammunition and medical supplies. VMO-4 had five (5) planes on Airfield No. 1, and two (2) on LST 776. VMO-4 furnished air spot for ten (10) artillery missions, conducted thirty-five (35) fire missions and flew tactical observers. Two (2) VOF air spot planes were maintained on station during the day. The Air Liaison Officer with RCT 25 reported that less than 50% of the Napalm dropped in the morning strike detonated.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

The strike requested by RCT 23 was delayed and was not dropped in the TA requested.

(k) Naval Gunfire. Elements of CTF 54 continued to support the attack. Naval gunfire support was on call throughout the day. Mortar and gunboat units operated along the coast on the right flank. In the afternoon one (1) destroyer closed on the east coast and successfully engaged enemy guns in direct fire up draws and ravines which opened seaward.

(l) Combat Efficiency of the Division was increased to an estimated 60% by the assignment of replacements to the RCT's.

(m) Weather and Visibility. Weather was fair, visibility good with ceiling overcast 6/10 to 9/10.

(n) All units were ordered to consolidate for the night at 1700, and to be prepared to continue the attack at King-hour, 0830, March 1st.

(o) At 1715 VAC LANFOR directed that one (1) battalion of this Division be assigned to VAC LANFOR Reserve by 1200, 1 March, 1945 and that it be assembled in 4th Division zone south of grid 73.

11. FROM 1800, 28 FEB 45 TO 1800, 1 MAR 45 (D PLUS 10)

(a) At 1930 RCT 24 was alerted to relieve RCT 23 prior to King-hour.

(b) At 2230 RCT 25 reported observing and firing on an estimated 150 enemy forming up in front of BLT 3/25. Naval Gunfire and artillery were requested and succeeded in dispersing the concentration. Sporadic mortar and artillery fire fell in the Division area during the night.

(c) After a coordinated VAC LANFOR-Naval Gunfire preparation from King minus 45 to King-hour, and an intense Division artillery preparation beginning at King minus 10 and moving forward in successive concentrations after King-hour, the Division continued the attack at King-hour, 0830, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 9-45, to capture O-2, prepared to continue the attack to O-3 on order. Boundaries - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(d) RCT 23, when ordered to consolidate for the night at 281700, was not in contact with the unit on its left. Two (2) platoons from the Reserve Battalion were sent into the zone of the

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

OPERATION.

3d Marine Division to close the gap and establish contact. To accomplish this it was necessary for these platoons to fight their way through by-passed enemy defenses in the 3d Division zone. During the night these platoons suffered casualties from enemy positions located to their rear. When RCT 23 was relieved by RCT 24, BLT 3/23 was then attached to RCT 24 until BLT 3/24, which was attached to RCT 25, could be relieved by BLT 3/23. When this relief was effected at 0930, BLT 3/23 was then attached to and became the reserve of RCT 25. At 1200 BLT 2/23 assembled in TA 165 BC as VAC LANFOR Reserve. RCT 23, less BLT's 2/23 and 3/23, assembled in TA 182 YRS as Division Reserve.

(e) RCT 24 relieved RCT 23 in line at 0630. The relief was initiated at 0330 and was accomplished by placing BLT 2/24 in line with BLT 1/23 and BLT 1/24 with 2/23. The relief was completed at 0630. The company attached to RCT 23 reverted to RCT 24 control at 0630. The fighting around the base of Hill 382 was intense and continuous until consolidation for the night was ordered at 1700. Slight gains were made on the left and right of the RCT zone. Upon consolidation at 1700 firm contact with RCT 25 on the right was established. After 1400 RCT 21, on the left, was able to advance quite rapidly in its zone, resulting in a gap of about 450 yards along the Division boundary. BLT 3/24 was ordered into the zone of RCT 21 to fill this gap. Although the ground over which this BLT moved into position had been crossed by RCT 21, it was necessary for the companies of BLT 3/24 to fight their way over this same area to take up a position on the Division boundary in order to establish contact with units on its right and left. By 1800 consolidation had been effected and firm contact had been established. The RCT CP moved to TA 182 S at 0930.

(f) RCT 25, with BLT's 1/25, 2/25, and 3/25 in line from left to right, continued the attack at King-hour but limited its advance in order to conform to the movement of RCT 24 on its left. BLT 1/25, assisted by one (1) company of the RCT Reserve (BLT 3/23), spent the remainder of the period in an attempt to reduce the reentrant and pocket of resistance in TA 183 J.

At 0850 the Division Reconnaissance Company was directed to report to RCT 25 to assist in mopping up operations in the rear areas of that RCT. It was further directed that the Reconnaissance Company was not to be committed in the front lines and that it would be released not later than 1700. The RCT CP was shelled at 1605 and all agencies were employed to search for probable sources of fire. Contact was established with RCT 24 when that unit was ordered to consolidate at 1700. Company "B", 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion, was attached for the period

UNCLASSIFIED

(g) 14th Marines. 1/14 was in direct support of RCT 25, 3/14 in direct support of RCT 24, 2/14 reinforced 3/14, and 4/14 was in general support. VAC LANFOR artillery reinforced the 14th Marines on call. VMO-4 fired a total of thirty-three (33) fire missions. Three (3) guns were spotted by air observation and destroyed by VAC LANFOR artillery fire. Sound ranging picked up fifteen (15) enemy guns, which were immediately shelled.

(h) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "A" remained attached to RCT 25; Company "B" was attached to RCT 24; Company "C" was under Battalion control.

(i) Aviation. Air support was furnished by CTG 52.2. VMO-4 flew two (2) photographic and five (5) day observation missions. One (1) experimental night mission was flown and proved to be very successful. Two (2) OY-1's arrived on the field from LST 776; VMO-4 then had seven (7) planes based on Airfield No. 1. One (1) FM-2, the first carrier-based plane to land on Airfield No. 1, made an emergency landing during the morning hours.

(j) Naval Gunfire. Preparation fires in TA's 185 BCG, 201 HIMNRS, 202 CHLMPQVX and 219 UV by direct support ships were controlled by individual battalions. Gunboats controlled by BLT 3/25, fired 40mm in TA's 168 A, 185 V. Between King-hour and King-hour plus 70 two (2) CA's and one (1) BB fired in TA 202 NO. Following this preparation, one (1) CA and one (1) DD closed on the coast, taking observed installations under direct fire. These ships reported three (3) guns destroyed in TA 219 A and a direct hit in a cave at TA 203 U. Four (4) DD's and two (2) gunboats were employed by the Division throughout the day.

(k) 4th Engineer Battalion. Company "A" was attached to RCT 25. Headquarters Platoon continued construction of the supply road paralleling the coast.

(l) Combat Efficiency was estimated to be 55%.

(m) Weather and Visibility. Weather was fair, visibility was good, with ceiling overcast average 3/10.

12. FROM 1800, 1 MAR 45 TO 1800, 2 MAR 45 (D PLUS 11)

(a) The period of darkness passed with little incident other than the normal infiltration attempts by the enemy in small numbers. Sporadic mortar and artillery fire was laid down by the enemy during the night, but at each salvo either VAC LANFOR or Division Artillery immediately commenced counterbattery fire.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(b) Direct support ships fired illumination fires during the night.

(c) Following VAC LANFOR Artillery preparation from King-hour minus 30 to King-hour minus 15 and King-hour minus 10 to King-hour, and an intense Division preparation beginning at King-hour minus 10 and moving forward in successive concentrations after King-hour, the Division continued the attack at 0800, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 10-45, to capture O-2, prepared to continue the attack to O-3 on order. Boundaries - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(d) RCT 24, with BLT's 3/24, 2/24, and 1/24 abreast from left to right, continued the attack at King-hour and made slight advances on the right and left and proceeded with the mopping up of pillboxes and caves on the reverse slope of Hill 382. It appeared that there were underground passageways leading into the defenses on Hill 382, and when one occupant of a pillbox was killed another one came up to take his place. This mopping-up proved to be a lengthy process. This RCT maintained contact with the 3d Division on the left, and upon consolidation at 1700 also established firm contact with the units on the right.

(e) RCT 25, with BLT 3/23 attached, and with BLT's 1/25, 2/25, and 3/25 in line from left to right, continued the attack at King-hour, and made its main effort on the left flank. In extremely bitter fighting against the reentrant on the left, BLT 1/23 and other elements spent the day in reducing pillboxes and caves which lined the face of the cliff in TA 184 B. Flame thrower and combat tanks were employed against a concrete blockhouse at the top of the cliff. Although the blockhouse appeared to be unoccupied after the tank attack, it was reasonable to assume that it too was connected by a subterranean passage and that it would be reoccupied. The BLT's in the center and on the right maintained their positions during the day. Upon consolidation for the night contact was maintained with RCT 24.

(f) RCT 23, less BLT's 2/23 and 3/23, remained in Division Reserve. BLT 2/23 was in VAC LANFOR Reserve and BLT 3/23 was attached to RCT 25. The Division Reserve was employed in mopping up the rear area and re-equipping in preparation for further action.

(g) 14th Marines. There was no change in the assignments of this unit. Air observers fired a total of forty-two (42) missions. Sound ranging located six (6) enemy guns firing in the zone of the Division and adjusted fire on them. A total of 306 missions were fired.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SECTION II. NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(h) 4th Tank Battalion. No change in assignments.

(i) Aviation. Air support was furnished by CTG 52.2. VMO-4 flew four (4) day, one (1) photographic, and one (1) night observation missions. Two (2) planes were damaged on the field by enemy artillery fire and one (1) in flight by AA fire. Planes dropped propaganda leaflets over the Division zone of action. At the end of the period five (5) planes were operational.

(j) Naval Gunfire. Elements of CTF 54 continued to support the attack. Because of the extreme irregularity of the front lines, direct support ships did not fire harassing fire during the night. During the day two (2) BB's and one (1) CA fired general support missions in eastern sectors of TA's 185, 202, 219 and all of 236, and mortar units covered TA's 250 and 251. RCT 24's ships were unable to fire a preparation for the King-hour attack because of safety limits; RCT 25's ships fired in TA 185 BCGHI. Four (4) DD's and two (2) gunboats were assigned to the Division for the day.

(k) 4th Engineer Battalion. Company "A" was attached to RCT 25; Company "B" was attached to RCT 24, and Company "C" to RCT 23, in Division Reserve.

(l) Combat Efficiency was reduced by excessive casualties, particularly to key personnel, and battle fatigue to an estimated 50%.

(m) Weather and Visibility. Weather was fair, visibility good, with ceiling overcast 3/10 to 5/10.

13. FROM 1800, 2 MAR 45 TO 1800, 3 MAR 45 (D PLUS 12)

(a) During the night all units consolidated positions, established contact with adjacent units, and maintained contact with the enemy. Activity along the Division front was limited to one (1) attempted counter-attack in front of BLT 2/24. In the ensuing action four (4) Marines and twenty (20) enemy were killed, and the remainder of the enemy was dispersed. Mortar and artillery fire was at a minimum during the night. This was attributed to the fact that the artillery counter-battery fire was immediate and accurate and the possibility that the enemy was making a withdrawal of his artillery and mortars to new positions. Direct support ships furnished illumination and fired harassing fires during the night in TA's 185 CDG, 202 GHLMQRVWX.

(b) The Division continued the attack at King-hour minus 75 (0630), King-hour being 0745, in accordance with the plan.

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

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SECTION IV OF OPERATION.

No. 11-45, without artillery or naval gunfire preparation. VAC LANFOR, Division artillery, and 3/12 fired counter-battery fires on located and suspected mortar, rocket, and artillery positions from King-hour minus 75 to King-hour plus 30. Boundaries and Objectives - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(c) RCT 24, on the left, with BLT's 3/24, 2/24, and 1/24 in line, attacked at King-hour minus 75 with orders to disengage at least three (3) companies from the front lines during the day. By 1525 two (2) companies were in rear of the front lines as RCT Reserve. The RCT made a slow advance against the enemy positions to its front. The right and center battalions were able to advance to the top of a ridge line to positions indicated on the map, Progress of Attack. During the period the RCT maintained contact with the 3d Division on the left. In the late afternoon Hill 382 was completely secured.

(d) RCT 23, less BLT 2/23, and with BLT's 2/25, 3/25 attached, passed through RCT 25, within its present zone, at King-hour minus 75. RCT 23, then with BLT's 1/23, 2/25, 3/25 in line from left to right and with 3/23 in reserve, continued the attack, holding with the battalions on its right and center. In savage fighting against well-entrenched enemy and subjected to intense mortar fire, the BLT on the left was able to make a slight gain to the positions shown at the end of the period. The reentrant, or pocket of enemy resistance, was isolated and, at the close of the period, was being contained and mopped up by two infantry companies, tanks, and halftracks. Company "B", 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion, was attached to RCT 23.

(e) RCT 25, less BLT's 2/25 and 3/25, when relieved by RCT 23 reverted to Division Reserve.

(f) 14th Marines. 2/14 was in direct support of RCT 23; 1/14 reinforced the fires of 2/14; 3/14 was in direct support of RCT 24, and 4/14 was in general support. Neutralization and destruction fires were fired in support of assault units. VAC LANFOR artillery reinforced the fires of the 14th Marines on call.

The air observers fired a total of nineteen (19) missions during the period, and when heavy artillery was required they fired VAC LANFOR artillery in the zone of the Division. No sound ranging targets were reported during the period. The total number of missions fired was 231.

(g) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "C" was attached to RCT 23; Company "B" was attached to RCT 24, and

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

battalion control. At the end of the period thirty-six (36) tanks were operational, twelve (12) were destroyed, and eight (8) were damaged.

(h) Aviation. CTG 52.2 continued to furnish air support. Seven (7) missions were requested and six (6) were completed. VMO-4 flew seven (7) day observation missions. Three (3) planes were operational at the end of the period.

(i) Naval Gunfire. Elements of CTF 54 continued to support the attack. The use of Naval Gunfire was limited because of the safety factors dictated by the location of the front lines. In order to cover the difficult terrain in the Division zone, three (3) VOF spot planes were employed and one (1) DD with an NLO aboard closed the coast and successfully delivered direct fire into TA's 185, 219, 201, and 202. Gunboats fired 40mm fire in TA 185. Four (4) DD's and two (2) gunboats worked with units of the Division.

(j) 4th Engineer Battalion. Company "A" was attached to RCT 25, with the 2d and 3d platoons attached to BLT's 2/25 and 3/25 respectively. These platoons continued mopping up operations in TA 184. Company Headquarters and the 3d platoon removed twelve (12) horn mines and one (1) terracotta mine from the roadway in TA 184 XW.

(k) All units were ordered to consolidate at 1700 and to be prepared to continue the attack on 4 March, 1945.

(l) Combat Efficiency was estimated to be 50%.

(m) There was a slight change in the area of operations and it was believed that the Division was now fighting in the rear of the highly prepared defensive area in which the operations for the past three (3) days had been conducted.

(n) Weather and Visibility. Weather was fair and visibility was good, with ceiling overcast 4/10, wind SE 15 knots.

14. FROM 1800, 3 MAR 45 TO 1800, 4 MAR 45 (D PLUS 13)

(a) The hours of darkness for this period were relatively quiet. Some medium mortar fire fell on the front lines and occasional sniper fire harassed the troops in the front lines. Rear areas were quiet. At 0355 there was an attempted infiltration in front of BLT 3/24, but it was repulsed with no casualties. Four (4) DD's provided illumination during the night, but no harassing fires were fired because of limitations imposed by the location of the front lines.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(b) Following a VAC LANFOR artillery preparation from King-hour minus 35 to King-hour, joined by a Division preparation from King-hour minus 15 to King-hour plus 15, and Naval Gunfire from King-hour minus 10 to King-hour, the Division continued the attack at King-hour, 0730, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 12-45, to capture O-2, prepared to continue the attack. Formation and Boundaries - no change. Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour. The main effort of the attack was made on the left, resulting in slight gains during the morning. A second coordinated attack was launched at 1500, but this also resulted in the gain of only a few yards.

(c) RCT 24, on the left, with BLT's 3/24, 2/24, and 1/24 in line, from left to right attacking generally in a south-easterly direction in order that the direction of attack would be parallel to the corridors, made only slight progress during the day. This RCT was able to employ the tanks during the day against pillboxes and caves, and the results obtained, particularly from the flame thrower tank, were satisfactory. The RCT used 2200 pounds of demolition in blowing cave entrances and exits. At the close of the period, and when consolidation was ordered at 1700, this RCT had established contact with units on its right and left.

(d) RCT 23, on the right, with BLT's 1/23, 2/25, 3/25 in line from left to right, and with BLT 3/23 in reserve, made short gains in the zone of BLT 1/23 and held on the remainder of the front. BLT's 2/25 and 3/25 could have advanced within their zones, but such an advance was not deemed advisable because it would have over-extended the lines. The terrain in front of this RCT was the most difficult yet encountered; observation was limited to only a few feet, and it was impossible to support the attack with anything heavier than normal infantry weapons. Detachments of BLT 3/23 were employed throughout the period in reducing the area of resistance in TA 184 F. Upon consolidation at 1700, contact was established with RCT 24. BLT 2/23 remained in VAC LANFOR Reserve.

(e) RCT 25, less BLT's 2/23 and 3/25, remained in Division Reserve.

(f) 14th Marines. There was no change in the assignment of the 14th Marines. Air observation was hindered during the period because of a very low ceiling. Twenty-one (21) fire missions were conducted for Division Artillery, and VAC LANFOR Artillery was fired when targets required heavy weapons. No targets were reported by sound ranging during the period. The total number of missions fired was 480.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION OF OPERATION.

(c) RCT 24, on the left, remained in position and, by thinning out the front lines, effected the necessary reorganization to establish a strong Regimental Reserve line of three (3) companies. Mopping up of the rear areas was continued during the period.

(d) RCT 25, on the right, with the Division Reconnaissance Company attached as of 0700, 5 March, relieved RCT 23 in its zone at 0600, 5 March. This RCT also effected the necessary reorganization to establish a Regimental Reserve of one (1) company, and continued mopping up the rear areas. A Provisional Battalion composed of the Division Reconnaissance Company and Company "L", BLT 3/25, was organized and relieved BLT 3/23 in TA's 183 IO and 184 K.

(e) RCT 23, less BLT 2/23, assembled in Division Reserve in the vicinity of TA's 182 O and 183 KL. The remainder of period was devoted to reorganizing, reequipping, and rehabilitating in preparation for the attack on 6 March. BLT 2/23 was in VAC LANFOR Reserve until 1500, at which time it was relieved by BLT 1/23.

(f) The 14th Marines continued to fire on targets of opportunity and executed harassing fires throughout the period. 1/14 was in direct support of RCT 25, 2/14 direct support of RCT 23, 3/14 in direct support of RCT 24, and 4/14 in general support. Air observation fired a total of seventeen (17) missions during the period. One (1) target was reported by sound ranging, and VAC LANFOR Artillery was adjusted on the target. The total number of missions fired was 302.

(g) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "C" was attached to RCT 23, Company "B" to RCT 24, and Company "A" to RCT 25. At the end of the period 30 tanks were operational. Company "A" tanks were employed extensively in TA's 183 JO and 184 FK.

(h) Aviation. CTG 52.2 continued to support the attack. Units of the Division requested fire missions, of which four (4) were completed in TA's 185 KGD and 202 DEGLQ. VMO-4 flew ten (10) tactical observation missions; one (1) pilot was wounded and evacuated, and four (4) planes were operational at the end of the period.

(i) Naval Gunfire. Elements of CTF 54 fired call fire missions throughout the day. Two (2) DD's, one (1) CA and, one (1) LCS were employed by the Division.

(j) 2d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion. Company "B" was attached to RCT 25. This company patrolled the beach areas north of the location of BLT 3/25 and fired on the beach.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(k) 4th Engineer Battalion. Company "A", attached to RCT 25, continued road work in the RCT rear area. The 2d and 3d platoons, attached to BLT's 2/25 and 3/25 respectively, took up defensive positions and supervised the laying of an anti-personnel mine field in front of these positions. Company "A", attached to RCT 24, was inactive during the day. Company "C", attached to RCT 23, was in the rest area with that RCT.

(l) Combat Efficiency was estimated to be 45%. The reorganization directed by VAC LANFOR was completed by 1200 and the Division was prepared to continue the attack on 6 March.

(m) Weather and Visibility. Occasional showers during the night. Daylight period was fair with visibility good, ceiling overcast 2/10 to 5/10.

16. FROM 1800, 5 MAR 45 TO 1800, 6 MAR 45 (D PLUS 15)

(a) The night was relatively quiet except for mortar and small arms fire along the front of RCT 24 and an attempted infiltration in this area.

(b) One (1) LCS fired harassing fires along the coast in TA 185 throughout the night. Illumination was provided by elements of CTF 54.

(c) Following a coordinated artillery preparation by twelve (12) artillery battalions (three (3) from the 3d Marine Division, three (3) from the 5th Marine Division, four (4) from the 4th Marine Division, and two (2) from VAC LANFOR) reinforced by Naval Gunfire, from King-hour plus 45 to King-hour plus 81, the Division continued the attack at King-hour plus 60, King-hour being 0800, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 13-45, to capture the high ground in the left of the zone of action and that portion of O-3 within zone. For boundaries, zone of action, line of departure, and objectives, see map - Progress of Attack.

(d) RCT 23, less BLT 1/23, moved into position prior to 0600, relieved BLT 3/24 in its zone with BLT 2/23 and attacked in column of battalions at King-hour plus 60, to seize the high ground in its zone. See the map, Progress of Attack. In extremely bitter fighting against caves, pillboxes, and emplacements in rugged terrain, this RCT advanced approximately 100 yards except on the extreme left where no gain was made. Upon consolidation for the night at 1700, a gap existed between the left and the 3d Division, but firm contact was made and maintained by RCT 23 before dark. At 0700 BLT 1/23 moved into TA 182 VW as VAC LANFOR Reserve.

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(e) RCT 24, less BLT 3/24, and with BLT 2/24 on the left and BLT 1/24 on the right, attacked at King-hour plus 60 in conjunction with RCT 23. Against opposition similar to that of RCT 23, RCT 24 moved forward to conform to the advance of RCT 23. Upon consolidation for the night at 1700, contact with RCT 23 was made and maintained. BLT 3/24 reverted to Division Reserve at 0630 in TA's 182 O and 183 KL when it was relieved by BLT 2/23. See the map - Progress of Attack.

(f) RCT 25, on the right, with the Division Reconnaissance Company attached and with BLT's 1/25, 2/25, and 3/25 in line from left to right, held in position on the right and center and assisted the attack of RCT's 23 and 24 by fire, prepared to conform to the advance of RCT 24. This RCT employed the Division Reconnaissance Company and elements of the Combat Team to mop up in TA 184 FK. RCT consolidated for the night and maintained contact with RCT 24.

(g) 14th Marines. All battalions fired a coordinated preparation for VAC LANFOR from King-hour minus 10 to King-hour plus 21 in the zones of the 3d and 5th Divisions and from King-hour plus 45 to King-hour plus 81 in the 4th Division zone. VAC LANFOR Artillery reinforced fires on call. 1/14 was in direct support of RCT 25, 2/14 with RCT 23, 3/14 with RCT 24, and 4/14 was in general support. Air observation fired a total of twenty (20) fire missions during the period. Sound ranging reported and adjusted fire on two (2) missions. The total number of missions fired was 472.

(h) 4th Tank Battalion. Four (4) tanks were employed in the zone of RCT 23 and a flame thrower tank assisted in the mopping up operations in the rear areas of RCT 25. At the end of the period thirty-five (35) tanks were operational, eleven (11) were destroyed, and eight (8) were damaged.

(i) Aviation. CTG 52.2 continued to furnish air support. Three (3) missions were requested by the Division in TA 185 and all were executed. VMO-4 flew one (1) night and seven (7) day observation missions. Five (5) planes were operational at the end of the period. Enemy AA was active throughout the day.

(j) Naval Gunfire. Three (3) DD's, one (1) CA, and one (1) LCS provided naval gunfire support for the attack. Preparation fires were fired from King-hour minus 10 to King-hour plus 45 at a reduced rate, and from King-hour plus 45 to King-hour plus 81, with fires increased. One (1) Naval Gunfire Spotter was placed aboard a DD and controlled direct fires against located targets along the east coast.

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(k) 4th Engineer Battalion had no change in its assignment.

(l) Combat Efficiency, reduced by excessive casualties among experienced leaders, was estimated to be 45%.

(m) Weather and Visibility. The weather was fair and visibility was good. There was a slight haze with ceiling overcast 2/10 to 4/10.

17. FROM 1800, 6 MAR 45 TO 1800, 7 MAR 45 (D PLUS 16)

(a) Activity during the night was sporadic but costly. At 2130 several enemy mortar shells fell in the lines of BLT 2/23, wounding approximately thirty (30) men. At 2210 enemy were reported moving in front of BLT 3/25; artillery fire was requested and the formation or gathering was dispersed. At 2250 BLT 1/24 reported that up to that time it had had its quietest night on the line. During the night forty (40) to fifty (50) of the enemy came into the foxholes occupied by elements of BLT 1/25 and in the ensuing melee one (1) officer, twelve (12) enlisted Marines, and an estimated fifty (50) Japanese were killed. At 0515 a rocket fell into the CP of BLT 2/23 killing one (1) and wounding five (5) men. The BLT commander was badly shaken up and was relieved by the Executive Officer of RCT 23. This interruption necessitated a thirty (30) minute delay in meeting King-hour. The Division rear areas were quiet. Illumination only was fired during the night.

(b) The Division continued the attack at King-hour plus 30, King-hour being 0730, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 14-45, without a preliminary artillery or naval gunfire preparation, to complete missions assigned on the previous day. Formation and boundaries - no change; line of departure - front lines at King-hour.

(c) RCT 23, less BLT 1/23, making the main effort for the Division, attacked within its zone, advancing slowly during the morning. At 1230, following a five (5) minute preparation, the attack was continued and resulted in substantial gains, particularly on the extreme left. BLT 1/23 continued in VAC LANFOR Reserve. Upon consolidation for the night at 1700, contact was established and maintained with the 3d Division.

(d) RCT 24, less BLT 3/24, in the center, with 2/24 and 1/24 in line left to right, continued the attack against heavy opposition, particularly on the right where intense machine gun and mortar fire stopped all advance. At 1245, following a five (5) minute preparation, the attack was continued. At 1700, when consolidation was ordered, this RCT had advanced left to

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

positions shown on the map - Progress of Attack and had made firm contact with RCT 23. During the morning when Company "C" was relieving Company "B", a heavy mortar shell landed in the CP, killing the Company Commander and six (6) men of Company "C". BLT 3/24 continued in Division Reserve.

(e) RCT 25, plus Division Reconnaissance Company, with BLT's 1/25, 2/25, and 3/25 in line from left to right, maintained contact with BLT 1/24 but was unable to advance because of the murderous fire coming from the front of BLT 1/24; as a result of this fire no gains were made by the RCT during the period. Mopping up operations in the rear areas continued.

(f) 14th Marines. From 0800 to 0830 the Regiment fired neutralization fires on all known enemy mortar and artillery positions. At 1225 VAC LANFOR and the 14th Marines fired a five (5) minute coordinated preparation on the front to RCT 23; at 1240 the same preparation was fired for RCT 24. There were no changes in the assignment of support battalions. Air observation fired a total of sixteen (16) missions, VAC LANFOR artillery being fired when targets required heavy artillery. Sound ranging adjusted three (3) VAC LANFOR artillery missions. The total number of missions fired was 159.

(g) 4th Tank Battalion. There were no changes in assignments. Tanks assisted and supported the attack of RCT 23, especially in the center of the RCT zone; however, the terrain prevented the operation of the tanks except in restricted localities. RCT 25 continued to operate flame thrower and other tanks against concrete blockhouses and caves in the vicinity of TA 184 FK. At the end of the period thirty-four (34) tanks were operational, eight (8) damaged, and twelve (12) were destroyed.

(h) Aviation. CTG 52.2 continued to furnish air support. Five (5) missions were requested by the Division; three (3) were completed and two (2) were cancelled. All air support was cancelled at 1510 because of bad weather. VMO-4 flew one (1) weather and five (5) tactical observation missions. At the end of the period five (5) planes were operational.

(i) Naval Gunfire. The Division was supported by four (4) DD's and one (1) LCS. A concentration was fired on known targets from King-hour to King plus 30. All units were available for call fires during the day. Two (2) VOF spot planes were employed with the fire support ships; one (1) DD working with air spot reported eight (8) artillery or mortar positions were destroyed in TA 185 KL and six (6) guns were knocked out in TA's 185 A and 202 U. A naval

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CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED
SECTION 1.1 OPERATION.

gunfire spotter aboard a DD spotted fires along the coast.

(j) 4th Engineer Battalion. There were no changes in assignments. All units supported their respective RCT's by executing demolitions work, mine removal, and road repair.

(k) Combat Efficiency was reduced to an estimated 45%.

(l) Weather and Visibility. The weather was warm, but visibility was poor. There were occasional showers with overcast ceiling limited at times to 300 feet.

18. FROM 1800, 7 MAR 45 TO 1800, 8 MAR 45 (D PLUS 17)

(a) Activity along the front lines for the night consisted mainly of small and large mortar fire and small arms fire. Generally the night was quiet, compared to previous nights. Some enemy mortar shells fell in the lines of BLT 1/24 and on the front of RCT 25. At 0300 BLT 3/24 was released to RCT 24, relieving BLT 2/24 in the line at 0530. RCT 24 reported that the enemy attempted a withdrawal during the night and that a considerable number of them were killed. BLT 2/24 reverted to Division Reserve in TA's 182 O and 183 KL. Only illumination fires were fired during the night:

(b) Following a coordinated preparation in successive concentrations reinforced by VAC LANFOR Artillery and naval gunfire from King-hour minus 90 to King-hour minus 60, the Division resumed the attack at King-hour minus 90, King-hour being 0750, making the main effort in the center, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 15-45, to assist in the capture of the remainder of the Island. Formation and boundaries - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(c) RCT 23, less BLT 1/23, on the right, attacking in column of battalions, BLT 2/23 in the line, jumped off on time. Advancing initially against light resistance, which soon stiffened to normal, considerable gain was made in the center of the zone. The enemy was apparently confused by the early morning attack. Resistance by the enemy in this area was relatively less than that experienced on the remainder of the front. When this RCT consolidated for the night at 1640, contact was established on the right and left. BLT 1/23 continued in VAC LANFOR Reserve.

(d) RCT 24, less BLT 2/24, in the center, with BLT's 3/24 on the left and 1/24 on the right, continued the attack at King-hour minus 90. Making its main effort on the left, this RCT was able to make only slight gains, generally in the center, against an enemy

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

who was concealed in perfectly fortified positions. Resistance was characterized by extremely heavy small arms, knee mortar, and large mortar fire. The right of this RCT was unable to move forward regardless of repeated efforts to envelop and to even by-pass the resistance holding up its advance. At 1120 BLT 2/24 was directed to reconnoiter the area of BLT 3/25 with the probability of relieving that BLT that night. Upon consolidation at 1640 contact was made with RCT 23 and maintained with RCT 25. BLT 2/24 continued in Division Reserve.

(e) RCT 25, on the right, with BLT's 1/25, 2/25, and 3/25 in line from left to right, held its position and maintained contact with RCT 24 on its left. Elements of the RCT and the Division Reconnaissance Company continued mopping up operations in the rear areas and in the vicinity of TA 184 KL.

(f) 14th Marines. Other than the preparation fires for the attack, fires were executed on call from the RCT's. Eighteen (18) rounds of yellow smoke were fired to pin-point targets for support aircraft. There were no changes in assignments. VAC LANFOR Artillery reinforced fires on call. Air observation fired a total of nine (9) missions. No targets were reported by sound ranging during the period. The total number of missions fired was 303.

(g) 4th Tank Battalion. Tanks were able to render some support to the attack of RCT 23, even though their approach was restricted more or less to roads. A mine field was encountered in TA 201 NOT and three (3) tanks were destroyed. Further tank activity in this area was delayed until the minefield was cleared by the engineers. During a requested air strike in TA 185 KL, an auxiliary gas tank of Napalm, through error, was dropped in TA 201 N and fell directly to the rear of a friendly tank. The Napalm was splashed all over the tank. The outer surfaces of the tank caught fire but the crew successfully evacuated the tank and with a portable CO2 extinguisher put out the fire. The crew sustained no casualties and the tank was not put out of action. At the end of the period, thirty-two (32) tanks were operational.

(h) Aviation. CTF 52.2 continued to furnish air support. The Division requested two (2) strikes, one (1) of which was completed in TA 185 KL and the other of which was cancelled by the originator. The 7th Fighter Command, with eight (8) P-51's strafed the coastal area in the Division zone. VMO-4 flew seven (7) tactical observation missions and five (5) planes were operational at the end of the period. The 726th SAW Squadron reverted to VAC LANFOR control.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

OF OPERATION.

(i) Naval Gunfire. Four (4) DD's from CTF 54 supported the attack. Call fires for the period were executed in TA's 185 and 202. A large amount of 40mm ammunition was employed in lieu of 5" as a safety precaution. One (1) naval gunfire spotter aboard a DD adjusted fires along the coastal area.

(j) 4th Engineer Battalion. There were no changes in assignments. This battalion continued to support the RCT's by executing demolitions on pillboxes, blockhouses, and the entrances and exits to caves and by mine removal and road work in the forward and rear areas.

(k) Combat Efficiency. The combat efficiency had been reduced by excessive casualties, particularly to key personnel, and battle fatigue, to an estimated 45%.

(l) Weather and Visibility. The weather was cloudy and cold, visibility was fair, and ceiling was overcast 10/10.

19. FROM 1800, 8 MAR 45 TO 1800, 9 MAR 45 (D PLUS 18)

(a) By 1800 enemy fires, consisting of rockets, mortars, grenades, rifle, and machine gun fire, were increasing in intensity, building up to a peak about 2000. Casualties were suffered in units all along the Division front and particularly in the area of TA 184 ABFG. Enemy movements indicated that either a counter-attack or a large scale infiltration would be attempted. Enemy units infiltrated in the zones of all RCT's but were most successful in the zone of RCT 23 where some elements reached the CP of BLT 2/23. At 1920 ten (10) to fifteen (15) Japanese were observed on a ridge in TA 202 QR. Artillery fire was requested on this area, and the enemy were either killed or dispersed. At 2300 there was considerable enemy activity along the front of BLT 3/24 and extending to the left in the zone of BLT 2/23 where infiltration attempts were reported. At 2330 the enemy attacked BLT 2/23 in force, and some elements succeeded in penetrating as far as the BLT CP where they were either killed or dispersed. It was apparent that this skirmish was not an all out "Banzai" attack but a well-planned and predetermined counter-attack in force. Captured information revealed that an assembly area had been designated at the crossroads in TA 201 N, from which the enemy moved up to CR 331 and south along the road to the CP of BLT 2/23, and that the forward elements were to be followed by a much larger force. The attack failed because of intense artillery fire and the disruption of the Japanese communications. A total of over 400 of the enemy were killed in the zone of BLT 2/23 during this counter-attack.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SECTION IV NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(b) Throughout the night there was constant pressure along the front of RCT 24; numerous small units attempted to infiltrate, but all were repulsed and enemy dead in this zone totaled 150 for the night. Some infiltration was attempted through RCT 25 but no enemy were successful. Illumination fires were employed throughout the night. Contact throughout the night was maintained with a support ship of the 3d Marine Division which fired on possible rocket positions in TA's 185 and 202 and kept the east coast under observation. At 0415 Flash Red was reported; at 0505 Flash Blue, control Green, was received, and at 0512 Flash White was reported.

(c) Following a coordinated VAC LANFOR-Division Artillery preparation from King-hour to King-hour plus 10, with a limitation on ammunition expenditure to 1000 rounds 75mm, and 1000 rounds 105mm, the Division continued the attack at King-hour, 0700, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 16-45, to complete the mission assigned in the previous Operation Order. Formation and boundaries - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(d) RCT 23, less BLT 1/23, resumed the attack in a column of battalions with BLT 2/23 in the assault. Considerable advance was made on the right and the right center against fairly light opposition, but the entire left was held up by intense enemy fire from the ridge in TA 202 BG. BLT 1/23 was released to RCT 23 at 1500, and BLT 3/23 reverted to VAC LANFOR Reserve at 1700 in TA 165 BC. Although ordered to consolidate at 1700, this RCT continued the attack to improve its positions and did not halt the attack until 1730. RCT 23 maintained contact with the 3d Division on the left and with RCT 24 on the right.

(e) RCT 24, less BLT 2/24, began the attack at King-hour with the main effort on the left in order to overrun a center of resistance along the boundary. This attack was not successful, and after a rapid reorganization the RCT launched a second attack at 0900, resulting in a breakthrough for a gain of about 300 yards on the left and left center. BLT 1/24, having suffered numerous casualties began a reorganization of its units into a consolidated BLT of two (2) companies under the command of the RCT Executive Officer. The BLT Commander was relieved just prior to this reorganization. By 1200 BLT 1/24 was able to advance its line on the left to a position opposite BLT 3/24. Extremely heavy resistance on the right held up the advance and little gain was made in that sector. Upon consolidation for the night at 1700, this RCT was in contact with elements on its right and left. BLT 2/24 was released to RCT 25 at 0500 to relieve BLT 3/25 on the extreme right of the Division zone. When released, BLT 3/25 was directed to assemble in TA's 182 O and 183 KL as Division Reserve. BLT 3/25 closed in the assembly

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

area at 0730.

(f) RCT 25, less BLT 3/25, and plus BLT 2/24, maintained its positions and was unable to advance on the left because of the resistance holding up the right of BLT 1/24. A prominent reentrant resulted from the inability of these two BLT's to advance; however, plans were made to drive through this area on the morning of 10 March.

(g) 4th Provisional Battalion. A temporary Provisional Battalion, consisting of thirty-eight (38) officers and four hundred eighty-eight (488) enlisted was organized from the Support Group and assembled in TA 182 Y as Division Reserve for emergency use in the rear areas.

(h) 14th Marines. 1/14 was in direct support of RCT 25, 2/14 in direct support RCT 23, 3/14 in direct support RCT 24, 4/14 in general support, and VAC LANFOR Artillery reinforced fires on call. Air observers fired a total of seventeen (17) missions during the period. VAC LANFOR Artillery was fired on three (3) targets which required heavy artillery. Six (6) targets were reported and were fired upon during the period from information secured by sound ranging. The total number of missions fired was 343.

(i) 4th Tank Battalion. There were no changes in assignments. At the end of the period thirty-three (33) tanks were operational, eight (8) were damaged and thirteen (13) were destroyed. Company "B" towed a 7.2 rocket launcher in the zone of BLT 1/24 and fired twenty (20) rockets. Results were not successful.

(j) Aviation. CTG 52.2 and the 7th AAF continued to furnish air support. Of the eight (8) support missions requested, four (4) were completed. The remainder were cancelled because the front lines were too close to the target areas by the time these missions came in. RCT 23 reported that the P-51 mission with 500-pound delayed-action bombs was very effective. VMO-4 flew six (6) tactical observation missions. Successful tests were completed of smoke rockets fired from VMO-4 wing-mounted bazookas for target designation. One (1) VMO-4 plane, armed with six (6) smoke rockets, was available on call to designate targets for support aircraft.

(k) Naval Gunfire. Because of the increasing limitations upon fire possibilities, the Division Naval Gunfire Support was reduced to two (2) DD's. In supporting the Division attack, fires were placed in TA's 185, 186 and 202, with two (2) VOF planes furnishing air spot.

UNCLASSIFIED

NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(l) 4th Engineer Battalion. There were no changes in assignments or tasks of this battalion.

(m) 4th Pioneer Battalion. At 0800 the Division Shore Party was relieved by the Garrison Force. For the remainder of the period this battalion was disposed tactically for beach defense. It was directed to be prepared to assemble in Division Reserve on one (1) hour's notice.

(n) Combat Efficiency remained at an estimated 45%.

(o) Weather and Visibility. The weather was cool; visibility was unlimited. The ceiling was unlimited in the morning, decreasing to 1500 feet by the end of the period.

20. FROM 1800, 9 MAR 45 TO 1800, 10 MAR 45 (D PLUS 19)

(a) Enemy activity during the night was relatively quiet. The front lines received a small amount of light and medium mortar fire at infrequent intervals during the night. There were several unsuccessful attempts at infiltration. In order to insure the closing of the reentrant in TA 184 CH, and to shorten the lines across the Division front, Division decided to have RCT 25 relieve BLT 1/24, the right BLT of RCT 24, with BLT 3/25, which was in Division Reserve prior to 0630. BLT 3/25 was released to RCT 25 at 0300. RCT 23, on the left, was then ordered to assume control of BLT 3/24 in its present zone at 0630. When relieved by RCT's 23 and 25, RCT 24, less BLT's 2/24 and 3/24, was ordered to assemble in TA's 182 O and 183 KL as Division Reserve. Two (2) DD's provided illumination in the Division zone during the night.

(b) After a coordinated VAC LANFOR-Division Artillery preparation from King-hour minus 25 to King-hour minus 15, and from King-hour minus 10 to King-hour, and moving forward in successive concentrations of 100 yards every five (5) minutes from King-hour to King-hour plus 15, the Division resumed the attack with two (2) RCT's in assault at King-hour, 0800, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 17-45, to destroy the enemy and capture the remainder of the island within its zone of action. For formation and boundaries, see the map, Progress of Attack. Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(c) RCT 23, on the left, less BLT 3/23, and with BLT 3/24 attached, continued the attack at King-hour with two (2) BLT's in assault, 2/23 on the left and 3/24 on the right, and with 1/23 in RCT Reserve, making its main effort on the right. Progress on the left was steady against light mortar and small arms fire coming from caves along the cliff line marking the Division front.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

the right the advance was slow against strong enemy resistance throughout the zone. After a steady advance resulting in considerable gains, the RCT took up a favorable defensive position along a line about 400 to 600 yards from the beach. Consolidation for the night was begun at 1700. Contact was maintained from right to left within the Division. At about 1500 patrols reached the coast line within the zone without encountering the enemy. At 1115 BLT 3/23, which was in VAC LANFOR Reserve, was released to RCT control. The RCT Reserve was employed in mopping up the rear areas throughout the day.

(d) RCT 25, on the right, with BLT 2/24 and the Reconnaissance Company attached, completed the relief of BLT 1/24 by BLT 3/25 at 0600 and assumed control of the zone as assigned in the attack order. See the map, Progress of Attack. At King-hour BLT's 3/25 and 1/25 jumped off in a coordinated attack supported by the fire of BLT's 2/25 and 2/24. Pivoting on the right of BLT 1/25, these two BLT's turned towards the southeast and were able to break through the reentrant and make a considerable gain during the day. During the day advance elements of BLT 1/25 were pinched out and were employed, together with units of BLT 2/25, to liquidate an area of resistance which developed in TA 184 N. At 1700, when consolidation was ordered, RCT 25 had reached the line shown on the map, Progress of Attack, and was occupying favorable ground for defense. The Division Reconnaissance Company was assigned the task of containing and destroying the enemy in TA 183 J in order to protect the rear areas from possible infiltration from caves in this vicinity. The advance of RCT 25 overran and annihilated the strong positions of the enemy and secured the commanding ground in the zone. The rear areas were mopped up as the advance was continued.

(e) RCT 24, less BLT's 2/24 and 3/24, reverted to Division Reserve in TA's 182 O and 183 KL at 0630. At 1115, VAC LANFOR directed that BLT 1/24 be assigned to VAC LANFOR Reserve and remain in position in above TA's.

(f) 4th Provisional Battalion, in Division Reserve, established defensive positions on the left of the Division zone in the rear areas. There was no activity reported during the night. During the daylight hours patrols from this battalion began mopping up operations in the Division rear areas.

(g) 14th Marines. 1/14 was in direct support of RCT 25, 2/14 in direct support of RCT 23, 3/14 in direct support of RCT 24 prior to 0630, after which time it reinforced the fires of 2/14; 4/14 was in general support, and VAC LANFOR Artillery reinforced fires on call. Air observers fired in fire mission during the

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

period. The total number of missions fired was 329.

(h) 4th Tank Battalion. Company "C" was attached to RCT 23, Company "A" to RCT 25, and Company "B" was under Battalion control. At the end of the period thirty-five (35) tanks were operational, six (6) damaged, and thirteen (13) destroyed. One (1) platoon of Company "C" operated with RCT 9 during the day.

(i) Aviation. Two (2) missions were requested by the Division from the 7th Fighter Command, but both were cancelled because the front lines moved forward so rapidly that the strikes could not be employed. VMO-4 flew seven (7) tactical observation missions. Beginning at 0700 this period, and daily thereafter until they were secured, close air support groups were to be composed of eight (8) P-51 aircraft, each armed with two (2) 500 pound bombs and full ammunition. Flights were to be relieved on station at two (2) hour intervals, the first flight 0700, the last flight 1700.

(j) Naval Gunfire. One (1) DD with VOF air spot supported the Division during the day. Before all fire was lifted, because of the rapid advance of the Division front, one (1) mission was fired in caves in TA 185 J. The ship was held for emergency missions, and VOF air spot was employed in keeping the Division's front under observation throughout the day.

(k) 4th Engineer Battalion. No change in assignments or duties.

(l) 4th Pioneer Battalion, was prepared to assemble in TA 166 F on one (1) hour's notice as Division Reserve.

(m) Combat Efficiency of this Division was reduced by excessive casualties, particularly to key personnel, and battle fatigue to an estimated 40%.

(n) Weather and Visibility. The weather was cool and fair; visibility was unlimited; ceiling was overcast 1/10 to 2/10.

21. FROM 1800, 10 MAR 45 TO 1800, 11 MAR 45 (D PLUS 20)

(a) Enemy activity was relatively quiet along the entire front. Some infiltration attempts were made on the front of RCT 25. The area of resistance by-passed in 184 N was contained by elements of this RCT. It was quite apparent that the main enemy resistance had been broken but that the Japanese were continuing their passive defense from an intricate system of well concealed caves. These caves were hard to locate and were generally disclosed only when

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~~SECTION IV. NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.~~

the enemy opened fire. Two (2) DD's provided illumination for the Division throughout the night.

(b) The Division continued the attack at King-hour minus 60, King-hour being 0830, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 18-45, without a preliminary artillery or naval gunfire preparation, to assist in the completion of the capture of IWO JIMA. Formation and boundaries - no change; Line of Departure - front lines at King-hour.

(c) RCT 23, with BLT's 2/23 and 3/24 abreast, continued the attack at King-hour minus 60 and rapidly overran the weak enemy resistance to its front by employing combat patrols to cover all of the beach areas. On the left of the RCT zone, the mopping up could not be completed because RCT 9 of the 3d Division was operating along the boundary and in the zone of action of RCT 23. On the right, BLT 3/24 encountered strong enemy resistance in the vicinity of TA 185 K. This resistance was reduced by the end of the period, and combat patrols had cleared out the remainder of this zone. BLT's 1/23 and 3/23, in RCT Reserve, were employed in mopping up the rear area. At 1530 BLT 1/23 relieved BLT 2/23 in its zone, completing the relief by 1700.

(d) RCT 25, with BLT's 3/25, 2/25, and 2/24 in line from left to right, continued the attack at 0745, fifteen (15) minutes late, to execute the mission assigned. BLT 1/25 neutralized the enemy resistance in TA 184 N by 1100. Shortly after the assault was initiated, the left of the line received intense fire from rockets, mortars, and small arms. The center of this fire area was located as being in the vicinity of TA 185 PQV, and it was at once apparent that this area was the final defensive position of the enemy in this zone. The terrain in this area was not normal in any respect; it could be classified only as a terrain freak of nature. However, it was well suited for the construction of cave positions, and the Japanese had utilized this advantage to the fullest extent. Their scheme of maneuver was to hold up the advance as long as it was possible, and to inflict as many casualties as they could before they were forced to adopt their usual suicidal tactics. By the end of the period this resistance in the above TA had not been liquidated. The Division Reconnaissance Company continued mopping up operations in the rear area.

(e) RCT 24, less three (3) BLT's, had no change. BLT 1/24 was in VAC LANFOR Reserve.

(f) 4th Provisional Battalion. One (1) platoon was attached to the Pioneer Battalion for the defense of Beach 1

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

during the hours of darkness. The Battalion continued mopping up operations in the rear areas of the Division zone.

(g) 14th Marines. In accordance with VAC LANFOR Order, 2/14, 3/14 and 4/14 fired a thirty (30) minute preparation from King-hour minus 10 to King-hour plus 20 in the zone of the 5th Marine Division. 1/14 was in direct support of the Division until 1430, when it was directed to reinforce the 13th Marines. VMO-4 fired one (1) mission during the period and executed surveillance of fires in the Division zone. Artillery spot missions were secured at 1145. No targets were reported by sound ranging. The total number of missions fired in the 4th Division zone was eleven (11); the total in support of 5th Division was twenty-six (26).

(h) 4th Tank Battalion. At the end of the period, thirty-nine (39) tanks were operational, four (4) were damaged, and eleven (11) were destroyed. During the afternoon one (1) flame thrower tank with crew was loaned to the 3d Marine Division.

(i) Aviation. VMO-4 flew nine (9) tactical observation missions. One (1) plane was hit by enemy machine gun fire, and at the end of the period one (1) plane was operational.

(j) Naval Gunfire. No fires were placed in the Division zone during the day. One (1) DD was on call for possible emergency missions.

(k) 4th Engineer Battalion. Company "A" was attached to RCT 25, Company "B" to RCT 24, and Company "C" to RCT 23. All units continued the execution of demolitions and road work in the areas of these respective RCT's.

(l) 4th Pioneer Battalion. No change in assignment.

(m) Combat Efficiency was reduced to an estimated 38%.

(n) Weather and Visibility. The weather was fair, visibility unlimited, and ceiling overcast 2/10 to 8/10.

22. FROM 1800, 11 MAR 45 TO 1800, 12 MAR 45 (D PLUS 21)

(a) Activity for the night consisted of sporadic mortar and small arms fire coming from the center of resistance in the zone of RCT 25. The majority of this fire was aimless and apparently fired with no other purpose than to bolster the courage of the enemy. Some infiltration was attempted from this area, but all attempts were unsuccessful. One (1) DD illuminated the zone of

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

action for the Division.

(b) Division Administrative Order No. 1-45, Warning Order for reembarkation, was issued at 0800. Reembarkation was to begin on or about 14 March.

(c) The Division continued the attack at King-hour plus 60, King-hour being 0700, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 19-45, to eliminate the pocket of resistance in TA 185 PQUV and to mop up thoroughly the zone, beginning at the coastline and working progressively back through the zone in order to destroy the remaining Japanese within the area. Boundaries and zones of action - no change.

(d) RCT 23, on the left, employed BLT 3/24 to assist RCT 25 in containing the enemy in the center of resistance in TA 185 PQUV. At King-hour this RCT, less BLT 3/24, began a systematic mopping up of its area from the beach toward the RCT rear area line. The evacuation of Marine dead and the burial of enemy dead as well as a general policing of the area occupied the remainder of the period.

(e) RCT 25, with BLT's 3/25, 2/25 and 2/24 in line, at 0900 began mopping up operations to destroy the organized resistance in its area. Because the area of this resistance was relatively small and was contained on three (3) sides (see the map, Progress of Attack), it was necessary to limit the weapons employed to small arms, mortars, and flame throwers. The character of the terrain prohibited the employment of tanks. The enemy were entrenched in ravines, caves and man-made pillboxes, and were extremely tenacious. In order to annihilate this resistance it was necessary to flush the enemy out of these emplacements one or two at a time. The Division Reconnaissance Company was employed in mopping up the rear areas. Detachments from RCT Headquarters were employed to evacuate Marine dead and to bury enemy dead.

(f) RCT 24, less three (3) BLT's, had no change. BLT 1/24 continued in VAC LANFOR Reserve.

(g) 4th Provisional Battalion. One (1) platoon was assigned to the Pioneer Battalion for the defense of Beach Blue 1 during the hours of darkness. At 1400 the battalion was disbanded and the elements thereof reverted to parent control.

(h) 14th Marines. Four (4) battalions fired preparation fires in the 5th Marine Division zone from 0903 to 0913. 3/14 fired harassing fires in the zone from 1900 to 0630 and from 0913 to 1045.

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

The total number of missions fired was 84.

(i) 4th Tank Battalion. Two (2) flame thrower tanks, without crews, were loaned to the 5th Marine Division. At the end of the period, forty-one (41) tanks were operational, two (2) were damaged, and eleven (11) were destroyed.

(j) Aviation. VMO-4 flew four (4) tactical observation missions, and at the end of the period two (2) planes were operational.

(k) Naval Gunfire. One (1) DD maintained contact with the Division in case emergency fires were required.

(l) The 4th Engineer Battalion continued operations in support of the RCT's.

(m) 4th Pioneer Battalion. No change.

(n) Combat Efficiency was estimated to be 36%.

(o) Weather and Visibility. The weather was fair and cool, visibility was fair, overcast 8/10 to 10/10.

23. FROM 1800, 12 MAR 45 TO 1800, 13 MAR 45 (D PLUS 22)

(a) During the night sporadic and generally aimless mortar and machine gun fire was directed towards the Division rear areas. Attempted infiltration from the enemy compressed within the center of resistance was continuous throughout the night but was unsuccessful. One (1) DD furnished illumination during the night.

(b) The Division continued the attack at King-hour minus 30, King-hour being 0730, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 20-45, to complete the missions previously assigned. There was no change in boundaries or formations.

(c) RCT 23 continued mopping up operations, evacuation of own dead, and the burial of the enemy dead. BLT 1/23 operated in the forward part of the area, BLT 3/23 in the center part, and BLT 2/23 was in RCT Reserve.

(d) RCT 25 continued the attack at King-hour to eliminate the enemy resistance in its zone. The Division Reconnaissance Company and elements of RCT Headquarters continued mopping up operations, evacuation of own dead, and burial of the enemy dead. The center of resistance was contained by BLT 3/25 attached to RCT 23

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UNCLASSIFIED OF OPERATION.

BLT's 3/25, 2/25, 1/25 and 2/24. Slow progress was made in the elimination of this area.

(e) RCT 24, less two (2) BLT's, continued in Division Reserve. At 0745 BLT 1/24 was released from VAC LANFOR Reserve to parent control. RCT 24 was employed in policing and mopping up the Division rear area.

(f) Division Administrative Order No. 2-45, directed that elements of the Division would begin reembarkation on 14 March.

(g) At 1350 a warning order was issued to RCT's 23, 24, and 25 to the effect that upon orders to withdraw all units, the assembly areas would be as follows: RCT 23 - TA's 165 BCD, 182 TWXY, 183 U; RCT 24 - TA's 182 JNOS, 183 AFKL; RCT 25 - TA's 183 MNRST, 184 UV, 167 B.

(h) 14th Marines. 2/14 and 3/14 fired harassing fires in the zone of the 5th Marine Division. All battalions were available to reinforce the 13th Marines on call until 1000. By 1130 all battalions had closed station and the forward observers and liaison officers of 3/14 returned to the battalion area at 1155. The total number of missions fired was 118.

(i) 4th Tank Battalion. Eight (8) tanks, including two (2) flame throwers, were loaned to the 5th Marine Division. Two (2) flame thrower tanks and two (2) combat tanks were employed along the road in TA 185 P. There was no change in the status of operational tanks.

(j) Aviation. VMO-4 flew four (4) tactical observation and three (3) photo missions. At the end of the period two (2) planes were operational.

(k) 4th Engineer Battalion. No change in assignments or duties.

(l) 4th Pioneer Battalion. No change.

(m) Combat Efficiency was reduced to an estimated 36%.

(n) Weather and Visibility. The weather was fair, visibility was good, and the ceiling was overcast 3/10 to 6/10.

(o) The operations for the period partially completed the mopping up of the Division zone and the continuance of the fighting to neutralize the enemy in the center of resistance then confined

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

to TA 185 K.

24. FROM 1800, 13 MAR 45 TO 1800, 14 MAR 45 (D PLUS 23)

(a) The period of darkness covered by this report was relatively quiet except in the front of BLT 3/25. Continuous fighting in this area went on all during the night. One (1) DD illuminated the Division zone throughout the night.

(b) In accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 21-45, the Division continued its assigned mission at King-hour, 0630.

(c) RCT 23 continued mopping up operations and the burial of enemy dead. At 0810 elements of BLT 1/23 encountered a small group of Japanese in TA 185 B. This group had apparently been hiding in caves and had been by-passed unintentionally. Patrols from BLT's 1/23 and 3/24 surrounded the area and killed all the enemy. By the end of the period 95% of area had been policed and mopped up.

(d) RCT 25 continued the attack at King-hour to reduce the center of resistance in its zone. A slow, gradual advance, against desperate resistance was made throughout the period, and it was believed that the enemy remaining in this pocket had been considerably reduced. Mortars, hand grenades, demolitions, small arms, and flame throwers were employed against this area. Because BLT 2/25 had become so depleted in strength, BLT 2/24 was directed to relieve BLT 2/25 in time to continue the attack at King-hour on 15 March. A Provisional Company composed of personnel from the RCT Weapons Company, RCT H & S Company, and the 81mm Mortar Platoon of BLT 1/25 was organized and relieved BLT 2/24 on the right. The Reconnaissance Company continued mopping up operations.

(e) RCT 24, less two (2) BLT's, was in Division Reserve, and continued the police of the rear areas and made preparations for reembarkation.

(f) The 14th Marines began reembarkation at 0700. By 1600, 1/14 and 4/14 had completed reembarkation; 2/14, 3/14, and H&S Battery were continuing preparations for loading.

(g) 4th Tank Battalion. Eight (8) tanks (including two (2) flame throwers) were on loan to the 5th Marine Division. At the end of the period forty-three (43) tanks were operational and eleven (11) were destroyed.

(h) Aviation. VMO-4 flew one (1) tactical observation

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

mission and at the end of the period two (2) planes were operational.

(i) Naval Gunfire. No naval gunfire was available nor could it be employed within the Division zone.

(j) 4th Engineer Battalion continued assigned duties blowing caves and executing general demolitions.

(k) Combat Efficiency was reduced to an estimated 35%.

(l) Weather and Visibility. The weather was fair, visibility was unlimited, and ceiling overcast 1/10 to 3/10.

25. FROM 1800, 14 MAR 45 TO 1800, 15 MAR 45 (D PLUS 24)

(a) Night activity in the Division zone was confined to the center of resistance in TA 185, where several unsuccessful infiltrations were attempted. There was considerable grenade activity, particularly on the front of BLT 3/24. BLT 2/24 relieved BLT 2/25 at 2200.

(b) The Division continued operations at King-hour minus 60, King-hour being 0730, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 22-45, to mop up thoroughly its zone of action.

(c) RCT 23 continued mopping up operations, burial of enemy dead, and the general police of its area. This RCT continued preparations for reembarkation and for the relief by RCT 24 at 0800, 16 March.

(d) RCT 25 resumed its operations to reduce the center of resistance in TA 185, to mop up the rear areas, to bury the enemy dead, and generally police its area. The order of units from left to right was BLT's 3/24, 2/24, 2/25, and 3/25. On the right of the center of resistance considerable advance was made, which reduced the size of the pocket approximately one-third.

The enemy continued to oppose the advance stubbornly. Numerous caves were demolished in this area after unsuccessful attempts to induce the occupants to surrender.

(e) RCT 24, less two (2) BLT's, was in Division Reserve. This RCT continued mopping up and policing of rear areas, and prepared to relieve RCT 23 in its present zone at 0800, 16 March.

(f) The 14th Marines continued reembarkation. The Regimental CP opened in the USS BOLLINGER at 1400.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(g) 4th Tank Battalion. Eight (8) tanks (including two (2) flame throwers) were still on loan to the 5th Marine Division. At the end of the period thirty-two (32) tanks were reembarked, three (3) remained attached to RCT 25, and eleven (11) were destroyed.

(h) Aviation. VMO-4 flew three (3) tactical observation missions, and at the end of the period two (2) planes were operational.

(i) 4th Engineer Battalion. No change.

(j) Combat Efficiency was reduced to an estimated 35%.

(k) Weather and Visibility. Weather was fair and visibility was good.

26. FROM 1800, 15 MAR 45 TO 1800, 16 MAR 45 (D PLUS 25)

(a) Activity for the night was confined to the area in front of the troops containing the center of resistance in TA 185. Accurate rifle fire, hand grenades, and small mortar fire were delivered by the enemy. An attempt by a party of from fifty (50) to sixty (60) of the enemy to break out of the center of resistance was stopped when the advance party of the enemy was fired upon. Six (6) of the enemy were killed, and the remainder were driven back into the caves from which they had emerged.

(b) At 2250 1/14 had completed reembarkation in APA 172; 3/14 and 4/14 had completed reembarkation in APA 234.

(c) The Division continued operations at King-hour minus 105, King-hour being 0815, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 23-45, to eliminate the pocket of resistance in TA 185 and to mop up its zone of action thoroughly.

(d) RCT 23 was relieved at 0800 by RCT 24, less two (2) BLT's, and immediately began reembarkation. At 1700 the CP of this RCT was opened in the USS ROCKBRIDGE.

(e) RCT 24, less BLT 2/24, relieved RCT 23 and continued mopping up and the general police of the area assigned it. This RCT assumed control of BLT 3/24 at 0800. In a cave in TA 185 B, a patrol killed fourteen (14) Japanese and entombed eleven (11) additional when this cave was closed. At 1800 positions were taken for the defense of the area as shown on the map, Progress of Attack.

(f) RCT 25, with BLT 2/24 attached, continued the attack.

UNCLASSIFIED

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SECTION IV. NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

at King-hour minus 105, and at 1030 all organized resistance in this area had ceased. For the remainder of the period this RCT continued mopping up in its zone, the evacuation of own dead, the burial of the enemy dead, the removal of friendly mine field in TA's 167 D and 184 SX, and general police of the area. At 1700 dispositions for defense were as shown on the map, Progress of Attack. At 1600 the Division Reconnaissance Company reverted to Division control.

(g) At 1100 the entire Division Sector was reported secured.

(h) At 1800 the Commanding General VAC LANFOR announced that all organized resistance on IWO JIMA had ceased.

(i) 4th Tank Battalion continued reembarkation. Eight (8) tanks were still on loan to the 5th Division, and one (1) flame thrower tank to the 3d Division.

(j) Aviation. VMO-4 flew one (1) photographic mission and one (1) tactical observation mission, and at the end of the period one (1) airplane was operational.

(k) Combat Efficiency was reduced to an estimated 35%.

(l) Weather and Visibility. Weather fair, visibility good, and ceiling overcast 1/10 to 4/10.

27. FROM 1800, 16 MAR 45 TO 1800, 17 MAR 45 (D PLUS 26)

(a) RCT 23 completed reembarkation at 2300.

(b) During the hours of darkness eleven (11) Japanese, attempting to move about in the Division zone, were killed. Other than this, quiet prevailed over the entire Division front during the night.

(c) RCT 24 relieved RCT 25 in its zone at 0800. BLT 2/24 reverted to parent control at that time. RCT 24, in accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 24-45, continued thorough policing and mopping up the remaining enemy in the zones of action of RCT's 23 and 25. Throughout the day, active patrolling was conducted in both areas, in addition to the evacuation of own dead, the burial of enemy dead, the blowing of caves, and the general policing of the areas.

(d) RCT 25, when relieved, assembled in designated areas and commenced reembarkation. At 1345 troops of RCT 25 were embarked on APA's 178 and 172.

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SECTION IV - NARRATIVE OF OPERATION.

(e) As a result of the mopping up operations for this period, fifteen (15) of the enemy were killed, one hundred thirty-two (132) enemy dead were buried, fifty-eight (58) caves were closed, and thirteen (13) Marine dead were evacuated. General police improved the area in preparation for turning it over to the 3d Marine Division.

28. FROM 1800, 17 MAR 45 TO 1800, 18 MAR 45 (D PLUS 27)

(a) At 1900 RCT 25 CP opened in APA 172, reembarkation having been completed at that time.

(b) No enemy activity was reported during the night.

(c) In accordance with VAC LANFOR Order No. 25-45, the 3d Marine Division relieved RCT 24 with RCT 9 at 0808.

(d) When relieved by RCT 9, RCT 24 assembled in designated areas and prepared to commence reembarkation on order.

(e) At 1650 units of RCT 24 were embarking and proceeding to APA 222.

(f) At 1730 the Division Advance CP opened in APA 103.

(g) The remaining units continued reembarkation.

29. FROM 1800, 18 MAR 45 TO 1800, 19 MAR 45 (D PLUS 28)

(a) RCT 24 completed reembarkation at 2000 and opened its CP at 2100 in APA 222.

(b) The 4th Pioneer Battalion CP opened in APA 233 at 2300.

(c) The 4th Engineer Battalion CP opened in APA 222 at 0030.

(d) The Division CP was closed ashore at 0900 and opened at the same time in APA 103.

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Appendix 1

to

SECTION IV

P R O G R E S S O F A T T A C K

1:20,000 Target Area Map of Objective overprinted to show objectives assigned and daily front line positions.

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SECTION V

COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. General.

(a) In view of the varied and numerous suggestions pertaining to changes in current Tables of Organization and Basic Allowances, and in view of the possible adoption of an FMF PAC proposed Table of Organization, a coordinated study of the subject has been instituted by the Division and the results therefrom will be forwarded to FMF IAC in the form of specific recommendations.

(b) Without attempting to comment on all detailed recommendations outlined in staff section and subordinate unit reports, the comments and recommendations included herein and considered of immediate importance and general interest, are submitted.

2. Comments and Recommendations.

(a) Comment. The immense value of cooperation and understanding which results from constant association in a joint endeavor is reflected in smoother, more efficient teamwork which is the essence of success in the most complicated of battles - an amphibious operation. This Division has gained considerable experience in amphibious technique as the result of having participated in four (4) major engagements in the past fourteen (14) months, and it is felt that, if the Division had been working with the same TRANSDIVS, the same TRANSGROUP Staff, and the same control organization throughout this period, the resultant would have been an amphibious fighting team of unparalleled efficiency. Certainly the inevitable process of relearning the capabilities of personnel and retraining in basic principles and practices prior to each operation would be minimized.

The immediate reaction to this proposal will be to state that widespread Pacific operations make such a scheme impractical. The fact remains that maximum efficiency and unity of action between the agency responsible for placing troops ashore and the troops themselves will result only from the establishment of such a policy and, in view of more difficult operations in prospect where cooperation and understanding will be vital during the critical stages of landings, it is maintained that every effort should be directed toward achieving the desired end.

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SECTION V - COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Recommendation. That the Navy establish a policy of maintaining TRANSDIV, TRANSGROUP staffs, and control organizations as permanent integral units, assigning them to work with the same troop units in each operation.

(b) Comment. Results indicate that high horizontal bombing by land based aircraft had little effect on the enemy's defensive system. In fact, one POW estimated that 40% of the bombs dropped by these aircraft prior to D-day missed the island entirely and this is considered a conservative figure. In order to permit more effective air strikes from low altitudes, which are essential if destruction of emplacements is to be accomplished, early destruction of enemy AA defenses must be effected. The efficiency of NGF spotting by VOS aircraft would also be enhanced by the reduction of the enemy's AA.

Recommendations. That in future assaults on heavily fortified objectives, initial effort be concentrated on destruction of AA defenses by carrier aircraft and that precise low-level bombing and use of rockets against located positions be initiated two (2) weeks prior to the target date.

(c) Comment. The Division's concept of NGF requirements for the IWO JIMA operation, which was submitted to VAC LANFOR early in the planning phase, emphasized the necessity for adequate preliminary bombardment of the objective and requested that a minimum of ten (10) days destructive fire be conducted prior to the landing. It was apparent that in order to insure success of the landing, weapon emplacements, pillboxes, and blockhouses, particularly those located on the right flank of the Division zone of action would have to be reduced prior to D-day by slow, deliberate, destructive fire from ships firing at close ranges. It is considered that the three (3) days allowed for the preliminary bombardment was insufficient.

Recommendation. That in future operations against highly fortified objectives a minimum of ten days preliminary bombardment to be scheduled, rotating BB or CA divisions if necessary.

(d) Comment. During the forward area rehearsal, the Division requested the use of "earthquake" bombs on the ridge in TA 183 CD, the "amphi-theater", and the high cliffs on the right flank of the Division zone of action, the objective being to cause a crumbling effect which would seal numerous weapons emplacements and caves contained in the cliff and ridge faces. This procedure had been found effective in the European Theater of Operations and

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SECTION V - COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

it is believed that similar results could have been obtained on IWO JIMA, particularly in view of the soft sand stone composition of the cliffs. The request was denied.

Recommendation. That provisions be made to employ "earthquake" bombs on future operations in an effort to crumble cliffs and seal caves, and also to use in large ravines for their concussive effect.

(e) Comment. The 19 LST's assigned the Division for the IWO JIMA operation were insufficient to properly embark four (4) assault BLT's and Division Artillery. In some cases tactical unity could not be completely preserved and the presence of additional radar, ponton barge and causeway personnel on seven (7) LST's further restricted troop space. LST requirements for the tactical loading of four (4) assault BLT's consist of sixteen (16) LST's, four (4) being assigned to each BLT. Division Artillery requires five (5) LST's, one (1) for each battalion and one (1) for regimental headquarters and additional ammunition, making a total of twenty-one (21) LST's needed to embark assault elements of the Division.

Recommendation. That a minimum of twenty-one (21) LST's, the entire troop capacity of which would be available for troop units, be assigned the Division in future operations of a similar character.

(f) Comment. On several occasions LST commanders refused to take aboard LVT's, causing the loss of LVT's from swamping when fuel was exhausted. (See par. 8(e), Annex NAN).

Recommendation. That all LST commanders be impressed with the responsibility they bear and the problems involved in operating with LVT units, and that new LST's be given training with LVT's sufficient to foster a spirit of cooperation and teamwork.

(g) Comment. Movement and operations of LST's and LSM's were handicapped because of the insistence of the TRANSRON Commander in personally controlling these craft. Consequently, the chain of command was considerably more involved and delays greater than if such authority had been vested in the TRANSRON Control Officer who was working in conjunction with the representative of the Commanding General.

Recommendation. That TRANSRON commanders establish a general policy relative to movement and operations of LST's and LSM's and delegate authority for the detailed control to their TRANSRON control officers.

UNCLASSIFIED
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UNCLASSIFIED
SECTION V - COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

(h) Comment. The two replacement drafts were not received in sufficient time to thoroughly train them along with the Division units for which they would provide replacements. The status of training of the replacement drafts when received was such as to require intensive and realistic combat training prior to their reaching a satisfactory state of readiness for combat, and it is highly desirable that these drafts be available to the Division throughout the preparatory training period.

Recommendation. That battle replacement drafts be assigned the Division at least three (3) months prior to embarkation for an operation in order that integrated training with the Division may be accomplished.

(i) Comment. The need for timely oblique and vertical photographs of the battle area was keenly felt throughout the operation. The quality of most of the photographs furnished by higher authority after D-day was poor and the photographs were worthless for use by small unit commanders. During the latter stages of the operation, vitally needed photographic coverage of the enemy area under attack was finally obtained through the use of a VMO-4 plane and a Division photographer, a woefully inadequate system in comparison with the modern equipment available to higher echelon for this purpose.

Recommendation. That higher echelon automatically furnish the Division adequate photographic coverage of its zone of action throughout the operation, that more emphasis be placed on thorough briefing of pilots for photographic missions, and that higher standards in the technique of processing film be achieved.

(j) Comment. Experience gained in the IWO JIMA operation emphasized the need for a heavier and more powerful direct fire weapon than the Bazooka for use of assault teams against concrete emplacements and caves, employing a shell with concrete-piercing capabilities against the former and a fragmentation shell for attack of the latter.

Recommendation. That a short range rocket of 4.5" caliber, capable of being crew served by two (2) men of the assault team and firing concrete piercing and fragmentation ammunition, be adopted.

(k) Comment. The need for additional mortars in the Division, particularly a heavier type mortar than the 81mm, was

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SECTION V - COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

apparent in the operation. Heavier mortars should be employed to supplement the organic 81mm mortar platoons and provide the infantry commander with vitally needed additional fire support to bridge the gap between the 81mm and artillery.

Recommendation. That the 4.2 mortar be adopted by the Marine Corps and a mortar battalion of two (2) 4.2 companies and one (1) 155mm mortar company be assigned to each Division.

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